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ENVY

/ Γενικά Θέματα



Manomania of Envy. Painting of French painter Theodore Gericault 1822/23

1. The Nature of Envy

1.1 Defining Envy

This entry follows the widespread assumption that envy is an emotion.[1] That is not to say that it is a mere feeling. Emotions are generally agreed to be more than feelings. Most emotion theorists could agree on this vague characterization: emotions are syndromes of thoughts, feelings, motivations, and bodily movements, loosely enough bound together that a given emotional episode may not require the occurrence of every element in the syndrome. The specific contours of the emotional syndrome of envy are controversial. It is agreed that envy involves an envier (“Subject”), a party who is envied (“Rival”)—this may be a person or group of persons—and some possession, capacity or trait that the subject supposes the rival to have (the “good”). The good might be something that only one party could possibly possess (the crown jewels, or being the world’s best go player), or it might be something easily duplicated. It is sometimes held that the good may even be utility, happiness, or some psychological state that Subject could attribute to Rival even if there were no material difference in their possessions or capacities.

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