

“Gestalt for Future – Creating a Network for Research” Gestalt
Research Conference in Hamburg 2022/09/02 14:15 – 15:15h



Mini-lecture 4: Beyond Effectiveness Research – Using “What is There” Now

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Relevance of basic research



- 1) We have to be able to **use language** that decision-makers from other paradigms can understand.
- 2) **Compatibility** with existing other theories from other research paradigms and disciplines is an important quality criterion (construct and concurrent validity).

Especially valuable:

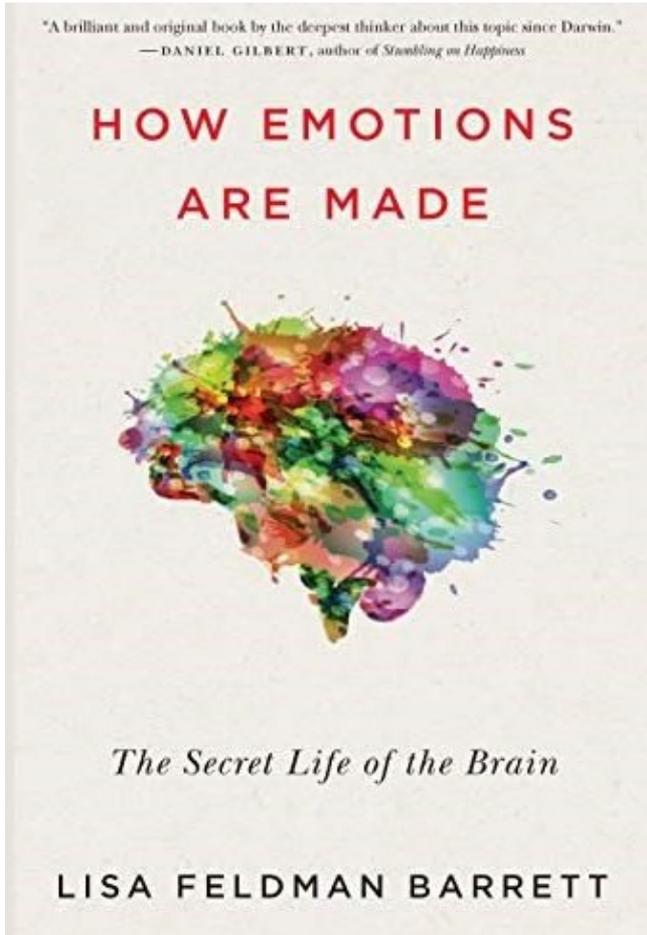
- Researchers who have **little contact with Gestalt** therapy
- Converging results
- Contradictory results

Helpful sources



1. New genre of popular books in which successful researchers introduce their research programs in understandable language.
2. Handbooks in which leading experts compile the most noteworthy discussions.
3. Secondary analyses of existing data (more difficult)

We have more than enough high quality research, we just have to make use of it!



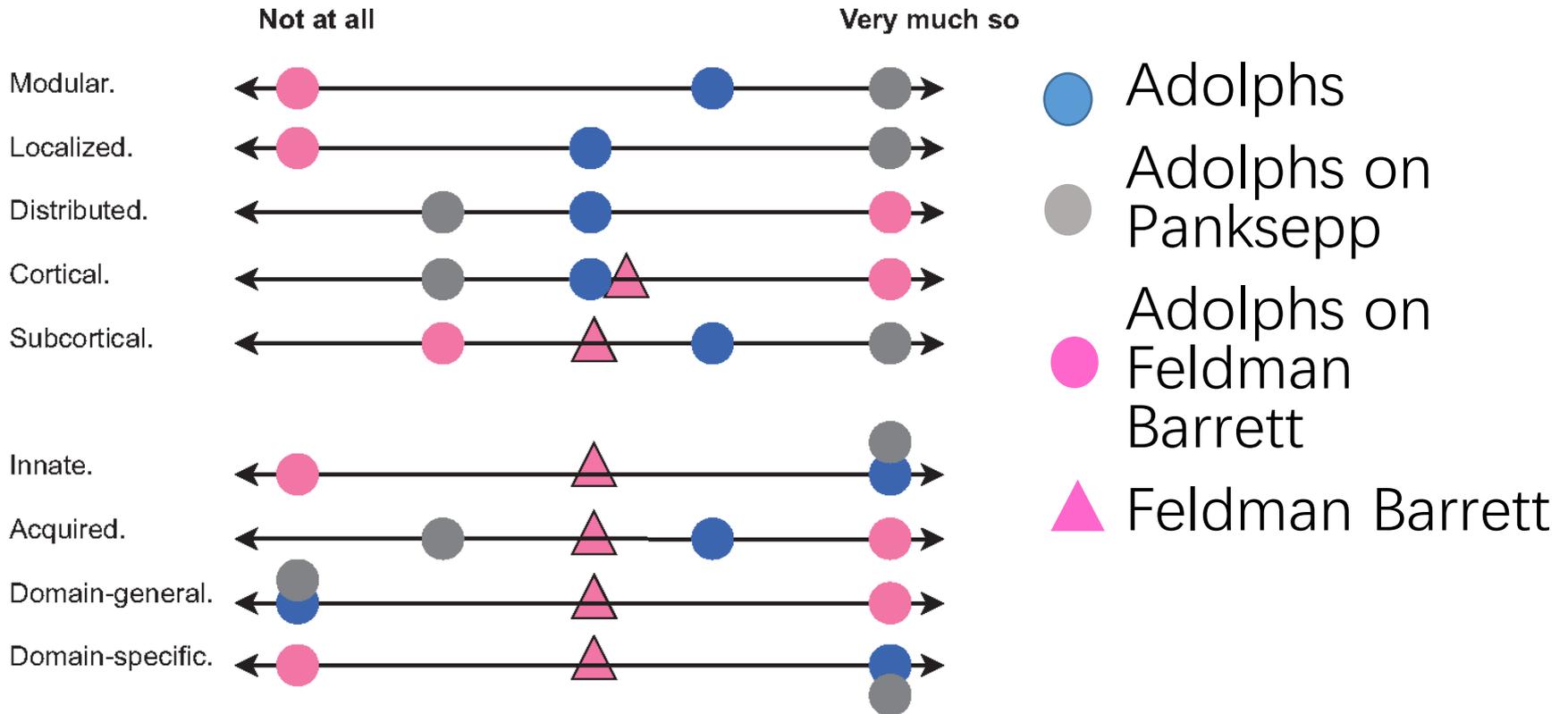


“Perceptions of emotion are **guesses**, and they’re ‘correct’ only when they match the other person’s experience; that is, both people agree on which concept to apply. Anytime you think you know how someone else feels, your confidence has nothing to do with actual knowledge. You’re just having a moment of affective realism.”



“I speculate that your **self** is constructed anew in every moment by the same predictive, core systems that construct emotions, including our familiar pair of networks (interoceptive and control), among others, as they categorize the **continuous stream of sensation** from your **body and the world.**”

(Mis-)understanding?



Adolphs, R. (2017). How should neuroscience study emotions? By distinguishing emotion states, concepts, and experiences. *Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience*, 12, 24-31. <https://doi.org/10.1093/scan/nsw153>



"Insightful and important, *Mindwise* is one of the best books of this or any other decade."
—Daniel Gilbert, Bestselling author of *Stumbling on Happiness*

Mindwise

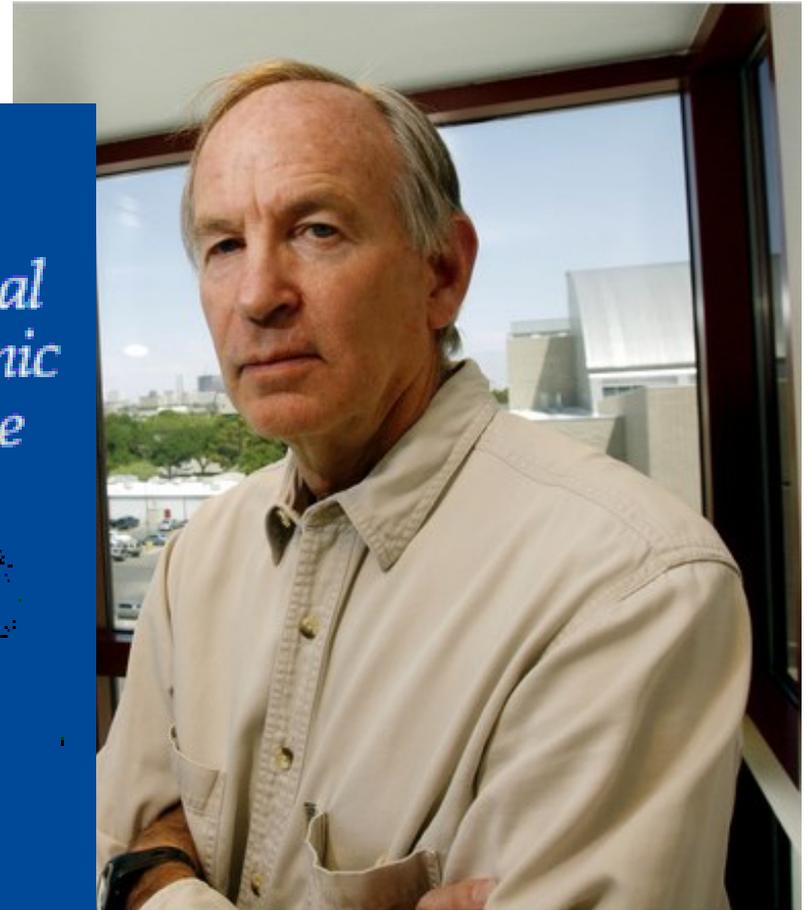
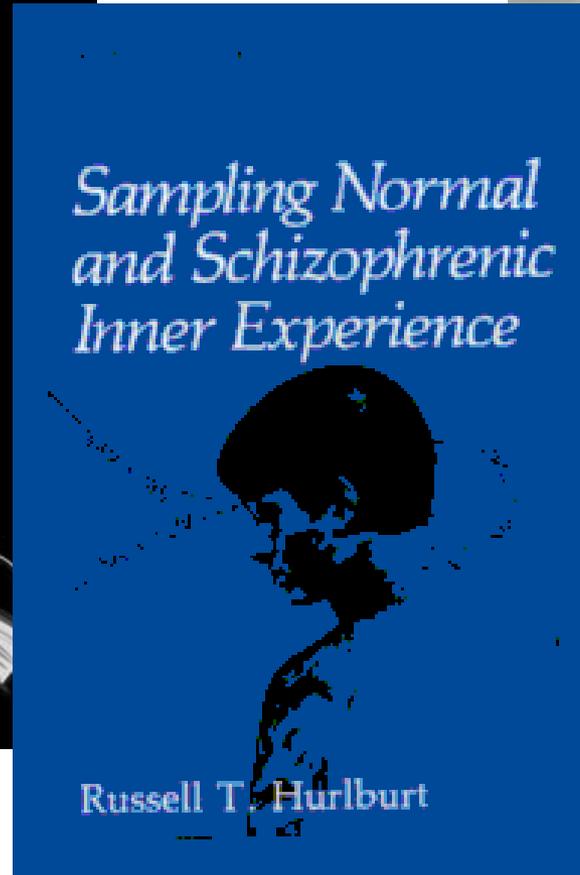


Why We Misunderstand
What Others Think, Believe,
Feel, and Want

Nicholas Epley



Russel T. Hurlburt





“The DES tries to be completely ‘open-beginninged’ (in contrast to open-ended), in the sense that there are no concrete expectations about what the person would report and what should be found. An open-beginninged question would be: ‘Tell me about your experience, if any, whatever it happened to be.’”



“People process input from **multiple modalities** at once, but most of that does **not become a recognizable** part of their stream of experience.”

“Translation” example (1)



Example from Bernhardt & Singer (2012, p.1)

“Empathy related insular and cingulate activity may reflect domain-general computations representing and predicting feeling states in self and others, likely guiding adaptive homeostatic responses and goal-directed behavior in dynamic social contexts.”

“Translation” example (2)



Example from Bernhardt & Singer (2012, p.1)

“Empathy related **insular and cingulate activity** may reflect **domain-general computations** representing and predicting feeling states in self and others, likely **guiding adaptive homeostatic responses and goal-directed behavior** in **dynamic social contexts.**”

“Translation” example

Example from Bernhardt & Singer (2012)



insular and cingulate activity -> brain activities
domain-general computations

-> general sediments

guiding adaptive homeostatic responses and
goal-directed behavior

-> regulate our body and behavior

dynamic social contexts

-> constantly changing lifeworld.



[Empathy relates to brain activities] that possibly reflect general sediments which help to understand and predict feeling states in ourselves and others, and which are very likely existing to regulate our body and behavior within a constantly changing lifeworld.



[Empathy] possibly reflects **general sediments** which helps to understand and predict feeling states in ourselves and others, and which are very likely existing **to regulate our body and behavior** within a **constantly changing lifeworld**.



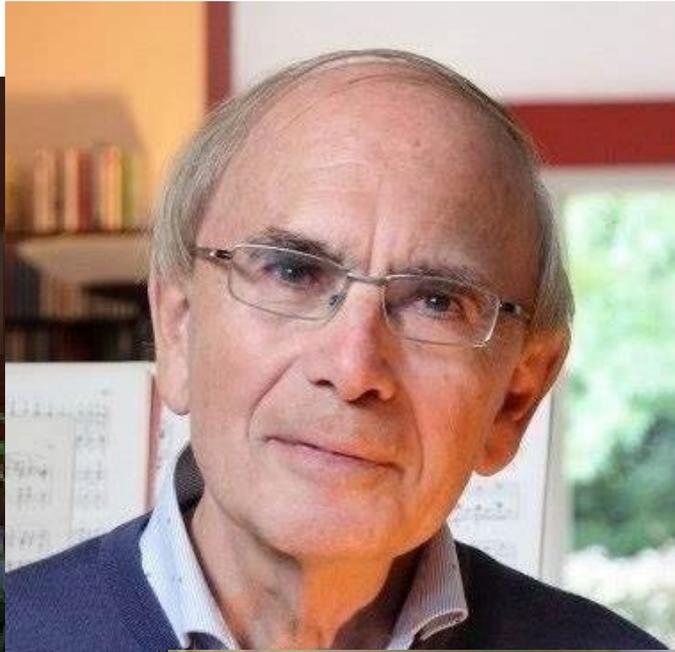
[Empathy] possibly reflects our personal life background which helps to understand and predict feeling states in ourselves and others, and which are very likely existing to regulate our body and behavior within a constantly changing lifeworld.



[Empathy] possibly reflects our personal life background which helps to understand and predict feeling states in ourselves and others, and which are very likely existing regulate our body and behavior [needs] within a constantly changing lifeworld.



[Empathy] possibly reflects our personal life background which helps to understand and predict feeling states in ourselves and others, and which are very likely existing regulate our body and behavior [needs] within an constantly changing organism/environment field.



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Die Änderungen an der Story wurden erfolgreich gespeichert!

Donnerstag, 17. Juni 2021

Similar representations of self and other in the brain

ahc, 08:26h

"[I]t is interesting to note that our ability to represent our own thoughts and represent another's thoughts are intimately tied together and may have similar origins within the brain. The fact that there seems to be a partial overlap between self-processing and processing of others fits well with the old adage of 'putting ourselves in another person's shoes?.' (p. 532)

Decety, J., & Sommerville, J. A. (2003). Shared representations between self and other: A social cognitive neuroscience view. *TRENDS in Cognitive Sciences*, 7 (12), 527-533. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tics.2003.10.004> 

... [comment](#) ... [bearbeiten](#)

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März

Januar

Latest

Similar representations...
"[I]t is interesting to note that our ability to represent...

by ahc (2022.09.01, 12:00)

"I-Sharing" alias "ego...
In circles of experimental
existential psychology,...

by ahc (2022.01.21, 10:39)

How our consciousness...
"As you embark on this

Challenges



- How to structure the results better?
- How to let more people participate?
- How to make it more available?
- How to connect it better with the Gestalt compendium?

Annotated Bibliography



Mini-lecture 4
Annette Hillers-Chen

Beyond Effectiveness Research – Using “What is There” Now

presented at the “Gestalt for Future – Creating a Network for Research” Gestalt Research Conference in Hamburg 2022/09/02 14:15-15:15h

Annotated Bibliography

Rusel Hurlburt’s research program
on inner experience and the descriptive experience sampling method (DES)

Website featuring a lot of open-source literature: <http://hurlburt.faculty.unlv.edu/>

Hurlburt, R. T. (1990). *Sampling normal and schizophrenic inner experience*. Plenum Press. [structured findings on the experience of schizophrenia using DES]

Hurlburt, R. T. (1993). *Sampling inner experience in disturbed affect. Emotions, Personality, and Psychotherapy*. Springer US. [bottom-up findings of how “disturbed affect” feels]

Hurlburt, R. T., & Schwitzgebel, E. (2007). *Describing inner experience? Proponent meets skeptic*. MIT Press. [insightful discussion on whether reliable introspection is possible]

Kühn, S., Fernyhough, C., Alderson-Day, B., & Hurlburt, R. T. (2014). Inner experience in the scanner: Can high fidelity apprehensions of inner experience be integrated with fMRI? *Frontiers in Psychology*, 5, 1393. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2014.01393> [validation of a phenomenological method with an fMRI method]

Lisa Feldman Barrett’s research program
on the constructed theory of emotion (and self and awareness)

Barrett, L. F. (2017). *How emotions are made: The secret life of the brain*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. [readable introduction about her constructed theory of emotion as predictions]

Barrett, L. F. (2020). *Seven and a half lessons about the brain*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. [“Your brain is not for thinking”]

Barrett, L. F., Niedenthal, P. M., & Winkielman, P. (2005). *Emotion and consciousness*. Guilford. [all authors in this editorial have to explicate their understanding of consciousness, unconsciousness, and awareness – though several actually do not answer this question...]

Adolphs, R. (2017). How should neuroscience study emotions? By distinguishing emotion states, concepts, and experiences. *Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience*, 12(1), 24–31. <https://doi.org/10.1093/scan/nsw153> [showing that even within the neurosciences there is misunderstanding about each other’s ideas]

Tania Singer’s and research program
on the neurosciences of empathy and compassion

ReSource Project: <https://taniasinger.de/the-resource-project/> [main ingredients of her compassion training are presence, affect, and perspective-taking]

Compassion training: <http://www.compassion-training.org/> [free downloadable ebook with many stimulating exercises and summaries of her scientific results]

Bernhardt, B. C., & Singer, T. (2012). The neural basis of empathy. *Annual Review of Neuroscience*, 35, 1–23. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-neuro-062111-150536> [summary explaining her distinction between empathy and passion, my “translation” example was taken from this paper]



Nicholas Epley’s research program
on social cognition (“how thinking people think about other thinking people”)

Website featuring many open-source articles: <https://www.nicholasepley.com/>

Eyal, T., Steffel, M., & Epley, N. (2018). Perspective mistaking: Accurately understanding the mind of another requires getting perspective, not taking perspective. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 114(4), 547–571. <https://doi.org/10.1037/pspa0000115> [article showing experimentally that perspective getting is a better strategy than perspective taking]

Epley, N. (2014). *Mindwise: How we misunderstand what others think, believe, feel, and want*. Vintage Books. [readable introduction to his main stream of research]

Hubert Herman’s Dialogical Self Theory (DST)
within the greater field of narrative psychology

Hermans, H. J. M. (2022). *Liberation in the face of uncertainty*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108951074> [extension of DST introducing “dialogical flexibility”]

Hermans, H., & Hermans-Konopka, A. (2010). *Dialogical Self Theory*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511712142> [most comprehensive description of his theory]



For more, occasionally try my blog:
<https://restaltbites.blogspot.de/>



Want to join/contribute/feedback?
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Disclaimer: By providing the citations above I simply try to help corroborate the tenets of Gestalt therapy as an idealistic goal. I am not affiliated with any of the authors above and do not receive any monetary benefits from citing their work. Why citing them and not others? Because their work for whatever reason has caught my limited attention...





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Thank you!