

About-Face: Rethinking Emotions

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wbur:

Nearly a half-century ago, a psychologist named Paul Ekman set out to see if human beings, from Papua New Guinea to Pittsburgh, showed emotions in the same way.

He went around the world, showing photographs of faces and asked people to identify the emotions shown: fear, sadness, anger, disgust, surprise. What he found, in short, was that emotions are universal.

It became one of the most recognized psychological works in the world. The findings are in the first chapter in most psychology textbooks. They're the basis for the multimillion-dollar industry built on studying facial expressions, taught to FBI agents, marketing executives, cops and spies.

And they might be all wrong.

Read the whole story: [*wbur*](#)