Emotional Responses to Kittens, Reunions, Gods, and Nations

Winter 2018   Anthro19   Haines A82
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Office hours Thursdays 11:00 – noon, or by appointment

We’re going to explore kama muta, a ‘new’ emotion, just recently discovered. For an overview, see our research web site: www.kamamutalab.org. You will do your own fieldwork, interviewing and participant observation. Then you will formulate your own research question, design your own study and write a research proposal. (For this seminar, you won’t do the research you yourself design – but it’s possible for you to do it as an independent study next quarter.)

2 October  What is kama muta, and how can we identify instances of it?

Assignment for the 9th: Interview 5 people about their most recent tears. Take careful notes. What evoked the tears? What other sensations did they have? Was the experience positive, negative, or both? Try to determine whether each tearful experience was an instance of kama muta, and if not, what emotions were involved.

9 October In Class: Discuss what you’ve discovered from your interviews

Assignment for the 16th: Interview 5 people about a reunion, a wedding, a birth, or a moment of love of god. Take careful notes. What sensations did they have?

16 October In class: Discuss your interview findings on sudden love

Assignment for the 23rd: Read “The Best Loved Story of All Time”
Identify two instances of this story in books, TV, movies, etc. Explain why they appeal to audiences.

23 October In class: Discuss the narratives you’ve identified and why they are appealing

Assignment for the 30th: Read “The Sudden Devotion Emotion” and come to class with two significant questions or comments on it.
https://www.dropbox.com/s/7b61g85238flp1d/Fiske%20Seibt%20Schubert%202017%20The%20Sudden%20Devotion%20Emotion%20corrected%20proofs.pdf?dl=0

30 October In class: Discuss the article

Assignment for the 6th: Interview 3 people in helping or service professions, or who are volunteers in a service role; ask them if they have had kama muta experiences. Take careful
notes. Did those experiences motivate them to choose or stay in the profession? Have they had kama muta experiences that affected the work itself?

6 November  In class: **Discuss what you have discovered about motives for vocations**

Assignment for the 13th: Find a situation where you yourself are likely to experience kama muta, along with other people. Do participant observation there: reflect on your own emotion(s) and make notes on them. Observe and/or interview other participants to discern how their emotions correspond to yours, or differ. Take notes on that, too.

13 November  In class: **Discuss what you learned from participant observation – and how what your learned from participant observation differs from what you would have learned from interviewing.**

Assignment for the 20th: Formulate your own question about kama muta -- a question that you could actually, practically research. Make the question very specific, very precise, and very clear!

20 November  In class: **Discuss the questions. Are they clear and precise?**

Assignment for the 27th: What method(s) would best enable you to empirically answer your question? Why is your method the best way to answer it?

27 November  In class: **Discuss the methods.**

Assignment for the 4th: What sorts of error and bias are your methods vulnerable to? What could you do to reduce those errors and biases?

4 December  In class: **Discuss methodological strategies for reducing errors and biases.**

Monday, 11 December: **Papers due** (e-mail to afiske@ucla.edu)

A mini research proposal in about two pages, or a bit more if you need more space:
- State your research question.
- Explain how it builds on and goes beyond what’s already known about kama muta.
- Explain why it’s interesting and important.
- Describe your method, precisely.
- Explain why your method is apt.
- Explain how you would analyze your data.

**Winter Quarter option:** Take an independent study and do the research you designed!