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9.68 Affect: Biological, Psychological, and Social Aspects of "Feelings"
Spring 2009

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Class Meeting 8

March 31

Theme: The Neuropsychology of Affect;
The Emotional Brain and Mental Life

PREPARATION:

READ: 8-1 Damasio, A. (2004) Looking for Spinoza: Joy, Sorrow, and the Feeling Brain, (excerpts: Chapter 1: "Enter Feelings", pp. 1-8; Chapter 2: Of Appetites and Emotions, pp. 25-80; Chapter 3: Feelings, pp 81-133), Harcourt.

READ:8-2 Oatley, K., & Jenkins, J.J. Understanding Emotions, Chapter 5, Brain Mechanisms of Emotion pp. 133-159.

VIEW: 8-3 Powers of Ten (videotape – viewing time 8 mins.)

WRITE: Reaction Paper #8 Three Key Ideas about the Neuropsychology of Affect

CLASS NOTES:

Organisms as congeries of systems within systems; of atoms within molecules within macromolecules within organelles within cells within tissues within organs, within organ systems, (pulmonary, cardiovascular, digestive, musculoskeletal, reproductive, nervous, central and peripheral – incl. autonomic – divisions) brains and spinal cords, triune mode of organization and development, within organisms, within sociocultural contexts (families, groups, collectivities) within surrounding geopolitical jurisdictions and local, regional and global environments. We introduce some evolutionary, experiential, neuropsychological, psychodynamic, literary, poetic, dramaturgical and sociological aspects of affect in human systems; discuss the distinction between feelings and emotions as it relates to the neuropsychology of affect; and look more closely at some earlier contributions to our understanding – beginning with what Egyptian high-priests told the first Greek historian, Herodotus, about practices dating back more than 12 centuries before their own time; we go on to identify some significant neuropsychological developments associated with the names (among others) of: Alcmaeon and Hippocrates, of Socrates, Plato, Aristotle and Galen, of Rene Descartes and Blaise Pascal, of Franz Josef Gall, (and Spurzheim), of John Harlow (Phineas Gage), Herbert Spencer, Charles Darwin, William James, Claude Bernard, Walter B. Cannon, Sigmund Freud, John F. Fulton (and C.B. Jacobsen), James W. Papez, Paul MacLean, Heinrich Klüver, Karl Lashley, Theodore C. Schneirla, Daniel S. Lehman, Donald O. Hebb, Karl Pribram, Hans-Lukas Teuber, James Olds and Peter Milner, Mortimer Mishkin, H. Enger Rosvold, Larry Weiskrantz, Allan F. Mirsky, Arthur Kling, William H. Sweet, Vernon H. Mark and Frank R. Ervin (Leonard Arthur Kille –aka "Thomas R." and "Harry Benson") –to be continued next week ...