

UNDERSTANDING MOTIVATION AND EMOTION



JOHN MARSHALL REEVE



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Johnmarshall Reeve

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Preface

My aim in writing this book is to facilitate students' understanding of the principles and applications of human motivation. The intended audience for the book is undergraduates enrolled in courses in motivation within a college's department of psychology or, perhaps, education. To accommodate the interest of the undergraduate student from any perspective, the presentation of the material is dominated by human motivation. Some number of experiments are included in which rats, dogs, and monkeys were research subjects, but the information gleaned from these studies is always couched in terms of an analysis of human motivation.

I have assumed some background knowledge on the part of the reader, such as an introductory course in psychology. The text material is extensive and sometimes detailed, as it would be a deception and an injustice to spare the student the complexity of motivation and emotion. Nonetheless, great effort has been taken to write in a way that is clear to and easy for any student taking a first course in motivation. To achieve this goal, the language is simple and direct; as the title implies, the purpose of every page is to help students *understand* motivation and emotion. With this goal in mind, I try to involve the reader in his or her quest through a continual supply of examples from and applications to everyday experience. Indeed, my chief goal is to illuminate the principles of motivation concealed in the sometimes puzzling organization of everyday human behavior.

Out of consideration of the needs of instructors for a reading list to stimulate class discussions and oral presentations, each chapter concludes with a recommended reading list of ten entries. I chose each entry on the reading list based on three criteria: (1) the complexity of the article (e.g., methodology and data analysis) is not overly difficult for the undergraduate, (2) its topic is both interesting and central to the chapter, and (3) its length is short, so the student will have time to read several articles rather than just one or two. The educational purpose of the reading list is to provide substance for class papers, discussions, and oral presentations. The recommended readings are further offered as an invitation to the interested reader to achieve a firsthand exposure to original articles in motivation. If the pages of the text can stimulate enough enthusiasm to encourage the reader to pursue the original articles, then I have achieved my primary purpose in writing this book.

Plan of the Book

The text is organized around five active areas of research: physiological motivation, extrinsic and intrinsic motivation, cognitive motivation, individual differences, and the emotions. Together, an overview of each area allows the text to cover the full territory of the psychology of motivation.

A physiological approach to motivation offers three principles: reward, arousal, and regulation. Chapter 2, on reward, presents the biology of reward and aversion, studies of brain stimulation, and Richard Solomon's opponent-process theory. Chapter 3, on arousal, discusses how arousal relates to reward and aversion and the intriguing study of psychophysiology. Chapter 4, on regulation, discusses the four basic and

potent motives of thirst, hunger, sex, and pain. Central questions offered within a physiological approach to motivation include: "How does the brain produce feelings of pleasure?", "What is the psychological significance of dilated pupils or sweaty palms?", and "How does the body regulate weight and what causes obesity?"

Chapter 5, on extrinsic motivation, adds the behavioristic perspective to our study. The reader is introduced to the language of behaviorism and the fundamental processes of classical and operant conditioning. Chapter 6, on intrinsic motivation, answers the question of what makes one activity more intrinsically interesting than another. This section, perhaps like no other in the text, offers a rich supply of examples from and applications to important areas of day-to-day activity, particularly in the areas of education, work, and sports. Section Two includes such questions as: "How can one use rewards to increase the motivation of another person?", "Does punishment work, and what are the problems with it?", and "How can education, work, and sports be made more interesting and enjoyable?"

The third section introduces the reader to the cognitive perspective. In Chapter 7, the cognitive perspective argues that mental events, such as plans and goals, energize and direct behavior. Chapter 8 focuses on one particular mental event—expectancy—and features analyses of self-efficacy, learned helplessness, and reactance. Chapter 9 concludes Section Three with a study of the principles and applications of attribution theory. Some of the central questions in Section Three include: "Does goal-setting increase motivation and, if so, why?", "Why are some people motivationally listless and passive while others are motivationally active and assertive?", and "How do our explanations of life's successes and failures relate to depression, interest, and emotion?"

Three areas of study demonstrate how individual differences contribute to motivation; and Section Four presents these three areas in separate chapters. In Chapter 10, the experimental study of personality characteristics concentrates on three personality characteristics related to temperament—extraversion, sensation-seeking, and affect intensity—and two personality characteristics related to control beliefs—desire for control and the Type A behavior pattern. Chapter 11 discusses the social motives of the needs for achievement, affiliation, and power. Our journey through motivation takes a clinical turn in Chapter 12 with an examination of the ideas of Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers (in the humanistic orientation), as well as Sigmund Freud and the neoFreudians (in the psychoanalytic orientation). Some of the more intriguing questions here include: "What motivates stuntmen and skydivers?", "What is the relationship between the need for achievement and entrepreneurial activity?", and "What is the unconscious and how might one tap into its hidden depths?"

The fifth and final substantive section addresses the important question of emotion. Chapter 13 presents theorists who highlight the important contribution of arousal and cognition. Chapter 14 presents theorists who highlight the important contribution of the face and its emotional expressions. Chapter 15 integrates the two previous chapters and addresses the question of whether emotions are primarily cognitive or primarily biological phenomena. Finally, Chapter 16 presents a vast literature on stress, coping with stress, and mental and physical well-being. Some of the central questions in this final section include: "Are emotions motivational states?",

“Can facial expressions cause a change in feelings?”, and “Does stress cause health problems such as cancer?”

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Almost all of this book was written while I was an assistant professor at Ithaca College in New York. It was at Ithaca that I became convinced that my students needed such a book. In a very real sense, I wrote the book for them.

It was also at Ithaca that I met Deborah Van Patten, of Holt, Rinehart and Winston, who is as responsible as I am for getting the book off the ground. The enthusiasm and helpfulness of the Holt, Rinehart and Winston/Harcourt Brace Jovanovich staff were a continual resource and source of pleasure. I am especially grateful for the help given to me by Susan Arellano, Susan Pierce, Steven-Michael Patterson, Clifford Crouch, Page Pepiot Sanders, and, most especially, Christina Oldham, the psychology editor.

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1

C H A P T E R

Introduction

Introduction

PERENNIAL QUESTIONS IN MOTIVATION

THEMES WITHIN THE STUDY OF MOTIVATION

**Motivation Includes Both Approach and Avoidance
Tendencies**

Motivation Is Best Understood as a Process

**Motivation Can Be Self-Regulated or Environmentally
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**Motive Strengths Vary Over Time and Influence the
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Motives Have Been Viewed as Hierarchically Arranged

We Are Not Always Consciously Aware of the

Motivational Basis for Our Behavior

Motivational Principles Can Be Applied

EXPRESSIONS OF MOTIVATION

Overt Behavior

Physiology

Self-Report

MOTIVATION IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Philosophical Origins

Rise of the Grand Theories

Rise of the Mini-theories

Contemporary Perspectives

SUMMARY

RECOMMENDED READINGS FOR CHAPTER 1



Introduction

This book considers one fundamental and interesting question: "What causes behavior?" When we attempt to explain what causes a woman to train to win a gold medal, we seek a theory of motivation to explain what causes her training behavior. The utility of our motivation theory is that it allows us to explain what gives behavior its energy and direction. It is some motive that energizes the athlete, and it is some motive that gives her actions a direction or purpose.

Another way of asking the same question is: "Which antecedent conditions activate and direct behavior?" Motivation researchers study how behavior becomes energized and how behavior becomes directed toward specific ends. Consequently, a study of motivation is a search for those "antecedent conditions" to energetic and directed behavior. Whenever we propose an antecedent condition to explain energetic and directed behavior, we have jumped into the arena of motivation. When we seek to explain why the athlete trains, we attempt to specify the antecedent condition or conditions to her strivings. In other words, our answer to "What causes behavior?" is to specify its antecedent conditions.

PERENNIAL QUESTIONS IN MOTIVATION

Such an attempt to explain what causes behavior prompts us to consider more specific questions, such as: "What starts behavior?", "How is behavior sustained over time?", "Why is behavior directed toward some ends but away from others?", and "How does behavior stop?" (e.g., Hunt, 1965; Jones, 1955). It is not enough to ask what causes a woman to train to win a gold medal; one must also ask why she begins to practice in the first place. What energizes her effort hour after hour, day after day? Why does she practice that sport rather than another? When she does practice, why does she quit, either during the day or during her lifetime? **The first essential problem in a motivational analysis of behavior therefore includes understanding behavior's instigation, persistence, and termination.**

A second problem in motivation asks why behavior varies in its intensity. Some days an employee works rapidly and diligently; other days the work is relatively lethargic. Sometimes a frustrated parent yells and screams at a child; other times the parent reprimands the child quietly. For the aforementioned athlete, practice is strong and persistent some days, but other days it is weak and unenthusiastic. Motivation researchers also ask why a person engages in an activity at one time but ignores it at another. The problem here is to answer why the person, when presented with choices, selects one course of action at one time but rejects that same course of action at another time. Why does the student study on Monday but not on Tuesday or Wednesday? Why does the person eat a great deal at 2 p.m., but not at all at 3 p.m.? Why does the person get angry and upset when stuck in traffic at one time but remain undisturbed in traffic at another time? People's behavior frequently varies in its intensity, so this second problem explores the forces that determine behavior's intensity over time.