

Emotions, Everyday Life and Sociology

Edited by
Michael Hviid Jacobsen

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Foreword and acknowledgements

It is sometimes said – and a famous song-line even states – that ‘love is all around’. Love, however, is not the only emotion permeating human life (if this was indeed the case, then the world would probably be a much better place to live than it currently is) – all other emotions are also all around: anger, fear, trust, loyalty, envy, jealousy, cynicism, sadness, joy, misery, empathy, laziness, boredom, anger, depression, happiness, embarrassment, shame, guilt, desire, excitement, pride, and so on. The list of emotions is too long even to attempt to exhaust here. This testifies to the fact that human life – and with it social life and everyday life – is saturated with emotions. This book is a sociological tribute to some of these emotions.

We live in emotional times, and even though some claim that these are in fact ‘post-emotional times’ (just as they are apparently also ‘post-factual times’), emotions in an almost unprecedented manner seem to capture the public imagination not only in politics and everyday life, but also in academia. Today, torrents of literature dealing with, dissecting, describing and analysing emotions are being published within various scientific disciplines and sub-fields, whereas half a century ago hardly anyone wrote about or researched emotions in any detail. We now have the ‘sociology of emotions’, the ‘psychology of emotions’, the ‘social psychology of emotions’, the ‘anthropology of emotions’ and the ‘history of emotions’, just to mention a few of the areas having paid particular attention to studying emotions. This goes to show that from previously being shunned or practiced primarily on the outskirts of the social sciences, the study of emotions is now embraced as a topic worthy of academic attention (either in its own right or as an integral part of other areas of research) even by high-profile researchers.

In my experience, one of the most important yet nevertheless often disregarded emotions in everyday life is thankfulness or gratitude. I would therefore like to extend my gratitude to the book's many contributors, who so willingly have shared their research-based knowledge on different emotions. I would also like to take this opportunity, as always, to thank my two ‘partners in crime’, Alice Salt and Neil Jordan at Routledge, for a professional collaboration on this volume. It has once again been a pleasure working with you.