New Research From Psychological Science

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Disgust and Anger Relate to Different Aggressive Responses to Moral Violations

Catherine Molho, Joshua M. Tybur, Ezgi Güler, Daniel Balliet, and Wilhelm Hofmann

Research has suggested that people experience high levels of anger and disgust toward moral violators and that self-reports of these feelings are highly correlated. This has led some to suggest that these two terms are equivalent and interchangeable expressions of moral outrage. In a series of four studies, Molho and colleagues examined whether this is really the case. In the last of these studies, participants read a scenario about a moral violation in which they or someone else was the target. The researchers found that feelings of anger and disgust shifted depending on whether the participant or another person was the target of the violation. These shifts in emotion were related to preferences for use of indirect or direct aggressive action toward the perpetrator. These results support a sociofunctional account of moral emotions in which anger and disgust have different antecedents and consequences and are not equivalent

Herd Those Sheep: Emergent Multiagent Coordination and Behavioral-Mode Switching

Patrick Nalepka, Rachel W. Kallen, Anthony Chemero, Elliot Saltzman, and Michael J. Richardson

There has recently been increased interest in understanding how humans engage in multiagent activity. In this study, the authors examined coordination dynamics using a goal-directed task in which pairs of participants had to herd groups of three, five, or seven virtual sheep into a containment center located in the middle of a virtual field. The researchers found that all pairs initially adopted a search-and-recovery (S&R) coordination style in which each participant first moved to the sheep farthest from the center containment area and moved from sheep to sheep as they worked inward toward the center. After a period of time, some pairs spontaneously shifted to a coupled-oscillatory-containment (COC) strategy in which each participants moved back and forth on a semicircular motion around the containment region

working their way toward the center of the field. Similar patterns of movement are seen in actual sheepdogs and in those engaging in team sports, suggesting these patterns may reflect context-specific realizations of the dynamics that define functional shepherding behavior.