Perceptual recognition, emotion and value

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Abstract: I outline an account of perceptual knowledge and assess the extent to which it can be employed in a defence of perceptual accounts of emotion and value recognition. I argue that considerations ruling out lucky knowledge give us some reason to doubt its prospects in the case of value recognition. I also discuss recent empirical work on cultural and contextual influences on emotional expression, arguing that a perceptual account of value recognition is consistent with current evidence.

1.   *Distinctive looks and recognitional capacities*

Perceptual knowledge is, I will assume, non-inferential. Familiar cases give us a sense of what this amounts to. Upon arriving home, my knowledge that the door is open is non-inferential whilst my knowledge that my children are (therefore) home is based on an inference. But this distinction can be understood in more than one way. On a psychological understanding, a judgement is inferential if its causal basis involves an inference-like transition between contents. On an epistemic understanding, a judgement is inferential is its epistemic standing depends on the epistemic standing of certain beliefs from which it may be inferred. In what follows I am concerned entirely with epistemic non-inferentiality.

An appealingly simple approach to perceptual knowledge sees it as involving the exercise of a certain type of recognitional or discriminatory capacity.[1] This is the capacity to recognise the way the world is by the way it appears. In the visual case, for example, one sees that *that* is *f* only if one possesses and exercises a capacity to recognise *f*s by the way they look.[2] So, for example, one sees that the object before one is yellow only if one possesses and exercises the capacity to recognise yellow things by the way they look. Similarly, one sees that it is a lemon only if one

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[1] Here I draw on, but cannot hope to do justice to, the subtle work of Alan Millar (2000; Pritchard et al., 2010).

[2] I follow Williamson (2000: Ch.1) in taking seeing that P to be a way of knowing that P.

possesses and exercises the capacity to recognise lemons from the way they look. This capacity will be manifested in one's tending to take things that look that way to be lemons.

Such a recognitional capacity is subjective in the straightforward sense that it concerns a feature of the subject, viz. that they possess a certain capacity. But this subjective requirement on perceptual knowledge brings with it an objective requirement that must be met by the objects of one's knowledge. This is that there must be regularity to the way they look.

Here we can follow Millar (2000) in distinguishing *characteristic* from *distinctive* looks. At a first pass, to say that lemons have a characteristic look is to say that most lemons look a certain way. On the other hand, to say that lemons have a distinctive look is to say that there is a way of looking such that most things looking that way are lemons. In our world, lemons have a look that is both characteristic and distinctive. However, in a world in which lemons are outnumbered by plastic lemon replicas, lemons would have a characteristic look, but not a distinctive look.

To ground perceptual knowledge, recognitional capacities must be responsive to distinctive looks. This ensures reliability and rules out a certain sort of luck.[3] It must be the case that the way things look is a reliable guide to the way they are. So, for example, looking the way that lemons look must be a reliable indication of being a lemon. That is, there must be an l such that most things that look l are lemons. Suppose that a subject were disposed to take things that looked that way to be limes. And further suppose that, on a particular occasion, they saw a lime that happened to be yellow. With the distinctive looks condition in place we can maintain that this subject does not see that (and so know that) the lime before her is a lime. She got lucky, and so lacks knowledge, since most limes do not look that way, despite the fact that on this occasion what she sees is a lime.[4]

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[3] As is widely recognised, some forms of luck are compatible with knowledge (Unger 1968; Pritchard 2007: Ch.5). Although I will not defend it here, I take it to be relatively uncontroversial that the lucky Watkin & Yolandi case discussed in §4 is not so compatible. It is a version of the well-known stopped clock example, and so a case of 'veritic epistemic luck' discussed by Pritchard (2007: Ch.6).

[4] This account might be refined in a number of ways. For example, we might want to set the reliability bar higher than a bare 'most'. For now we can simply use 'most' as

2.   *Emotion Recognition*

As I will use the phrase, *A* recognises *B*'s emotional state *e* when *A* comes to know, through a face-to-face or analogous encounter, that *B* is *e*. For example, upon seeing my daughter's beaming smile, I come to know that she is happy. A natural question to ask is whether such knowledge is ever perceptual?

Philosophers, psychologists, and lay-folk often say something to the effect that one can *see emotion in the face*. Peter Goldie, for example, claims that,

> an expression of emotion, such as a facial expression or an intonation of voice
> […] often yield[s] an immediate and highly reliable grasp of another's
> emotion, and, to a less extent, their mood and character traits. On such
> occasions it is natural to say that we *perceive* embarrassment in the blush, fear
> in the trembling, anguish in the sob, and so forth. (2000: 182)

In a later work, he suggests something similar for traits/attitudes such as friendliness, 'one can *see* the friendliness *in* an action or *in* a facial expression; the knowledge that this person is being friendly is perceptual, and not inferential' (2004: 23). [5]

Such perceptual accounts of emotion recognition can be understood in a number of ways. The most obvious distinction is between the claim that *A* bears the seeing relation to *B*'s emotion, on the one hand, and the claim that *A* sees that *B* is *e*, on the other. The latter, I have suggested, entails that *A* has (visual) perceptual knowledge of *B*'s emotion. This will be my focus. [6]

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a technical term defined as that proportion, whatever it is, required for one's recognitional capacities to reliably deliver truth. Of course, this raises the question of what we mean by 'reliable', but that issue can wait.

[5] Also see (Dretske 1973; McDowell 1982; Cassam 2007: Ch.5; Green 2007; Green 2010; Smith 2010, Smith 2013; McNeill 2012).

[6] As Peter Goldie recognised, a perceptual account alone is likely to account for only the most elementary of knowledge of another's emotional state, for example that they are happy or afraid (cf. Goldie 1999). Anything significantly more sophisticated is

Articulating such a perceptual account in line with the above view of perceptual knowledge would give us something like the following two necessary conditions on emotion recognition,

DL$_e$: For some emotion type e there is a look, l, such that most people that look l are e

RC$_e$: Competent observers can recognise people that are e on the basis of their looking l

That is, if A sees that B is e then there must be some look l such that most things that look l are e, and A must possess and have exercised a capacity to recognise people that are e from their looking l (cf. Millar 2000: 87).[7]

Common-sense surely tells us that both DL$_e$ and RC$_e$ are satisfied, at least for the so-called 'basic' emotions of joy, surprise, fear, anger, disgust and sadness (Ekman & Davidson 1994: Part I). We typically suppose that there are indeed distinctive ways that joyous, surprised, fearful, angry, disgusted, and sad people look. These ways will include certain typical bodily postures and, perhaps most strikingly, certain facial expressions: joyous people smile, angry people frown, and so on. Further, we typically suppose that competent observers are usually adept at recognising when, say, a person is joyous from the way they look (e.g. when they smile). Putting these together, it is entirely in keeping with common sense that, in at least some cases, we take others to be, say, happy in virtue of exercising a capacity to recognise happy people from the distinctive way they smile. Adapting a well-known phrase of Wittgenstein's (1953: Part II, §iv), the human face is the best picture of the human soul.

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liable to require justified beliefs about the expresser's character, etc. Whilst this point is closely related to the issue of context discussed below, I will not pursue it here.

[7] Note that whilst this is a perceptual account of emotion recognition, it does not require that emotions themselves be perceptually manifest. That is, it does not require, although it does allow, that the ways that people look include their emotional states themselves. I argue for this stronger claim about the visual manifestation of some emotional states in (Smith, 2013).

In addition to being a part of common sense, this account accords with a well established tradition in the psychology of emotion. This tradition arguably begins with Darwin's (1872) ground-breaking work but really only became an established, in fact arguably the standard, view in the latter half of the Twentieth Century with the work of Tomkins, Friesen, Izard, and Ekman (see, for example Ekman et al., 1972; Ekman 1972). Summarising Ekman's 'Neurocultural' version of this position, basic emotions are pan-cultural 'affect programmes', automatically triggering particular facial expressions which can be overridden only by culturally varied 'display rules'. These stereotypical facial expressions are universally recognised and associated with their particular basic emotion. As a notable example, the Duchenne smile is the universally recognised indicator of joy and is often claimed to be impossible, or at least very difficult, to fake (Ekman & Friesen 1982).

This view, it would seem, lends some support to both DL_e and RC_e. Keeping with the example of joy, it supports the view that the look of someone exhibiting a Duchenne smile is distinctive of joy, and the claim that competent observers can recognise joyous people on the basis of their looking that way.

In addition, the Neurocultural view can answer a worry about whether DL_e and RC_e cohere in exactly the right way. Ways things look, the values of l, can be more or less determinate. For example, a banana looks yellow, but it also looks a particular shade of yellow; a Duchenne smile involves certain specific muscle actions (specifically, the *zygomatic major* and the *orbiculari oculis*), but of course no two smiles look exactly alike. It is important, given the general account of perceptual knowledge that I am sketching, that the determinacy of l is not significantly lower in RC_e than in DL_e. For if only a certain very determinate look, l_1, were distinctive of fs, yet the typical observer's powers of discrimination were not so fine, effectively classing everything looking l_1–l_n as f, then reliability would be threatened. The Neurocultural view provides some reason to think that this possibility is not realised. The Duchenne smile, for example, is specified at a level of determinacy not so high as to be indiscriminable to a competent observer. Indeed, it is quite natural to suppose that the production and recognition of stereotypical facial expressions have co-evolved (Fridlund 1994; Jack et al., 2012).

The Neurocultural view, then, supports the common-sense picture of some emotions—the basic ones—possessing looks that are both characteristic and distinctive and to which we are sensitive in our recognitional capacities. As such, it

goes some way towards supporting the proposition that at least some cases of emotion recognition satisfy two necessary conditions on perceptual knowledge. This is a highly attractive package combining, as it does, an intuitive account of perceptual knowledge, a common-sense picture of emotion recognition and a significant body of supporting empirical work.

3. Value Recognition

As I will use the phrase, *A* recognises *o*'s evaluative property *v* when *A* comes to know, through a perceptual or analogous encounter, that *o* possesses *v*. Here I assume a broad understanding of evaluative properties to include, for example, being cruel, being offensive, being threatening, being appropriate, etc. So, for example, upon seeing someone pull the wings from a fly, I may come to know that that action was cruel.[8] As with the case of emotion recognition, we can ask whether such knowledge is ever perceptual.

A number of philosophers have recently argued that it is. Concerning an example in which Jack sees Mary being teased, Peter Goldie asks, 'Can Jack *see* that Mary is upset and about to cry, and that this fact, evaluated in this situation, is a reason for him to change the subject?' (2007: 350), answering in the affirmative.[9] This example—in Goldie's terms, a case of *seeing what is the kind thing to do*—is complex, involving the situation as a whole calling for a certain course of action, and much of Goldie's account consists in teasing apart some of this complexity. But Goldie's example might also be thought to support the simpler case in which Jack sees that the teasing of Mary is cruel. Here we have a perceived action instantiating a thick evaluative property. Because of their relative simplicity, I shall focus on cases of this sort.

As with the case of emotion recognition, a perceptual account of value recognition can be construed as involving the following two necessary conditions,

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[8] In speaking of value recognition in this way I am presupposing that there exist values to be known. This is obviously a non-trivial assumption, but I could not possibly defend it here.

[9] Also see, for example, (McGrath 2004; McBrayer 2009; Audi 2010; Cullison 2010).

DL$_v$: For some evaluative property v there is a look, l, such that most actions
that look l are v

RC$_v$: Competent observers can recognise actions that are v on the basis of
their looking l

That is, if A sees that ϕ is v then there must be some look l such that most actions that
look l do so because they are v, and A must possess and have exercised a capacity to
recognise actions that are v from their looking l (cf. Millar 2000: 88).

Unlike the case of emotion recognition neither DL$_v$ nor RC$_v$ enjoy the support
of a widely accepted empirical theory. On the other hand I think it fair to say that
common sense sides with both principles. On the objective side, at a certain level of
determinacy, there is a look that most actions of, for example, pulling the wings from
a fly share. And it is arguably true that most actions looking that way are cruel. On the
subjective side, as Goldie has argued, folk wisdom accepts that we possess capacities
to respond to certain appearances with evaluative judgement and appropriate action.
These capacities are, or are associated with, certain virtues. As McDowell, whose
claim greatly influences Goldie's own account, puts it, '[a] kind person has a reliable
sensitivity to a certain sort of requirement that situations impose on behaviour […]
The sensitivity is, we might say, a sort of perceptual capacity' (McDowell 1979: 331–
332). If this is correct—if both DL$_v$ and RC$_v$ are satisfied—then according the
account of perceptual knowledge outlined in §1, we will be in a position to defend the
claim that some knowledge of evaluative facts is perceptual.

4.   *The explanation of looks*

The account that I have been working with takes the distinctive looks and
recognitional capacities conditions to be necessary for perceptual knowledge. There is
some reason, however, to suppose that they are not jointly sufficient. [10] This is for the
reason that whilst the account of perceptual knowledge, and so both emotion and
value recognition, is intended to secure knowledge from luck, its success on this score

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[10] Indeed, one may be sceptical of the project of providing sufficient conditions on the
possession of knowledge (Williamson 2000).

is questionable. Consider Yolandi, who is unfortunate enough to have her face permanently frozen into a Duchenne smile. Watkin, a competent observer with the requisite recognitional capacities, may see Yolandi at a time when she happens to be amused. Since most people who, in that context, look that way, are amused, and Watkin judges Yolandi to be amused, the two conditions DL_e and RC_e are met. However, it is implausible that Watkin thereby knows Yolandi to be amused. This, plausibly, is for the reason that the way Yolandi looks is not explained by her being amused. Watkin got lucky. Had he seen Yolandi at a different time, a time at which she was not amused, he would have formed the same belief, and would have been wrong. On the assumption that knowledge cannot be lucky in this way, he doesn't know Yolandi's state of mind.

A second, non-luck based, reason to doubt that the two conditions, DL_e and $RC_{e,}$ are jointly sufficient is that, if they were, every way an object looks would potentially ground knowledge of certain necessary truths. For any l it is true that most things that look l are either f or not-f, for any f. It would then be possible, implausibly, to gain knowledge via vision that some object is either f or not-f.

It is relatively easy to avoid these consequences by introducing another necessary condition on perceptual knowledge to the effect that the way the perceived object looks is appropriately explained by the way it is.[11] That is, for S to see that o is f from the way, l, o looks, it must be that o looks l because it is f.[12] Applying this to the case of emotion recognition, we will say that in order for someone to see that another is, say, happy from the observation of their Duchenne smile, it must be the case that they are smiling because they are happy. Whilst I leave this 'because'

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[11] This is not the only response possible, of course. For example, one might argue that one or other safety condition (very roughly: knowledge that P requires that in nearby worlds in which one forms the same belief in the same way, P is true) protects perceptual knowledge from the kind of luck under consideration (cf. Williamson 2000; Pritchard 2007). I take it, however, that no safety principle answers the worry about necessary truths. The condition I propose is consistent with safety.

[12] In a slightly different context, in my (2013) I build such an explanatory condition into a revised version of the distinctive looks condition.

unelaborated, any reasonable construal of it should rule out the sort of luck exhibited in the Yolandi/Watkin example.[13]

It is reasonably plausible to suppose that in a range of cases, this condition is met. When I see that *that* is yellow from the way it looks (i.e. yellow), it is the case that it looks that way because it is yellow. When I see that it is a lemon from the way it looks (i.e. yellow and lemon-shaped), it looks that way because it is a lemon. When I see that a person is amused from the way they look (i.e. exhibiting a Duchenne smile in an appropriate context), they look that way because they are amused.[14]

What about the case of value recognition? Will this meet this 'explanatory connection' condition? I want to suggest that it will not. Actions do not look as they do because they instantiate value properties. Rather, I suggest, the way an act looks is explained by (facts about) the basic visible properties (shapes, colours, etc.) of the agent, the patient, and the surrounding environment. Those facts will, I assume, be explained by further facts about the agent, patient and environment; perhaps including the agent's intentions, the patient's sensitivities, etc. But, I conjecture, at no point in this chain of explanatory relations will we meet the fact that the act is cruel. The closest connection we might find will be that the cruelty of the act and the way the act looks have a common explanation, in the above cited intentions and sensitivities. But this in no way supports the claim that there exists an explanatory relation between them, no more than does the fact that the rising barometer and coming storm have a common explanation support the contention that the rising of the barometer explains the coming of the storm. If this is right, value recognition will not satisfy a plausible necessary condition on perceptual knowledge.

To this is might be responded that I have wrongly assumed that the way that the act looks consists in its basic visible properties (shapes, colours, etc.) rather than

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[13] This condition incorporates into the account of perceptual knowledge something every much like one element of Dretske's (1969) view, viz. that there should be a counterfactual-supporting relation between the ways things are and the ways things look. However, since I have not analysed the 'because' in counterfactual terms, it is not open to exactly the same objections. Of course, any such account will be subject to concerns about deviant explanatory chains. Since I am not offering the above conditions as jointly sufficient, this worry can be side-stepped here.

[14] §5 is, amongst other things, a response to scepticism about this claim.

its evaluative properties themselves. That is, we should allow that acts can, on occasion, literally look cruel; that cruelty can be perceptually manifest. [15] If so, then the claim that the way the act looks (i.e. cruel) is explained by its being cruel will not seem implausible at all.

To answer this objection in a satisfactory way would be a significant undertaking, but let me just sketch my answer. I agree that there is a case to be made for such 'high level' looks as *looking happy* (Smith, 2013). I do not think, however, that they will include *looking cruel* among their number. Any plausible account of high level looks ought to accept that an object possesses such a look in virtue of possessing various low level looks. That is, a person looks happy in virtue of the way their mouth and eyes, for example, look; an action looks cruel in virtue of the ways in which its agent, patient and environment look; and so on. If this is right, and supposing this 'in virtue of' to be explanatory in the relevant sense, then the move to such high level looks achieves nothing. It will still be the case that, in order for the way that the act looks to be explained by its being cruel, it must be that the low level ways it looks must be so explained. And this is exactly what I have suggested is implausible. For this reason, the present account of perceptual knowledge will not support the contention that some of our knowledge of evaluative facts is perceptual.

5.   *Culture and context*

Unfortunately for the perceptual account of emotion recognition outlined in §2, there is growing empirically grounded scepticism towards the Neurocultural view. Furthermore, empirical work threatens not only the theory but also those aspects of common-sense that lend support to DL_e and RC_e, including the view that the explanatory connection proposed in §4 is satisfied.[16] In the present section I outline and, by way of amending both DL_e and RC_e, respond to this empirical challenge.

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[15] Whilst both Millar (2000) and Goldie (2007) are sympathetic to the idea that some cases of value recognition are perceptual, neither would endorse this claim.

[16] Much of the research described in this section relies on attributions of emotional state based on a combination of emotional elicitors and self-report. One might worry that, for a variety of reasons, both are unreliable. Whilst I have some sympathy with

5.1 Cultural variation in emotion expression and recognition

There now exist serious challenges to the claim that basic emotions have pan-cultural expressions that are universally recognised. This claim has typically been supported by cross-cultural matching studies that have found subjects from a variety of cultures to match pictures of stereotypical facial expressions with the predicted basic emotions (e.g. Ekman & Friesen 1971). It is helpful to distinguish two distinct claims: first, that certain distinct facial expressions are universally produced by the basic emotions, second that these facial expressions are universally recognised as so produced. Matching studies lend direct support to the universal recognition hypothesis and indirect support to the universal production hypothesis, via the linking assumption that recognitional capacities have evolved to accurately track the (social) environment.

In a recent analysis of extant studies Nelson and Russell argue convincingly that, 'the matching scores are low, vary with culture and language, and are inflated by method' (2013: 12; also see, Russell 1994; Russell 1997). The only emotion for which there is clear evidential support for the universal recognition claim is joy. So, with the exception of joy, this significantly undermines the empirical support for the universal recognition hypothesis.

Important new work done by Jack and colleagues (2012) challenges the universal expression production hypothesis. From a study comparing emotion recognition in Western Caucasians with East Asians, they conclude that there is, 'clear cultural specificity both in the groups of facial muscles and the temporal dynamics representing basic emotions' (2012: 7242). Via the linking assumption that facial expressions are 'signals designed for communication (and therefore recognition)' (2012: 7242), they conclude that the production of facial expressions, even for putative basic emotions, is culture-specific. This data undermines the universal production hypothesis.

The most obvious conclusion to draw from this empirical work is that emotion production and recognition vary with culture. This does not directly challenge DL_e.

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this concern, for the present purposes I will take the research at face value. We should, of course, be cautious not to overstate any conclusions we might draw from it.

Rather, at most what it challenges is the claim that the basic emotions have *characteristic* looks. That is, whilst this data may challenge the claim that for each of the basic emotions there is a particular way that most people in that emotional state look, it does not challenge the claim that for any given basic emotion there is a look (associated with the stereotypical expression) that is such that most people looking that way are in that emotional state.

Of course, it is *possible* that one or more of those looks that common-sense takes to be stereotypical of the basic emotions are, in fact, produced by different emotions, or no emotion at all, in different cultures. That possibility would threaten DL_e. Whilst there may be no empirical evidence for this suggestion, it is surely epistemically possible. A scenario familiar to epistemologists is that of Fake Barn County, a locality where there are a great many convincing barn facades but very few actual barns. Suppose that Fake Barn County is so richly populated with barn facades that their number is greater than that of real barns elsewhere. It would follow that a certain familiar look is not distinctive of barns. Furthermore, an apparently competent observer would not necessarily be in a position to recognise barns from their look, not if they were in fake barn country.

Exactly similar points might be made about Zombie Planet, a locality in which a great many humans exhibit Duchenne smiles without being joyous (or in any other psychological state). Again, it would seem that if there is in fact such a hitherto undiscovered Zombie Planet, then on the present account we lack the ability to recognise joyous people from the way they look, since it is not true that most humans looking the way in question are joyous.

This threat can, in any case, be diffused by a non ad hoc reformulation of both DL_e and RC_e to include a 'round here' clause. Surely what such examples show is not that our knowledge might be limited in this way, but that our analysis needs refining. What matters is whether *round here*, in our current locality, joyous people have a distinctive look, and whether competent observers can recognise joyous people *round here* by their looking that way.[17] Such a reformulation of both DL_e and RC_e allows us to respond to the threat posed by the cultural variety of facial expression. For, in this

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[17] Cf. Millar, 'When we claim that someone can run a mile in five minutes, we don't mean *can run a mile in five minutes no matter what the conditions and circumstances*.' (2010: 167–168)

case, we are at liberty to interpret 'round here' as meaning 'within our culture'. The resulting account of emotion recognition will be explicitly culture specific, but it will be no less perceptual for that.

5.2 Scepticism about emotional expression

Even if the universality claim is dropped, a recognisable variant of the Neurocultural view would maintain that, at least within certain cultures, there are basic emotions that produce stereotypical facial expressions. This, along with the assumption that such facial expressions are not, at least to any great extent, produced by any other, non-emotional means, would support the claim that within cultures some emotions have distinctive looks. These more limited claims have, however, been subject to various challenges. At the most radical, Fridlund (1994; 1997) claims that there is little evidence for, and significant evidence against, the view that emotions produce facial expressions.

Playing a central role in Fridlund's case for this sceptical view are considerations of the evolutionary function of facial expression. For example, he claims that evolutionary pressures dictate that, contrary to the Neurocultural view, '[d]isplayers must not signal automatically, but only when it is beneficial to do so, that is, when such signalling serves its motives [...] Automatic readout [...] would be extinguished early in phylogeny' (Fridlund 1994: 132). According to Fridlund, not only does this tell against the Neurocultural view, it supports his own Behavioural Ecology account according to which stereotypical facial expressions are not caused by emotions but rather, 'are declarations that signify [...] what we will do in the current situation, or what we would like the other to do.' (Fridlund 1994: 130).[18] On this view, it is not emotional factors but rather 'social motives' that determine emotional expression. Obviously, if true, this would undermine both DL_e and RC_e.

However, Fridlund's evolutionary case is less than compelling. To begin with, 'being beneficial' is not the same as 'serving motives'. Since I can be wrong about my environment, something can benefit me in unexpected ways. This is a point familiar from debates on the nature of well-being, and the standard reason for rejecting the crudest preference satisfaction accounts. Thus it may be that

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[18] For a related view from the philosophical literature, see (Griffiths 2003).

automatically expressing, and thereby making known, my emotions brings me benefits despite not serving my immediate 'motives'. Furthermore, it is far from obvious that benefits accrue, and selection occurs, as Fridlund's argument presupposes, at the level of the organism (Sober 1984: Part II). Group selection might well favour the automatic expression of, and so sharing of information about, emotional states, for obvious reasons.

There is also some evidence against Fridlund's claim that expressions are never or rarely indicative of emotions. As mentioned above, and as Fridlund (1994) accepts, it is plausible that the production and recognition of facial expressions have co-evolved. Thus, it would be surprising, so in need of explanation, if facial expressions have evolved to express social motives without being typically recognised as such. It is evidence against Fridlund's view, then, that emotion, not social message, is overwhelmingly attributed on the basis of facial expression (Horstmann 2003).[19] Whilst these considerations are obviously not conclusive, I will nevertheless treat them as reason enough to set aside the challenge to DL_e and RC_e posed by Fridlund's Behavioural Ecology view.[20]

5.3 Contextual influence on expressive behaviour

As Fridlund points out, '[i]f displays simply read out fundamental emotions [...] then [...] displays should largely be a function of emotional elicitors [...] if displays serve social motives [...] then [...] their occurrence should be a function not only of the proximal elicitors, but of those who are present, one's aims toward them, and the context of the interaction.' (Fridlund 1994: 145). This suggests a moderate line according to which facial expressions are sometimes produced by emotions, sometimes by social factors, perhaps more often by a combination of the two. In fact there is evidence that in naturalistic settings contextual, predominantly social, factors

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[19] Indeed, the fact that people do take expressive behaviour to be produced by emotion, suggests that there will develop a practise of *using* stereotypical facial expressions to communicate their emotional states, even if that expressive behaviour is not automatic (Parkinson, et al., 2005: 169).

[20] For a philosophical attempt to combine elements of Fridland's and Ekman's positions, see (Green 2007: Ch.5).

have a significant influence on facial expression (Fernández-Dols & Crivelli 2013; Fernández-Dols & Ruiz-Belda 1997).

First, a number of naturalistic studies report weak correlations between emotion (as determined by the emotion-eliciting context or by self-report) and predicted facial expression. For example, subjects experiencing surprise do not tend to display the stereotypical surprise expression (Schützwohl & Reisenzein 2012), nor do subjects self-reporting even intense joy tend to display Duchenne smiles (Reisenzein et al., 2013). Further, naturalistic studies of bowlers, athletes and football fans, all in joy-eliciting situations, indicate that many smiles occur at socially interactive moments, but very few occur during non-interactive periods, despite no self-reported change in emotional intensity (see Fernández-Dols & Ruiz-Belda 1997; and Fernández-Dols & Crivelli 2013 for discussion). This is the so-called 'audience effect' on facial expression.[21]

As interesting as these studies are, they do not directly challenge the present account of emotion recognition. What they challenge is, once more, the claim that certain emotions have *characteristic* looks, but that is no part of the account. The falsity, for example, of the claim that most joyous people smile, is not of immediate concern. For we can accept this whilst nevertheless maintaining that there is some way of looking such that most people looking that way are joyous.

Potentially more troublingly, a pair of recent studies have shown that people display more Duchenne smiles when engaging in a cooperative task than when engaging in a task that is non-cooperative. Whilst being on the receiving end of such cooperative Duchenne smiles increases one's self-reported joy, these studies showed no robust correlation between the expresser's own happiness and Duchenne smiling (Mehu et al., 2013; Mehu et al., 2007). This, it would seem, motivates the thought that, 'the Duchenne marker could advertise altruistic intentions' (Mehu et al., 2013: 421) which, in turn, suggests that, far from being distinctive of joy, the Duchenne smile is distinctive of something else, the desire to cooperate or, to put it another way, friendliness.

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[21] The audience effect, whilst undeniable, cannot plausibly explain all the data, since there is evidence that, in fact, subjects pull more 'sad' faces when alone (Jakobs, et al., 2001).

It is important, however, not to overstate the significance of this for the perceptual account of mindreading, and for two reasons. First, friendliness (here conceived as a positive attitude towards others, including a willingness to join in or cooperate) is one of the examples from Peter Goldie with which we started. His claim was that, 'one can *see* the friendliness *in* an action or *in* a facial expression' (2004: 23). It seems, then, that the present reason to doubt the truth of DL_e with respect to joy is, at the same time, a reason to suppose that DL_e may be true for friendliness.[22]

Second, what this work suggests is that within certain contexts Duchenne smiles are produced by friendliness and not joy. It does not show, however, that this is so for the majority of Duchenne smiles, considered in every context. It says nothing, for example, about the production of Duchenne smiles by audiences at comedy shows. In fact, there is indeed evidence that Duchenne smiles are, as one would expect, correlated with (comic) amusement (Reisenzein et al., 2013). Amusement is not the same as joy. Amusement, we might say, is an appropriate response to the funny, whereas joy is an appropriate response to things going well (for one). However, the above indicates that we should be careful not to suppose that the evidence supports the claim that there are *no* contexts in which most people displaying a Duchenne smile are doing so because they are joyous.

Despite these caveats, it remains that we have here a serious challenge to the bare claim that most people 'round here' that look the way associated with displaying a Duchenne smile do so because they are joyous, or friendly, or amused.

5.4 Contextual influence on emotion attribution

Not only does context affect the facial expressions we make, it also affects the emotion that observers are disposed to attribute to expressers and does so in two ways. First, the context in which the expresser is observed plays a role in the emotion attributed. Second, the context in which the observation and attribution is made can play a similar role.[23] Since Lev Kuleshov's famous experiment in the early Twentieth

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[22] See (Mehu et al., 2007) for evidence relevant to RC_e formulated for friendliness.

[23] There are also intermediate cases, a good example being film music, which affects emotion attribution whilst occupying an ambiguous position between the context of the actor and that of the viewer. Such cases are very interesting, however for

Century, filmmakers have known that editing technique can imbue a neutral face with emotional content (see Wallbott 1988; Mobbs et al., 2006). The same face can, when cut with different shots, seem either caring or lusty, for example.[24] That is, the context in which someone appears, whether that context be at a time, as with still pictures, or over time, as is made possible by film, has an effect on the emotional state observers are disposed to attribute.

The second way in which context affects attribution is perhaps less familiar but is no less significant. It has been found that, in the lab, the likelihood of a face being judged as either disgusted or angry varies with previous faces seen (Yik et al., 2013). That is, a face displaying the characteristic disgust expression is much more likely to be judged as a disgust face if the observer has previously seen an angry face; otherwise it is more likely to be judged as an anger face. This effect concerns not the context of the face seen, but the observational context of the attributor.

On the assumption that these varying contexts do not have the effect of literally changing how the perceived person/face *looks*, these studies challenge RC_e. For what they suggest is that competent observers may lack a stable disposition to judge those looking l to be e. Our dispositions are, rather, blown by the winds of context.

5.5 Distinctive looks, recognitional capacities and context

We have then, a series of empirical challenges to the perceptual account of emotion recognition outlined in §2. Whilst cultural variation can be accommodated by a 'round here' clause, this is not so for the effects of 'local' context on expression and recognition. A defender of the perceptual account of emotion recognition must show how it is consistent with these empirical studies. This can be done by incorporating a contextual element into both DL_e and RC_e.

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simplicity I set them aside. The distinction in the text between the context of the expresser and that of the observer is, in some respects, artificial but this is harmless for present purposes.

[24] Alfred Hitchock presents this example in his well-known 'definition of happiness' interview, during his description of what he there calls 'pure cinematics'.

DL_e claims that for some emotion type e there is a look, l, such that (round here) most people that look l do so because they are e. The particular example I have been using is the look associated with the display of a Duchenne smile. The worry is that contrary to a common-sense understanding of the relation between joy and smiling this look is not, in fact, distinctive of joy.

If context plays such a role in both the production of expressive behaviour and the attribution of emotional states to others on the basis of their expressive behaviour, then the account must be adjusted to allow for this. The most obvious way to achieve this would be along the following lines:

> ***DL_e****: For some emotion type e, and some context c, there is an l such that most things (round here) that look l in c are e

> ***RC_e****: Competent observers can recognise people that are e (round here) on the basis of their looking l in c

This makes explicit something indicated, but not articulated, in Millar's original discussion. There he suggests that his perceptual account might have application to some knowledge of others' psychological states.

> What is required for us to be able to tell that someone is expressing anxiety from the way he looks is that there should be looks which are (nearly enough) distinctive of expressions of anxiety. It is plausible that this condition is met since it is plausible that there are demeanours which, *in suitable contexts*, are (nearly enough) distinctive of expressions of anxiety (Millar 2000:87, my emphasis)

What Millar takes here to be a plausible thought about expression might have been thought to be undermined by the empirical studies mentioned above. I suggest, however, that the combination of DL_e* and RC_e*, explicitly including a contextual parameter, can nicely handle the evidence on both cooperative smiling and the effects of the expresser's context on attribution. The thought is that attributors are sensitive to the context in which Duchenne smiles are produced. In particular, they are sensitive to the difference between cooperative, amusing and joyous contexts.

If the above hypothesised correlations between emotional states, emotional expressions and contexts exist, and if perceivers' recognitional capacities are robust in tracking such correlations, then the perceptual account of emotion recognition can accommodate a good deal of the above empirical evidence concerning the effect of contextual factors (including, for example, the Kuleshov effect). So, if it is the case that, in amusing contexts most people exhibiting Duchenne smiles are amused, and that competent perceivers can recognise amused people by their exhibiting that look in such contexts then, in that way, it may be that they attain perceptual knowledge that another is amused. Of course, that there are such correlations and that perceivers have such recognitional capacities is an empirical hypothesis and, as such, is open to refutation. Nevertheless, it is an entirely natural supposition.

There remains, however, a worry. For the evidence concerning the effect of the *perceiver's* context on attribution might be taken to show that perceivers, in fact, lack the stable dispositions to attribute emotions based on looks in contexts that RC_e* requires. If our disposition to attribute a given emotional state to a subject depends on the order in which faces have been presented (Yik et al., 2013), then it would seem that our emotion attributions may be subject to systematic variation not matched on the objective side (i.e. by the relation between emotions and looks). This, it might be insisted, is not answered by the above incorporation of context into the perceptual account, since the relevant context is that of the attributor not the attributee.

This is not a serious concern, however. In fact, the explicit inclusion of context into DL_e* and RC_e* does significantly answer this empirical worry, for the study in question concerns the attribution of emotional states to contextlessly presented faces. What the study suggests is that when presented with a *context-free* face, our attribution of emotion to it can vary according to our own context. What the study *does not* show is that the same is true of faces presented in emotion-relevant contexts. For example, the study gives us no reason to suppose that our attribution of friendliness to a person exhibiting a Duchenne smile in a cooperative situation so varies.

6. Conclusion

The simple perceptual accounts of emotion and value recognition presented by Goldie, and drawing on Millar, rely on there being stable, explanatory connections

between emotions/values, looks, and recognitional capacities. In §4 I argued that the explanatory condition presents a problem for the account of value recognition. Since actions do not look as they do because they instantiate value properties, there is some reason to think that we cannot use the present account of perceptual knowledge as an account of value recognition. In §5 I raised a different worry for the account of emotion recognition. Whilst the account sits well with the neuro-cultural view of emotional expression, there is some reason to doubt that view. Recent empirical work on emotional expression suggests that the relations between emotional states, on the one hand, and expressive behaviour are not as tight as the neuro-cultural view might lead us to suppose. The perceptual account can, however, be defended by incorporating both locality and context into its two principle claims. Despite the various effects of context on emotional expression and recognition, it still seems plausible that some of our knowledge of others' emotional states is genuinely perceptual.[25]

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[25] Thanks to Ann Whittle for pointing out many confusions in earlier drafts, and also to audiences at two conferences, both held in Manchester. One was a celebration of the work of Peter Goldie, the other a part of the *Knowledge of Emotion* project, in which Peter was intended to play a major role. I didn't get the opportunity to show this paper to Peter but, had I, I imagine that he would have gently told me that it was 'very interesting'.

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