



The Oxford Handbook of Evolution and the Emotions

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FRONT MATTER

Introduction to *The Oxford Handbook of Evolution and the Emotions*

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Welcome, dear readers, to *The Oxford Handbook of Evolution and the Emotions* (TOHEE). This book approaches the science of emotion from an evolutionary perspective, collecting key advances from the last few decades in a single volume.

The book is divided into four sections as follows:

Part 1 outlines different ways of approaching emotions from an evolutionary perspective.

Part 2 discusses specific emotions. Chapter topics range from romantic love, pride, and happiness, through shame, anger, and jealousy, to gratitude, kama muta, and compassion.

Part 3 details the role emotions play in many domains of life, including the challenges and opportunities that we encounter on a daily basis – cooperation, intergroup conflict, reconciliation, politics, morality, motivated reasoning, emotion regulation, status hierarchy navigation, illness, the legal system, emotions in nonhuman animals, and more.

Part 4 explores the link between emotions and psychopathology from an evolutionary perspective. This section deals with specific psychological disorders, such as borderline personality disorder, narcissistic personality disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, and depression. Crucially, it also asks key theoretical questions about how best to conceptualize disorders, and what light evolutionary thinking can shed on this important issue.

Traditionally, the social sciences have been proximate in their focus, largely restricting themselves to “how” questions about mechanism and development while typically ignoring the “why” questions about evolution and biological function. In keeping with this volume’s evolutionary approach, its authors give both the proximate and the ultimate levels of analysis their due, addressing both the “hows” and the “whys” of emotion science. This allows for a deeper understanding of emotions and enables us to move toward a more comprehensive science of the mind.

Together, the 67 chapters in this book represent the state of the art in evolutionary approaches to affective science. The chapters offer a stimulating mix of theoretical insights and empirical findings that we hope will inspire new research and prove useful to scholars in a number of fields: psychology, psychiatry, biology, anthropology, sociology, behavioral economics, comparative research, and any discipline whose subject matter touches on emotions in some way.

p. xxii We put this book together now because the time is ripe for an overview of the field. Emotion research, especially that inspired by evolutionary thinking, has made huge strides over the past few decades. It is gratifying to see how well the scientific method works: we know so much more about emotions in humans and in other species than we did 20 or 30 years ago! At the same time, many questions remain unanswered, and different theoretical perspectives still need to be integrated – or to battle it out in the empirical arena. Emotion research is a young area within a broader science, psychology, that is itself still maturing.

Before we close, I would like to acknowledge that this book is the fruit of a massive collaborative undertaking, and to thank the dozens of authors who contributed their expertise and knowledge to this volume. *The Oxford Handbook of Evolution and the Emotions* boasts close to 70 cutting-edge entries by more than 100 experts in fields ranging from anthropology to zoology. It has been a distinct pleasure to see science and scholarship practiced in such a collaborative, international, and cross-disciplinary manner. This book would not exist without the hard work and perspicacity of these authors.

This volume, then, seeks to accomplish two objectives: document the explosion of new knowledge over the past few decades, and pose key questions about where the field should go next. This is an exciting time for emotion science, and a propitious moment to take stock of our field. We hope you enjoy reading this book as much as we enjoyed putting it together.