

The Value of Emotions for Knowledge, Edited by Laura Candiotta, Palgrave Macmillan, 2019 (Book Review)

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BOOK REVIEW

The Value of Emotions for Knowledge. EDITED BY LAURA CANDIOTTO. (Cham, CH: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019. Pp. xv + 310. Price, ebook: €85.59; Hardcover: €108.99.)

Philosophy of emotions has become an established sub-discipline of philosophy, and emotions are no longer exclusively seen as disturbances that threaten our rational faculties. Philosophers now take seriously the multi-faceted relation between emotion, knowledge, and reason. Laura Candiotto's edited volume on emotions and their role in epistemic practice brings together texts that look at this relation from different angles and from different traditions. The volume includes texts that zoom in on a wide variety of themes, like agency, emotion regulation, group emotions and social epistemology, cognitive science, and pragmatist accounts of emotions. The book will be interesting not only for those engaging with philosophy of emotions but also for those working on epistemology and philosophy of mind. Some papers are more general, while others focus on problems within specialized debates, but all of the texts are greatly accessible. This makes the volume appealing for both experts in the field and those who are new to philosophy of emotions. Unfortunately, I cannot do justice to the papers in a short book review, but I will try my best to give a brief snapshot of the content of each text.

The first part of *The Value of Emotions for Knowledge* is a helpful introduction by editor Laura Candiotto. She outlines the importance of emotions for epistemic practices and concisely presents the philosophical debate regarding the epistemic role and epistemic status of emotions. This helps to locate the upcoming texts within the philosophical landscape.

Part two of the volume then begins with two texts that focus on the rationality of emotions. Cecilia Mun presents an account of how we can know by virtue of our emotions. By drawing on ideas from Ronald de Sousa and Ruth Millikan, she argues that emotions provide knowledge about the world because the intentionality of emotions gives our emotions knowable content. Raamy Majeed investigates the idea that information encapsulation is crucial for understanding the rationality of emotions. Information processing is encapsulated when it is unaffected by other information in the system. Majeed

argues that although information encapsulation is an important element in a satisfying explanation of emotional processing, it is not necessary for emotion-driven reasoning because emotions can highlight the importance of information without being encapsulated.

Part three of the book comprises three papers that look at the epistemic function of emotions with an emphasis on their embedded and embodied nature. Roberta Dreon presents what pragmatists have to say about emotions. Dreon reconstructs and clarifies the views of John Dewey and George Herbert Mead. The result is a clear picture of the pragmatist approach to emotions that brings to the fore that emotions are a continuous interplay of mind, body, and the social and natural environments. In their contribution, Sam Wilkinson, George Deane, Kathryn Nave, and Andy Clark utilize the cognitive science framework of predictive processing to cast a light on emotions. According to this framework, emotions are constructed from predictions and contribute to the reduction of prediction errors of the whole embodied processing system of the agent. Because of this role, emotions are a vital part of cognition. Dina Mendonca and Joao Saàgua emphasize the role of meta-emotions in reasoning. They argue that the reflexivity of emotions, i.e., emotions about other emotions, is an integral element of emotion regulation, refinement, and correction. Mendonca and Saàgua draw on situated cognition and pragmatism, which makes their text complementary to Roberta Dreon's paper in the same part of the book.

The two papers in part four of the volume focus on the role of emotions for self-understanding. Dave Ward concentrates on the role of emotions for practical reason and agency. Turning elements of David Velleman's influential framework of practical rationality on their heads, Ward argues that we can make better sense of our agency by considering the role of emotions for narrative self-understanding. Owen Earnshaw draws our attention to the connection between the emotion of disorientation and intellectual inquiry. After presenting reasons why disorientation can be considered an emotion, Earnshaw then shows its constructive role. Disorientation motivates inquiry and is conducive to the development of the epistemic virtue of humility.

The texts of part five look at the epistemic role of negative emotions. Michael S. Brady defends the positive value of suffering. According to Brady, suffering is necessary for the increase in wisdom. He shows that suffering contributes to the development and application of components of wisdom, particularly reflectiveness. Pascal Engel explores the link between negative emotions and moral knowledge. Using the work of Jonathan Swift, Engel shows that anger and contempt can convey moral knowledge.

The papers of the last part of the book focus on group emotions and the relation between rationality and moods. Laura Candiotta, drawing on the 4Ecognition approach (embodied, embedded, enactive, extended), investigates the function of emotions for the acquisition of knowledge. By focusing on

participatory sense-making, she argues that emotions are crucial for epistemic cooperation and the quality of social relations between epistemic agents. Anja Berninger looks into the relation between shared emotions and the epistemic activities and states of a group. She argues that shared emotions play a crucial role in the epistemic enterprise of a group because they unite the group into an epistemic subject. In the final text of the book, Anthony Hatzimoysis addresses the overlooked question of whether moods can be rational. He shows that doubts about the intentionality of moods and shortcomings in the view that takes moods to be background feelings cast a sceptical shadow over the rationality of moods.

I hope that the brief summaries give a good idea of the wide ground that is covered by the texts in this collection. The book includes a variety of approaches and perspectives, which testify to the diversity and liveliness of the field. This variety also means that there is much of value for readers coming from various theoretical backgrounds and for everyone who wants to know how epistemology, philosophy of mind, and philosophy of emotion can benefit from one another.¹

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