

SC2216: Emotions and Social Life
FASStrack 2026

Schedule: AM Session (10am-1pm, Singapore Time)
Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday

Course Description

Considering how emotions factor into so many important decisions we make, it is hard to believe that systematic studies of emotions and their consequences have only taken place in the past 40 years. "Follow your heart" has to be one of the most commonly used expressions when advice is solicited, and is probably what factors into at least half of the decisions we make when it comes to life changing choices. Can you imagine not taking into consideration your feelings when determining what career path to take, where to live, or whom you intend to marry? Emotive concerns factor into many of the important decisions we make throughout our lifetime. How these decisions affect others, society at large, and ultimately, human history, is what we will explore in this course.

This course will provide an in-depth look at the social consequences of emotions. It will begin with an examination of how emotions have been conceptualized, from classical sociological theory, to the contemporary school of thought on the sociology of emotions. It will then review the emotions of anger, love, fear, humor, and shame, to examine how these specific emotions, far from being irrelevant, play a role in shaping the world around us. Through the study of emotions and how they factor into our social structure, we can hopefully make sense of why interpersonal conflict, war, racial violence, and inter-ethnic rivalry have plagued mankind since the dawn of existence.

Preclusion/ Prerequisite

Nil

Lecturer

Dr George Baylon Radics, Senior Lecturer socrgb@nus.edu.sg

Course Assessment

Assessments		Assessment deadlines
Group Social Media Project about Fieldtrip	35%	10 July 2024, 5pm
Individual Write Up	15%	13 July 2024, 5pm
Review of compulsory readings	30%	17 July 2024, 11:59pm
Tutorial Participation	20%	Weekly
Total for CA:	100%	

- Group Social Media Project (35%): In groups of 3-5 students, prepare a meme, video (4 minutes max), or social media post that explores ONE emotion. It may be an emotion we covered in class, or an emotion not covered in class. Make sure to define the emotion somewhere in your project--either in the social media project itself or your individual writeup. You may use the articles and topics presented in class, or you may look beyond the course materials for inspiration.
- Individual Write Up (15%): In 1,500 words, explain the inspiration behind your social media project. Define your emotion using sociological literature and discuss how it was explored in your project.

- Review of compulsory readings (30%): This is an open book assignment. You must answer **three** questions. They are all weighted equally. Each answer should be around 800 words. Your document should not exceed 2400 words (all inclusive - references, footnotes, cover page etc.).

Course Topics

Week	Day	Topic	Session Activities
1	June 30	<u>Introduction to Module</u> <u>Philosophical Debates</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renes Descarte (1647), "Meditation II: Concerning the Nature of the Human Mind: That the mind is more known than the body," <i>Meditation on First Philosophy</i>, pp. 16-23. • Jean-Paul Sartre (1939), "Introduction," <i>The Emotions: Outline of a Theory</i>. • Catherine Lutz (2008) "Engendered Emotion," <i>Emotions a Social Science Reader</i>, pp. 63-71. 	Lecture and Tutorial Fieldtrip 1
	July 1	<u>Classical Sociological Theory and Emotions</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Karl Marx (1932), "Estranged Labour," <i>Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844</i>, pp. 106-119. • Stejpan Mestrovic (1998), "Anomie and the Unleashing of the Will," <i>Emilé Durkheim and the Reformation of Sociology</i>, pp. 54-75. • Max Weber (1919) "Science as Vocation," <i>The Vocation Lectures</i>, pp. 1-31. 	Lecture and Tutorial
	July 2	<u>Contemporary Theoretical Foundations</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peter Berger and Thomas Luckman (1966), "The Foundation of Knowledge in Everyday Life," <i>Social Construction of Reality</i>, pp. 19-43. • Herbert Blumer (1969), "Society as Symbolic Interactionism" <i>Symbolic Interactionism</i>, pp. 78-89. • Erving Goffman (1959), "Introduction," <i>Presentation of Self in Everyday Life</i>, pp. 13-27. 	Lecture and Tutorial
	July 3	<u>Sociology of Emotions</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patricia A. Adler, Peter Adler, and Andrea Fontana (1987) "Everyday 	Lecture and Tutorial Fieldtrip 2

		<p>Life Sociology" <i>Annual Review of Sociology</i>, pp. 217-235.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jonathan Turner (2009), "The Sociology of Emotions: Basic Theoretical Arguments," <i>Emotions Review</i>, pp. 340-354. 	
2	July 7	<p><u>Anger</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thomas Scheff (1994), "The Origins of World War II: Hitler's Appeal to the Germans," <i>Bloody Revenge</i>, pp. 105-124 Franz Fanon (1952), "The Fact of Blackness," <i>Black Skin White Masks</i>, pp. 82-108. 	Lecture and Tutorial
	July 8	<p><u>Love</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brenda Yeoh and Shirleena Huang (1999), "Singapore Women and Foreign Domestic Workers: Negotiating domestic work and motherhood," <i>Gender, Migration and Domestic Service</i>, pp. 277-300. Rhacel Salazar Parreñas (2001) "Mothering from a Distance: Emotions, Gender, and Intergenerational Relations in Filipino Transnational Families," <i>Feminist Studies</i>, pp. 361-390. <p>Robyn M. Rodriguez (2002), "Migrant Heroes: Nationalism, Citizenship and the Politics of Filipino Migrant Labor," <i>Citizenship Studies</i>, pp. 341-356.</p>	Lecture and Tutorial
	July 9	<p><u>Fear</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frank Furedi (1999), "The Explosion of Risks," <i>Culture of Fear</i>, pp. 15-45. Ulrich Beck (2007), "Felt War, Felt Peace: Staging Violence," <i>World at Risk</i>, pp. 140-159. <p>Rod Martin (2018) <i>The Psychology of Humor: An Integrative Approach</i>, pp 1-30.</p>	Lecture and Tutorial
	July 10	<p><u>Humor</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Majken Sørensen (2015) "Radical Clowning: Challenging Militarism through Play and Otherness" <i>Humour</i> (28)1: pp 25-47. Rey Tiquia (2011) "The Qi That Got Lost in Translation: Traditional Chinese Medicine, Humour, and 	Lecture and Tutorial

		Healing” <i>Humour in Chinese Life and Letters (Volume 1)</i> , Hong Kong University Press: pp 37-47.	
3	July 14	<u>Fear</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frank Furedi (1999), “The Explosion of Risks,” <i>Culture of Fear</i>, pp. 15-45. • Ulrich Beck (2007), “Felt War, Felt Peace: Staging Violence,” <i>World at Risk</i>, pp. 140-159. • Rod Martin (2018) <i>The Psychology of Humor: An Integrative Approach</i>, pp 1-30. 	Lecture and Tutorial
	July 15	<u>Humor</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Majken Sørensen (2015) “Radical Clowning: Challenging Militarism through Play and Otherness” <i>Humour</i> (28)1: pp 25-47. • Rey Tiquia (2011) “The Qi That Got Lost in Translation: Traditional Chinese Medicine, Humour, and Healing” <i>Humour in Chinese Life and Letters (Volume 1)</i>, Hong Kong University Press: pp 37-47. 	Lecture and Tutorial
	July 16	<u>Shame</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amy Chua (2011), “The Chinese Mother” and “Ending” in <i>Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother</i>, pp. 3-5; 216-232. • Sungeun Yang and Paul C. Rosenblatt (2001), “Shame in Korean Families,” <i>Journal of Comparative Family Studies</i>, pp. 361-375. • Dil Bach and Soren Christensen (2016), “Battling the Tiger Mother: Pre-School Reform and Conflicting Norms of Parenthood in Singapore” <i>Children and Society</i>, pp. 134-143. 	Lecture and Tutorial
	July 17	<u>Group Presentations</u> <u>Conclusion</u>	Lecture and Tutorial