1 Emotion at Work

From the "Leaner Years" to the "Affective Revolution"

Catherine S. Daus, Russell Cropanzano, Vicente Martínez-Tur, and Liu-Qin Yang*

In 2017, the Onassis Cultural Center in New York hosted an exhibition called "A World of Emotions" (Levere, 2017). This exhibition was publicized as "Bringing to vivid life the emotions of the people of ancient Greece, and prompting questions about how we express, control, and manipulate feelings in our own society" (Onassis USA, 2017). The historical epoch covered was from 700 BC to AD 200, very roughly from a time near the end of the classical period to the middle of the Hellenistic period. One commentary on this exhibition suggested: "These objects provide a timely opportunity to think about the role of feelings in our personal, social and political lives and help advance the relatively new field of the history of emotions" (Levere, 2017).

While this exhibition focused on the ancient Greeks, it is important to understand that they were hardly the first people to think and write about affect – consider that the Epic of Gilgamesh and the biblical book of Exodus, among others, predated classical Greek writings. In the prologue of the Epic of Gilgamesh – which many believe to be the first surviving great work of literature – the author, Sîn-lēqi-unninni, referring to his hero, writes: "He had seen everything, experienced all emotions" (Mitchell, 2004, p. 8). Clearly emotions were perceived as critically relevant to life. In Exodus, we see the Israelites *groaning* to God to release them from their misery (Exodus 2:23–25; 3:7). The Greek contribution to the characterization of emotion, shared by Chinese thinkers (Virág, 2017), was that they were willing to consider "hot" affect rationally. That is, they applied the lens of reason to human feelings. To be sure, their analysis was pre-scientific; the institutions of science would not be invented for another few centuries. However, through introspection, careful thought, and dialogue, these ancient thinkers were able to arrive at ideas that were surprisingly modern or, at least, surprisingly recognizable to a contemporary audience. Plato, for example, divided the soul into three parts: reason, spirit, and appetite (for a review, see Annas, 2003). In the healthy mind, reason, which was the smallest of the three, would mediate between the other two (Dixon, 2003), which roughly translate to anger/temper (spirit) and love, hunger, thirst (appetite). The Epicureans grounded their goal of a flourishing life in terms of affect. Like modern Utilitarians, they saw the best life as one that cultivated pleasure and avoided pain (Cooper, 2012). However, concerning emotion, perhaps the most sophisticated ancient thinkers were the Stoics. Stoic philosophers viewed negative emotion (*pathē*) as occurring when we give irrational "assent" to bodily feelings (Graver, 2007). In other words, the *pathē* are a consequence of dysfunctional judgments (cognitions), and people can improve their well-being by controlling their thinking

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(Sellers, 2006). If the reader finds this familiar, it is likely more than a serendipitous resemblance. Stoic philosophical thought influenced the development of modern cognitive behavioral therapy (Robertson, 2017).

With so auspicious a history, one would think that emotion would have become a major topic in organizational psychology and organizational behavior (OB) as the disciplines developed after World War II. Sadly, this was not to be, despite a promising start in the 1930s. During that decade, researchers experimented with a diversity of ideas and methodologies. For example, in his 1932 book *Workers' Emotions in Shop and Home*, Rexford Hersey tracked railroad employees' daily moods over a period of months. He mapped mood cycle and found that negative mood (when compared to positive and neutral moods) was related to lower job performance. Reports of the Hawthorne Studies, so named because they were conducted at Western Electric's Hawthorne Manufacturing facility, began in the 1920s and would continue into the 1950s (e.g. Baritz, 1960; Mayo, 1930). These studies examined, among other things, the variability of emotion over time, mutual sentiments with teams, and hostility. Of course, these older studies had a number of problems that have been identified by modern scholars (Muldoon, 2017). Still, the Hawthorne studies used a number of methodologies, such as observations and test-room interventions, that showed promise (Mayo, 1933; 1945).

Despite this promising research, post-war researchers attended mostly to other concerns (Grandey, 2008). It was this unwelcoming conceptual landscape that led Mowday and Sutton (1993, p. 197) to lament that employees were depicted as "cognitive stick figures whose behavior is unaffected by emotion." About the same time, Pekrun and Frese (1992, p. 152) famously mused, "We should not have consented to write an article on work and emotion" because "in order to do a review, one needs literature that can be reviewed." Brief and Weiss (2002) describe this period as "the Leaner Years" (p. 279), though eventually it gave way to the "Hot 1990s" or what Barsade, Brief, and Spataro (2003, p. 3) would call "affective revolution." How organizational psychology and organizational behavior got past the leaner years and into the affective revolution is a story of overcoming two challenges – the first of which was the cognitive revolution, and the second of which was a lack of a shared language.

Beginning in the 1950s, the so-called "cognitive revolution" dominated scientific psychology (Miller, 2003). Among other things, this intellectual movement emphasized such concepts as "*information, computation, and feedback*" (Pinker, 2002, p. 31, italics in original). Whatever its merits, the cognitive revolution had a deleterious effect on affect research (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995). It is widely believed that the cognitive models simply displaced interest in affect, and this is somewhat true. However, it is more precise to say that during the leaner years, affect was understood in terms of cognitive processing and, therefore, the former was subordinate to the latter. For example, affect was described as contained within cognitive schemas (Sujan & Bettman, 1989), tagged to a schema (Fiske, Neuberg, Beattie, & Milberg, 1987), or resulting from a discrepancy between a real-world event and a schema (Purcell, 1986). In each case, the cognitive schema is the focal concept; affect is a component, an appendage, or an outcome, respectively.

The second challenge was the lack of a shared language for discussing affect. Without a common language, affect researchers were in no position to meet the trials posed by the cognitive revolution. This state of affairs existed because basic concepts – affect, attitude, mood, and emotion – had yet to be distinguished from one another. For example, "attitudes" were viewed as a type of affect. On this thinking, job satisfaction studies, of which there were many, became affect research. In an influential series of papers, Weiss and his colleagues (Brief & Weiss, 2002; Weiss, 2001; Weiss & Brief, 2001; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) hammered out a solution to this problem. "Affect" is understood to be a general term that refers to people's feelings about objects or events. A "mood" is free-floating affect, unattached to a stimulus. When compared to emotions, moods tend to be of longer duration and less intense. "Attitudes" are multi-faceted constructs, which contain affect but also include characteristic cognitions and behavioral predispositions. Emotions are generally of shorter duration and greater intensity than moods, and are directed at a target, as when you feel "angry" with a coworker or "happy" with a performance review.

Eventually, this better conceptualizing of our topic would allow affect researchers to provide strong alternatives to cognitively oriented theories of work behavior. Addressing these two challenges greatly increased the volume of affect research (Grandey, 2008). Having lived through this period, one gets the feeling of watching a reservoir, filled well past capacity, just as the dam breaks. When it broke there was a flood, as the number of published articles on mood or emotion more than doubled between 1972 and 2001 (Grandey, 2008). These articles approached affect from a number of perspectives. Below, we consider the history of some of the major research traditions that provided structure and impetus for subsequent explorations on affect and emotions. We have chosen the areas of emotional labor, affectivity and discrete emotions (focusing on positive and negative affectivity and affective events theory), and emotional intelligence, as these areas particularly have had frequent, long-term, consistent, and far-reaching academic and applied impact.

The Sociology of Workplace Emotion: Display Rules and Emotional Labor

Perhaps because of the influence of the cognitive revolution, the revival of the study of affect first came not from psychologically oriented researchers, but from sociology. In the 1983 publication of *The managed heart: Commercialization of human feeling,* Hochschild (1983) introduced the concepts of display rules and emotional labor to a management audience. This book was based on her earlier work, published a few years previously (Hochschild, 1979). Reflecting her sociological background, Hochschild employed both observational methods and intensive interviewing.[1] She profiled the often extreme pressure felt by employees due to the perceived necessity of managing their own emotions. Flight attendants and bill collectors repeatedly reported frequent circumstances of having to "put on a show" to navigate the emotional landscape during interactions on the job. There followed a series of articles that underscored the centrality of emotional displays at work (Rafaeli, 1989; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987, 1990; Sutton, 1991; Sutton & Rafaeli, 1988).

Apart from research on display rules, Hochschild (1979; 1983) further paved the way for future investigations of emotion regulation and emotional labor. This work highlighted two broad processes that employees could use to manage emotions: *surface acting* (managing the expression of, but not the felt, emotion) and *deep acting* (managing or modulating the felt emotion). By the late 1990s and early 2000s, emotional labor had become a major area of study (e.g. Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Brotheridge, 1999; Grandey, 2000, 2003; Morris & Feldman, 1996), and this continues to the present. In this volume, we devote four full chapters to the topic – Chapter 11 on display rules and emotional regulation, Chapter 21 on service encounters, Chapter 22 on emotion management, and Chapter 23 on emotional labor. But here we

[1] This book provides several chapters that cover the diverse array of research methods used to study affect and emotion in organizations. Specifically, Chapters 6 on quantitative methods, 7 on qualitative methods, and 2 on neuroscience collectively cover a plethora of approaches.

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are getting ahead of our story, for by the 1990s, researchers were beginning to stir.

The Psychology of Workplace Emotion: Affectivity and Discrete Emotions

While Hochschild (1979; 1983) may have originally taken a sociological perspective on workplace emotion, her contributions go well beyond any single discipline. An analysis that emphasizes emotional displays, which Hochschild provided, demands a broader look at the causes and consequences of workplace emotion for the workers themselves and for others around them. We mention several works that bridged the passageway from emotional labor primarily being "housed" in sociology, to psychologists recognizing the critical explanatory and applied power of emotional labor concepts in the work setting, emphasizing the very personal nature and outcomes of emotional labor. For example, in 1993 the book *Emotion in organizations*, edited by Fineman, demonstrated this bridge. While the book contained chapters dedicated to emotional labor (James, 1993; Putnam & Mumby, 1993), and a preface by Hochschild (1993), there was much beyond this. There were chapters on discrete emotions, including fear (Flam, 1993) and nostalgia (Gabriel, 1993). In like fashion, Ashforth and Humphrey (1995) also considered research on display rules in the workplace, which by that time was beginning to mature, but these authors added a more general analysis and critique (for a similar but more current view, see Elfenbein, 2007). Also deserving mention is the book *Emotions in the workplace*, edited by Lord, Klimoski, and Kanfer (2002). Its publisher claimed it to be "the first to bring together recent findings in one place and present a solid industrial/organizational research perspective on this complex area of inquiry." Works such as these brought the study of emotions in the workplace to the forefront of inquiry and challenged the "all things cognitive" consensus and paradigm that had primarily prevailed since the cognitive revolution.

Positive and Negative Affectivity

During the 1980s, a number of social–personality psychologists began to take a hard look at the concept of moods. When research participants rated themselves or others on words pertaining to affect, the resulting factor solution produced two dimensions. When this solution was then rotated 45°, the dimensions pertained to two hedonic types of affect – positive affect and negative affect (Tellegen, 1985; Watson & Clark, 1992). In other words, positive and negative feelings were independent of one another (Burke, Brief, George, Roberson, & Webster, 1989). An individual could be high on both, low on both, or high on one and low on the other (Larsen & McGraw, 2011; Larsen, McGraw, & Cacioppo, 2001). From the vantage point of more than three decades later, we have learned to become comfortable with the positive affect/negative affect factor structure. However, at the time it was a counterintuitive breakthrough, providing a conceptual and measurement model for research in organizational psychology and organizational behavior. According to Watson and Clark (1984), positive affect and negative affect were characteristic of both states (temporary fluctuations in mood) and traits (long-term predispositions to feel good or bad)–positive affectivity (PA) and negative affectivity (NA). With some justification, Watson and Tellegen (1985, p. 219) were able to proclaim that "psychology has re-discovered affect."

It is worth noting that the affective circumplex model (Russell, 1980) complicated positive affect and negative affect research. As noted above, the separation of positive from negative affect came from a 45° rotation of affect ratings. However, if these findings were not rotated, then a different solution appeared. There were again two factors. The strong first factor was "hedonic tone" or "pleasantness" (Larsen & Diner, 1992; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). It ranged from

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highly negative, through neutral, to highly positive. The weaker second factor was "intensity" or "activation." It ranged from low intensity to high (Judge & Larsen, 2001). Following from earlier work, organizational scholars have integrated these two solutions – positive affect/negative affect and hedonic tone/intensity – into the affective circumplex, suggesting that mood can be represented by either set of axes (Cropanzano, Weiss, Hale, & Reb, 2003; Grandey, 2008).

With these structural issues addressed, research on workplace affect began to build quickly. For example, Staw, Bell, and Clausen (1986) found evidence for the relationship of trait affect and job satisfaction by doing a retrospective reanalysis of archival data. Using data collected over a near fifty-year timespan, they showed a small but significant relationship between affective dispositions and job satisfaction at several later points in time. Likewise, Cropanzano, James, and Konovsky (1993) found that NA and PA predicted work attitudes, including job satisfaction and organizational commitment. This work has withstood the test of time. In one of the first meta-analyses examining affectivity and job satisfaction, Connolly and Viswesvaran (2000) reported fairly strong relationships between PA and job satisfaction (.49) and NA and job satisfaction (−.33). Later meta-analyses would further document this relationship (Bowling, Hendricks, & Wanger, 2008; Bruk-Lee, Khoury, Nixon, Goh, & Spector, 2009), as well as extending it to other work attitudes (Thoresen, Kaplan, Barsky, Warren, & de Chermont, 2003).

These examples, though well known, only scratch the surface. A large body of research has examined the relations between employee affect and employee performance, in a variety of forms, such as creative performance, task performance, organizational citizenship behavior, and counterproductive work behavior. Isen and Baron (1991; see also Isen 1999) maintained that positive affect predicts creative work behavior, an interesting finding that was later amended. George and Zhou (2002) found that positive moods boosted creative performance among people who were high in clarity of feelings, and who also worked in environments that rewarded and recognized creativity. When employees were low in clarity of feelings, while working in environments that did not reward and recognize creativity, then positive mood was negatively related to creative performance.

Likewise, attention was devoted to the relationship between affect, especially positive, and negotiator behavior. Carnevale and Isen (1986) reported that PA boosted integrative solutions while bargaining. Baron (1990) found that positive moods encouraged bargainers to be more cooperative and less contentious. Furthermore, George (1995) and Barsade (2002) found that positive leader mood promotes leader effectiveness, a finding that is supported by contemporary research (Joseph, Dhanani, Shen, McHugh, & McCord, 2015). There was also a flurry of interest in mood and OCB: some studies found that affectivity was a reliable predictor (George, 1991; George & Brief, 1992; Lee & Allen, 2002), while others were less supportive (Organ & Konovsky, 1989; Williams & Anderson, 1991). Clarifying these matters, a meta-analysis by Kaplan, Bradley, Luchman, and Haynes (2009) found that PA was positively related to job performance ratings and organizational citizenship behaviors, whereas NA was negatively related to these criteria. NA also predicted counterproductive work behavior (for similar findings, see Dalal, 2005). Here we mention a few chapters in our volume specifically relevant to the discussion of affect and performance: Chapter 9 (on emotion and various forms of job performance); Chapter 10 (on affect, creativity and innovation); Chapter 13 (on affect and workplace judgment and decision-making); and Chapter 25 (Performance management and workplace affect).

By the 1990s, research on PA and NA was an important driver of the affective revival. This scholarly interest in affect is reflected throughout

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the present volume; see Chapters 3 (on personality and affect); 4 (workplace affect and motivation); 25 (performance management and workplace affect); 27 (gender and workplace affect); and 32 (happiness in its many forms). However, there was a dark lining to this silver cloud. In a manner of speaking, the two-factor model of affect had become too successful. Research on affect had indeed returned, but research on discrete emotions, specifically, continued to lag (Gooty, Gavin, & Ashkanasy, 2009; Lazarus & Cohen-Charash, 2001; Weiss & Brief, 2001).

Affective Events Theory

Affective events theory (AET) is a general theory of workplace emotion that seeks to describe within-person changes in affective states (Weiss, 2002; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). According to AET, these fluctuations are stochastic. There are regular changes in affect, which oscillate according to describable laws (Weiss & Beal, 2005). They are predictable, though not perfectly so. Individual difference traits are important to AET in that they shape the distribution of affective states, which are experienced by individual workers (Cropanzano, Dasborough, & Weiss, 2017). At a basic level, AET posits a conceptual mismatch within many theories of workplace emotion, in that other theories use a putatively stable feature of the work environment, such as climate or support, to account for an unstable emotional state. As a result, these theories are trying to use a rough constant to account for a predictable change (Weiss & Beal, 2005). A more plausible approach, at least according to AET, is to consider changing workplace stimuli (events) as precursors of affective states. Initial research into the theory was supportive (Weiss, Nicolas, & Daus, 1999; Weiss, Suckow, & Cropanzano, 1999), and various reviews have noted the importance of AET in inspiring investigations of workplace affect, especially discrete emotions (e.g. Ashton-James & Ashkanasy, 2002; Fisher & Ashkanasy, 2000). This focus on discrete emotions, mentioned in the above section as well as here, represents both a lament (on the lack of empirical attention) and an invitation (for future investigations), which we also discuss in our closing chapter.

Given its influence, it is easy to forget that AET was originally developed to better understand job satisfaction (the 1996 article was entitled "An affective events approach to job satisfaction"), placing it squarely within the 1990s research tradition. However, its generality was recognized early on and its applications rapidly expanded to such domains as performance (Beal, Weiss, Barros, & MacDermid, 2005), work stress (Trougakos, Beal, Green, & Weiss, 2008), and leadership (Cropanzano et al., 2017).

There is another aspect of AET that bears mention. Affective events theory places a great deal of emphasis on phenomenal structure. Within the organizational research literature, the distinctions among "affect," "mood," and "discrete emotion," which were discussed earlier, were articulated within the context of AET (e.g. by Weiss, 2002) and extended to levels beyond the individual, as in the study of group affect (e.g. Ilies, Wagner, & Morgeson, 2007), team mood (e.g. Totterdell, 2000), and emotional climate (e.g. Härtel, Gough, & Härtel, 2006).[2] Notably, AET even provided a list of basic emotions, including such states as anger, fear, joy, and the like (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). This helped create interest in discrete emotions, which is evident in the present volume (see especially Chapters 29–35). Additionally, AET emphasized the distinction between "states" and "traits," though this was apparent in other work as well (such as that of Watson & Clark, 1984). In these ways, AET was more than (just) a theory. Rather, the work of Weiss and his colleagues (e.g. Brief & Weiss, 2002; Weiss, 2001; Weiss & Beal, 2005; Weiss

[2] This book also covers levels beyond the individual; see especially Chapters 18 and 28.

& Brief, 2001) helped provide the conceptual infrastructure upon which later workplace emotion research rested.

Emotional Intelligence: Science vs. Practice

A final tradition involves the tortuous history of the study of emotional intelligence (EI). This work is thoroughly reviewed in Chapter 12. For now, we consider its historic emergence over the past few decades. The construct of EI can be defined as an "ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions" (Salovey & Mayer, 1990, p. 189). Though particular models varied, academic research originally understood EI as a set of related abilities pertaining to emotions (for an illustration of early work that helped pave the way for future EI, see Beldoch, 1964; for early construct and definitional clarification, see Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey, 1999; Mayer & Salovey, 1997; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). To date, the most commonly utilized model is the "four branch model," which proposes that emotional intelligence is comprised of four related but distinguishable skills: perceiving emotions, using emotions, understanding emotions, and managing emotions (Salovey & Grewal, 2005, pp. 281–282).

This early research, though relevant to work organizations, was not widely known to organizational scholars until the publication of Goleman's book *Emotional intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ* (1995). This volume and his later publications (e.g. Goleman, 1998; Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002) were written in an accessible and popular style, leading to the commercialization of EI (Landy, 2005). Additionally, Goleman (1998, p. 318) reconceptualized EI, expanding it to include five broad competencies: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Despite the name, this new concept of "emotional" intelligence is about more than emotion. For instance, it includes cognition (self-awareness), behavioral regulation (motivation), and interpersonal skills (social skills). In later work, Goleman et al. (2002, pp. 253–256) adjusted this list somewhat to encompass self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management. They then added three to six facets for each competency, creating a full eighteen dimensions. These dimensions were broad and eclectic, including such diverse things as "service," "initiative," "accurate self-assessment," and "change catalyst."

It is important to recognize that Goleman (1995, 1998) did not simply establish a different model. Rather, this work went so far beyond the original *emotional* focus that Goleman had created a different type of EI, which was substantially broader than the original construct. Consequently, this new family of theories was conceptually distinct from the original EI research. This and related "mixed models" of EI (Daus & Ashkanasy, 2005, p. 455) combined skills, competencies, and personality traits into an ad hoc mix. This approach, the mixed model, has been criticized by researchers (e.g. Ciarrochi, Chan, & Caputi, 2000; Mayer, Roberts, & Barsade, 2008; Murphy, 2006), who are more likely to favor an ability model (Daus & Ashkanasy, 2005; Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey, 2016). However, the mixed models remain popular (cf. Goleman et al., 2002). Despite the concerns with Goleman's (1995, 1998) approach to EI, it does suggest an interesting historical possibility. As we have seen, organizational research was initially slow, almost unwilling, to fully incorporate affect into models of workplace behavior (e.g. Weiss & Brief, 2001). Practitioners filled this lacuna. Being closer to actual workplaces, they appear to have more deeply felt the incompleteness of academic thinking. EI research may not have been perfect, but it appealed to practitioners, especially, and helped fill the

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theoretical void we have discussed regarding emotions in organizational life.

Regardless of its conceptual travails, emotional intelligence remains an important construct. People high in emotional intelligence have better physical health (Martins, Ramalho, & Morin, 2010; Schutte, Malouff, Thorsteinsson, Bhullar, & Rooke, 2007) and report higher well-being (Sánchez-Álvarez, Extremera, & Fernández-Berrocal, 2016). They also appear to be more effective workers, though this depends on how EI is measured. A meta-analysis by O'Boyle, Humphrey, Pollack, Hawver, and Story (2011) found that all types of EI (ability, self-report, mixed models) predicted job performance beyond the effects of cognitive ability and personality.

Conclusion

Reflecting upon our history and with knowledge of the chapters in our volume, we can thus say with some assurance that the study of affect in work organizations has finally arrived. The history and theoretical paradigms we have reviewed here are simply the tip of the iceberg regarding current scholarship on emotions in organizational life. What follows is a series of more detailed and thorough reviews. We conclude simply with an invitation to dive into our offerings and feel confident that you will find much to stimulate your research and applied imaginings.

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