Today

- Emotional experience
- Emotional expressions
- Culture and emotion

Emotion

Intro Psychology
Georgia Tech
Instructor: Dr. Bruce Walker

Emotional Experience

- “Feeling sad” is not the same as “feeling an itch”
- Emotions are too complex to categorize easily
- But very real, shared experience

Theories of Emotion

- “Common sense”
  - Event, interpretation, emotion, action
  - Lose money, get angry, so shout

Theories of Emotion

- James-Lange Theory
  - Event, action, emotion resulting from action
  - Lose money, shout, get angry from shouting
  - Problems:
    - Speed of emotions >> speed of autonomic nervous system (see Cannon)

Theories of Emotion

- Attribution-of-arousal
  - Like James-Lange theory, but more cognitive, *not* focused on autonomic nervous reaction
  - Body arousal contributes raw materials, which are then interpreted, molded into emotion by cognitive appraisal
  - Amygdala plays role in emotional appraisal
Expressing Emotions

• Important element in relationships and interpersonal/social interactions
• Cross-cultural commonalities
  – Many have behavior/biological roots
    • e.g., “blech!” face = disgust, and spitting food
• Cultural display rules can modify universality of expressions

Categorizing Emotions

• Is this possible?
  (compare to taste, and to smell)
• “Basic Emotions”
  – Fear, anger, happiness, sadness?
  – Pain, pleasure?
  – Surprise, anger, sadness, disgust, fear, contempt?
• What is “basic”, anyway? Some receptor for them?
• Effects of culture are profound, as well!

• ? How can one study this complex subject?

Upcoming

• Social context
• Psychopathology