

# ASCAP NEWSLETTER

Across-Species Comparisons And Psychiatry Newsletter  
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## Hedonic Anathetic Psalicyology

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Newsletter aims: 1. A free exchange of letters, notes, articles, essays or ideas in whatever brief format.  
2. Elaboration of others' ideas.  
3. Keeping up with productions, events, and other news.  
4. Proposals for new initiatives, joint research endeavors, etc.

Editorial: The first edition of this Newsletter stimulated sufficient reinforcement that more issues are on their way. Indeed, the reinforcement excites the aim of monthly frequency. Much of the encouragement occurred vocally, as face-to-face or over the telephone, but some written comments that went beyond an affirmative vote are in the adjoining column as letters to the editor. The most novel anathetic signal was a Christmas gift in the form of a pair of kitchen tins with pecking chickens painted on their sides. Also someone noted that I misspelled the second version of my own acronym - as "plasic"! But most importantly, and very fitting, John Price sends a formal contribution published in this issue. I here take the editorial liberty of emphasizing his last paragraph by placing it here as a guest editorial comment:

"The neglect of agonistic behavior by psychologists has left us with a dearth of language and concepts, and it seems to me that there is a lot of sorting out and labeling to be done before we can think clearly about what goes on. This kind of newsletter should be an excellent place to do that kind of sorting out."

Some other communications I am saving for the next or future issues.

For the philosophy and goal guiding this newsletter and for keys to the above boxed neologisms, see the first footnote on page 5(1).

Letters to the Editor:

Dec. 24, 1987

The ASCAP NEWSLETTER. I am delighted you sent it out. However, I need a little time to think about the arguments. So, expect my attack at your jugular to arrive in early 1988.

Michael T. McGuire, UCLA, Cal.

Dec. 27, 1987

I am just winding down from watching the 49ers dismantle the LA Rams. To start the evening at the computer, I thought I would just drop you a line with regard to your ASCAP Newsletter.

You're right. I find it both interesting and, well, different. It is fascinating the way people with completely different backgrounds take ideas from unlike disciplines and rework them to produce provocatively different perspectives.

George W. Barlow, UC Berkeley, Cal.

6 Jan 1988

I like the idea of your ASCAP newsletter and I enclose a contribution to it. ... [See next page]

I like your simplification of the pecking equations to include only S1 (a + c), S2 (a + c), RHP1, and RHP2 - these four terms seem to form a self-contained system which one could set up in, e.g., a pair of birds. Then one could use it to test various inputs, such as psychotropic drugs.

John S. Price, Milton Keynes, Engl.

Catathetic Signals by J.S. Price

In Jane Austen's novel, Emma (2), Mr. Knightley, a country gentleman, is interested in the possibility of marrying the heroine, Emma, whom he has watched grow up and loved since she was 13. His problem is that Emma is clearly a high-spirited young lady who tends to take the lead in her personal relationships, and they have recently had two unresolved quarrels which left them both "vexed" (chaps. 8 & 18). Would she give the wifely deference required by a nineteenth century husband, or would she answer back over every issue or even try to boss him about? To reassure himself, Mr. Knightley puts Emma to the test. He takes advantage of the fact that Emma has unwisely and uncharacteristically made fun of and humiliated Miss Bates, one of the village ladies who is a notorious chatterbox. When he next (in chap. 43) meets Emma, Mr. Knightley takes her to task over what she has done. Since it is the most loving put-down in the whole of English literature, I will ask the editor's indulgence to quote the episode in full.

While waiting for the carriage, she found Mr. Knightley by her side. He looked around, as if to see that no one were near, and then said,

"Emma, I must once more speak to you as I have been used to do: a privilege rather endured than allowed, perhaps, but I must still use it. I cannot see you acting wrong, without a remonstrance. How could you be so unfeeling to Miss Bates? How could you be so insolent in your wit to a woman of her character, age and situation? - Emma I had not thought it possible."

Buna recollected, blushed, was sorry, but tried to laugh it off.

"Nay, how could I help saying what I did? - Nobody could have helped it. It was not so very bad. I dare say she did not understand me."

"I assure you she did. She felt your full meaning. She has talked of it since. I wish you could have heard how she talked of it -

with what candour and generosity. I wish you could have heard her honouring your forbearance, in being able to pay her such attentions, as she was forever receiving from yourself and your father, when her society must be so irksome."

"Oh!" cried Emma, "I know there is not a better creature in the world: but you must allow, that what is good and what is ridiculous are most unfortunately blended in her."

"They are blended," said he, "I acknowledge; and, were she prosperous, I could allow much for the occasional prevalence of the ridiculous over the good. Were she a woman of fortune, I would leave every harmless absurdity to take its chance, I would not quarrel with you for any liberties of manner. Were she your equal in situation - but Bane, consider how far this is from being the case. She is poor; she has sunk from the comforts she was born to; and, if she live to old age, must probably sink more. Her situation should secure your compassion. It was badly done, indeed! -- You, whom she has known from an infant, whom she has seen grow up from a period when her notice was an honour, to have you now, in thoughtless spirits, and the pride of the moment, laugh at her, humble her - and before her niece, too - and before others, many of whom (certainly some) would be entirely guided by your treatment of her. - This is not pleasant to you, Emma - and it is very far from being pleasant to me: but I must, I will, ~ I will tell you truths while I can, satisfied with proving myself your friend by very faithful counsel, and trusting that you will sometime or other do me greater justice than you can do now."

"While they talked they were advancing towards the carriage; it was ready; and, before she could speak again, he had handed her in. He had misinterpreted the feelings which had kept her face averted, and her tongue motionless. They combined only of anger against herself, mortification and deep concern. She had not been able to speak; and on entering the carriage, sunk back for a moment overcome - then reproaching herself for having taken no leave, making no acknowledgement, parting in apparent sullenness, she

looked out with voice and hand eager to show a difference; but it was just too late. He had turned away and the horses were in motion.

In the next chapter Emma visits Miss Bates, and, although she does not actually apologise, she makes herself agreeable to her. In the following chapter, Mr. Knightley visits Emma's house and Emma's father tells him that Emma has visited Miss Bates. Emma does not speak, but "with a smile and a shake of her head, which spoke much, she looked at Mr. Knightley". The latter then looks at Emma "with a glow of regard", takes her hand and presses it, which makes Emma "warmly gratified".

In the above passage Mr. Knightley delivers 3 catathetic signals, or, we could say, delivers his catathetic signal 3 times. Emma answers back to the first 2 but at the third she is silent (an unusual response for her). The author has the hero going away without knowing immediately the effect of what he has done, but the next day he learns that Emma has visited Miss Bates and thus taken note of his criticism. He also receives from Emma non-verbal signals of a submissive nature. Mr. Knightley is thus reassured that, having attacked her with criticism, she has not retaliated - in the language of the pecking equation her retaliatory term is negative, and she stands to him in a complementary rather than a symmetrical role. Emma's response is satisfactory to Mr. Knightley - it fits in with the requirement of an ideal marital relationship in pre-Victorian England, that the wife should in important matters submit to her husband; he proceeds, a few pages later, to propose marriage.

In the film Ben Hur, the hero is a galley slave in a Roman vessel, and the Roman general, Arius, thinking he might employ him as a gladiator, has him lashed with a whip in order to

test his mettle. Ben Hur's response is one of aggressive retaliation. Arius approves of this, and of the hate in his eyes, and of the self control which enables him to moderate his aggressive response.

I think it is fairly clear that Arius and Mr. Knightley are playing the same game. They have both tried a "put down", using it as a probe to test the other's response. In fact they both got what they wanted. Mr. Knightley got a wife who was submissive to him in spite of her dominating behavior to others, and Arius (he hoped) got a gladiator who fought back.

What I have tried to do, in suggesting the term catathetic (an adjective to be applied to signals, messages and behavior), is to find the term which will cover all kinds of "putting down" behavior, whether they consist of words or blows or whether they occur in man or animals. Here is a list with some obvious subdivisions:

1. Non-verbal
  - a. non-contact
    - threat stare (man and rhesus monkey)
    - raised fist, wagging finger (man)
    - challenge display (lizard)
    - gill-erection (Siamese fighting fish)
  - b. contact
    - punching (man)
    - head pushing (cattle and lizard)
    - pecking(domestic chicken)
    - tail-slapping (lizard)
    - non-lethal biting (rat, monkeys)
    - corporal punishment (man)
    - attacking and chasing (most species)
2. Verbal
  - a. statements of superiority
  - b. threats of hitting, wounding or killing

- c. varied kinds of verbal abuse
  - criticism
  - insult
  - insult to mother, etc
  - sarcasm
  - use of swear words
- d. unilateral definitions of the relationship
- e. asymmetrical neutral or anathetic signals: These are signals which are culturally recognised as being normally given by a higher-ranking to a lower-ranking person. If given to an equal they have a catathetic effect because they assume higher rank in the sender.

I have excluded from the category of catathetic signals what are usually described as dominance displays - smart clothes, badges of rank, haughty bearing, etc., and I have called the latter signals of absolute RHP (resource holding potential). They can be distinguished from catathetic signals because when they occur in an ally they raise RHP, whereas catathetic signals by definitions reduce RHP, and in fact are not exchanged between allies except for practice. The catathetic signal is given when [the individual's] own RHP has been compared with the RHP of a potential adversary and a favourable result has registered. The catathetic signal is therefore a signal of favourable relative RHP, and this is its definition as far as the signaller is concerned. Its message is "I am better than/superior to you". Sometimes it takes the form of just such a statement. It is in the nature of signals that they are doubly defined, in terms of both sender and receiver. The receiver-based definition of catathetic signals is that they lower RHP in the recipient. They do not reduce that component of RHP which consists of real resources, such as weapons, strength, skill, etc., but

they effect a lowering of the ritual component of RHP. After all, RHP and catathetic signals are components of ritual agonistic behavior and it is the ritualisation which is the whole point of the game.

A word about anathetic signals. I have defined them as signals which raise the the RHP of the recipient, but what is their definition in terms of the sender? Is the withholding of an anathetic signal the same as delivering a catathetic signal, as in "damning with faint praise" or the failure to pay due deference which has been likened to an insult?

I think I have taken up enough space now, but perhaps there may be an opportunity in the future to discuss the concept of RHP in more detail, and also the role of asymmetrical signals and relationship definitions as catathetic signals. There is also the interesting question of the similarity and differences of catathetic signals which are exchanges between equals and those which are used to confirm an already asymmetrical relationship.

I think there is need for more terminology, e.g., adjectives to describe the hierarchical direction of signals. Can anyone improve on "up-hierarchy" and "down-hierarchy", and should this apply to the direction the signal is actually being sent, or the direction the signal is usually sent? And what should we call the signals exchanged between equals? And do we need to develop a concept of up-hierarchy motivation.

The neglect of agonistic behavior by psychologists has left us with a dearth of language and concepts, and it seems to me that there is a lot of sorting out and labelling to be done before we can think clearly about what goes on. This kind of newsletter should be an excellent place to do that sorting out.

The plan for the next (February) issue is to publish the "attack at your jugular" from Mike McGuire that came just as this issue was being produced and an essay that discusses issues raised by him in it and by John Price above in this issue's essay . . .

plus keep those cards and letters coming!

1. Philosophy and goal: High scientific importance rests on comparing animal behaviors across-species to understand better human behavior, knowing as we do so that evolutionary factors list be considered for understanding properly such behaviors. To accomplish these comparisons, very different new ways of viewing psychological and behavioral phenomena are required. This in turn explains why we need new words to define and illustrate new dimensions of comparisons across species. We expect that work in natural history biology in combination with cellular-molecular biologic research will emerge as a comprehensive biologic basic science of psychiatry. Indeed, this must happen if we are to explain psychiatric illnesses as deviations from normal processes, something not possible now. Compare to pathogenesis in diseases of internal medicine.

Some neologisms {illustrated in the boxed heading) that will hopefully help implement these goals are those of:

1) Michael I. Chance: "hedonic" (and "agonic") refer to relaxed and fun-loving versus competitive monkey groups and to human groupings as well (first initiated with CJ Jolly in 1990, this term is referenced fully in Issue No. 1, Footnote 1.)

2) John S. Price: 'anathetic' (versus "catathetic") are new terms to describe a classification of communications between conspecifics (members of a sane species). Catathetic messages are "put-downs" whereas anathetic signals "build-up" the target individual.

3) Russell Gardner, Jr.: "Psalic" is a 2 way acronym: Propensity States Antedating Language In Communication and Programmed Spacings And Linkages In Conspecifics. These describe communicational states conjecturally seen in psychiatric disorders and in normals (humans and non-human animals), such as alpha psalic seen in manics, high profile leaders and dominant non-human animals. Eight psalics have been described.

All of the above new or renewed terms are initiated or elaborated in Chance, III (Ed) Social fabrics of the Mind, due out in early 1988, published by Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, love and New York.

2. Jane Austin's novel, Emma, was first published in 1816. The quote, however, was from the Zodiac Press edition of 1972.