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# Looking for a second opinion: Epistemic emotions and the exploration of information sources

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## Abstract

Epistemic emotions affect learning and exploration. Specifically, beliefs held with high confidence elicit high levels of surprise and curiosity when proven wrong. In turn, these emotions lead to searching for more elaborative details about the belief topic. Do epistemic emotions also motivate exploration of how widely a belief is held? After answering a trivia question and indicating how confident they were, participants were shown an answer submitted by another participant, reported their surprise and curiosity, and then given the option of seeing up to three responses from different participants. The results supported serial mediation, with certainty predicting surprise, surprise predicting curiosity, and curiosity predicting the number of additional sources explored. However, unlike prior findings, high-certainty errors did not result in stronger emotions or more exploration than low-certainty errors. Thus, epistemic emotions motivate not just elaborative exploration but also exploration of opinion convergence - two complementary ways to justify beliefs.