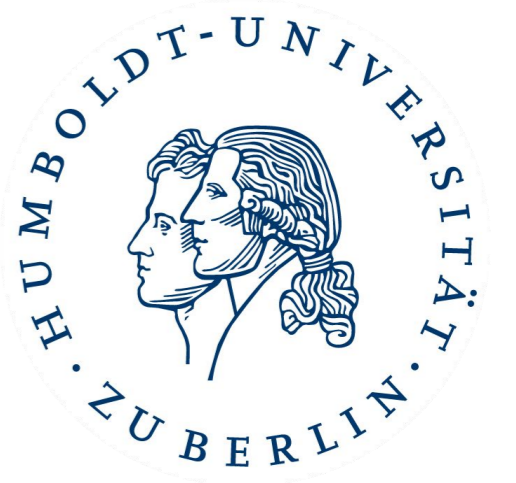
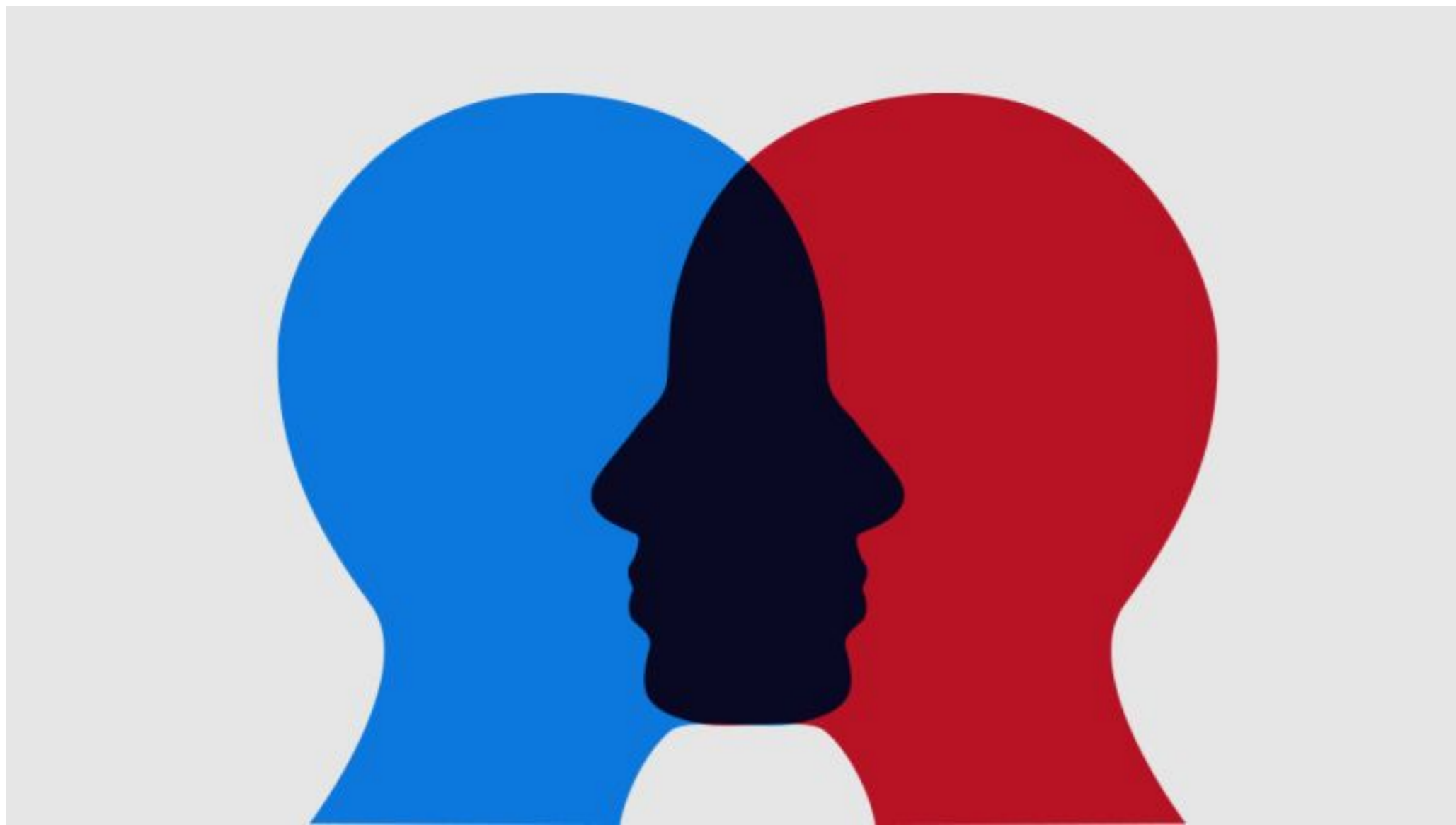


# The Coherence between Music & Empathy



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The word "empathy" describes the ability to feel into somebody which means an empathetic person can share the feeling of another person. Music can also act as a medium of mutual understanding and can activate or convey empathy between people. But what is the coherence between music and empathy regarding subjectivity, sociological and cultural perspectives?



## Subjectivity

Music is capable of acting as a 'virtual person', owing to the similarity to human vocals, as a gestural expression of emotions and as a surrogate for a friend, who can empathise with a listener's circumstances and feelings. Also there is the idea, that music has **attributes of an idealized person** or community. Music not only passively reflects the listener's subjectivity, but also forms the listener's experience. It creates something unknown, that wants to be integrated into the listener's mind. Another aspect is the fact that music can help to structure the **listener's identity**. The connection of music, as a kind of social ideal and the listener's identity helps to reflect on who you are and who you want to be.

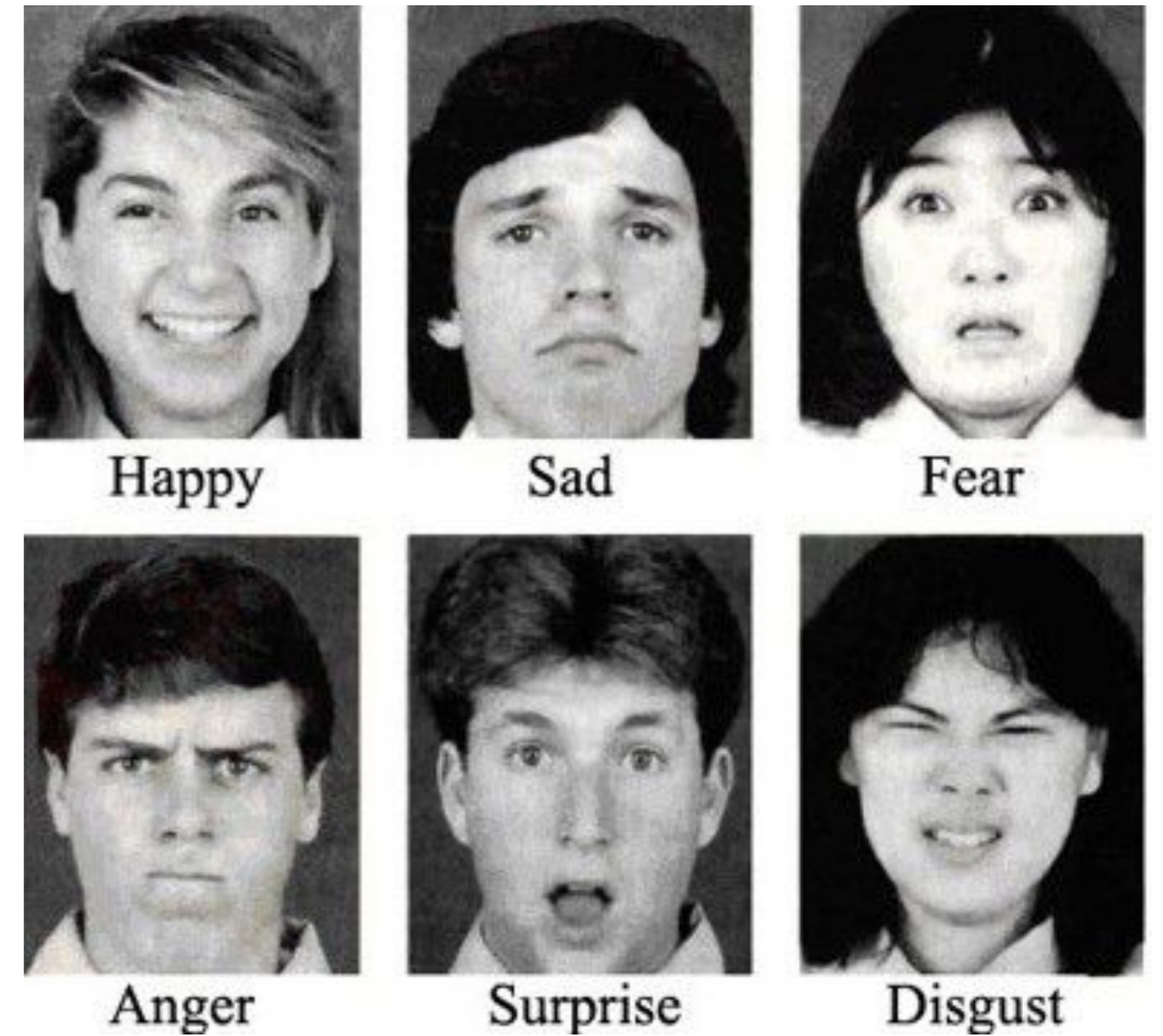


## Sociological Perspectives

Music generates a collective **orientation** and a common state of emotion. In the study of empathy, the

**predisposition** becomes important. Each member of a community needs to bring their learned and educated social capabilities. **Communicative acting** creates communities. It improves the atmosphere, for example at an event where music is played in the background.

The feeling of empathy is shown generally by **body language, facial expression and vocalization**.



## Cultural Perspectives

Music can help to communicate emotional meanings between different cultures. Thanks to the relationship between universal and cultural specific aspects of this **communication**, music simplifies not only the cultural, but also the **cross-cultural understanding**. Empathy for other people and cultures becomes the basis for **moral judgements**. Music, as well as the practising of music, contributes greatly to the empathy towards other cultures. The free circulation of public **emotionality** is a kind of **catalyst for empathy** to blossom, which is triggered by the music. Because of that, empathy can be understood as a **social achievement** and not solely as a character trait.

