

Parsing the Passions: Methodology and Emotion in IR

Workshop Report
By Eric Van Rythoven

Project Summary

This project looked to offer a state-of-the-art survey of the diverse methodological approaches and issues in the study of emotions in contemporary International Relations research. While interest in emotion and affect in IR has grown in recent years, there remains a conspicuous absence of sustained engagement with questions of methodology and method. This workshop focused on filling this gap by addressing two aims.

The first aim was to showcase a wide variety of different approaches to studying emotion for a general IR audience. Far from being permanently mired in theory explication, there now exists a wide array of techniques and strategies for the study of emotions in IR, even if until now their consideration has largely remained tacit rather than explicit. Drawing together a diverse range of perspectives, *Parsing the Passions* invited scholars to outline and explain their strategies for emotions inquiry.

These efforts lay the foundation for the second aim of the project: to foster engagement, critique, and dialogue among approaches. As Hutchison and Bleiker have recently noted, the subfield has become far too 'disparate', and 'numerous contributors have not been able to build on each other as effectively as they could' (2014: 507). By not engaging with other approaches, each path of inquiry risks 'recreating the wheel'. Worse yet, they risk ignoring the pitfalls and perils already identified by previous work. In prompting such an encounter, we especially look to promote synthetic and eclectic engagements by asking participants to reflect critically on how different methodologies have been deployed within the subfield, as well as how these deployments connect to broader debates over methodology in IR.

Participants

In alphabetical order

<u>Participant</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>	<u>Country</u>
Aaron Hoffman	Associate Professor	Purdue University	USA
Amir Lupovici	Lecturer	Tel-Aviv University	Israel
Andrew Ross	Associate Professor	Ohio University	USA
Aviad Levy	PhD Candidate	Hebrew University	Israel
Brent E. Sasley	Associate Professor	University of Texas	USA
Daniel Levine*	Assistant Professor	University of Alabama	USA
Elina Penttinen	Lecturer	University of Helsinki	Finland
Eric Van Rythoven*	PhD Candidate	Carleton University	Canada
Erica Resende	Assistant Professor	Instituto Universitário de Pesquisas do Rio de Janeiro	Brazil
Himadeep Muppidi	Professor	Vassar College	USA
Ilan Danjoux	Visiting Professor	University of Calgary	Canada
Lauren Wilcox	Assistant Professor	University of Cambridge	UK
Linda Åhäll	Postdoctoral Researcher	Malmö University	Sweden

Luke Campbell	PhD Candidate	University of Kansas	USA
Melanie Richter-Montpetit	Assistant Professor	University of Sheffield	UK
Mira Sucharov*	Associate Professor	Carleton University	Canada
Simon Koschut	Assistant Professor	Freie Universität Berlin	Germany
Todd Hall	Associate Professor	University of Oxford	UK
Ty Solomon	Assistant Professor	University of Glasgow	UK

* Workshop Convener

Dr. Karin Fierke and Dr. Roland Bleiker were unable to attend the workshop. We were also joined by at least three observers in the audience.

Schedule

8:15 *Introduction by Conveners*

8:25 *Panel 1 – The philosophical and conceptual underpinnings of emotions inquiry*

Chair: Van Rythoven

Presenters: Solomon, Ross, and Campbell

9:45 *Panel 2 – Interacting passions: inquiries into the political circulation of emotions*

Chair: Solomon

Presenters: Van Rythoven, Resende, Sasley, Lupovici, and Hoffman

11:20 *Coffee Break #1*

11:40 *Panel 3 – Popular perturbations: visualizing emotions in and through cultural practices*

Chair: Ross

Presenters: Sucharov, Åhäll, and Danjoux

1:00 *Lunch*

2:20 *Panel 4 – Affective power: shaping order, bodies, and the ‘other’*

Chair: Levine

Presenters: Koschut, Hall, Richter-Montpetit, and Wilcox

3:40 *Coffee Break #2*

4:00 *Panel 5 – Passionate transformations: emotions, methodology, and the lingering effects on the discipline*

Chair: Sucharov

Presenters: Levine, Penttinen, Muppidi, and Levy

5:20 *Closing remarks by Conveners*

5:30 *Finish*

Workshop Outcome

The workshop largely functioned as a miniature conference. Absent a unifying framing paper, participants were organized into thematically oriented panels around issues such as emotions concepts, studying emotions in political interactions, or studying affective power. This format allowed for some stimulating conversations across research programs which would normally not occur, and contributed to a certain measure of mutual intelligibility. It also brought to light some previous misunderstandings of each other's work and allowed for better appreciation of the scope and purpose of different research projects. Equally valuable here was the opportunity for researchers to meet in person for the first time and establish professional networks.

The workshop also highlighted some important challenges for emotions research. The major issue here is how the diversity of perspectives leads to a lack of common language which makes discussions of methodology difficult. As Todd Hall remarked, the emotions turn is characterized by something of a 'concepts arms race', and that this ever expanding vocabulary makes shared understanding difficult. Also underpinning this diversity are many of the typical divides seen in the discipline: positivism and post-positivism, quantitative and qualitative, normative and explanatory, and so on. Yet the workshop was still able to discuss a number of important issues such as the challenges surrounding the coding of emotional images in visual content analyses, writing about embodiment in a subfield dominated by discussions of 'affect' or 'emotion', testing causal relationships under experimental conditions, the pedagogy of emotions research, and the role of ideal typification in understanding affective phenomena.

Future Plans

There are multiple projects emerging from this workshop. Some participants have signaled that, while they found the workshop useful, they will be pursuing the publication of their research independently, or as part of another project.

In the days following the workshop Eric Van Rythoven and Mira Sucharov discussed plans for an edited volume with different publishers. They received a number of enthusiastic reactions and will be preparing a book proposal for *Routledge* in the Summer of 2016. This project looks to include several of the workshop participants. Our second meeting in 2017 will be organized as an author's workshop so each contributor to the edited volume will be able to receive feedback on their individual chapter.

Finally, we are looking to host audio recordings of the workshop panels. Unfortunately, the recording quality is not great but may still be of value to those working in this area.

Budget

Our approved budget of \$14,585 includes funding for two events. The first was the larger methodology workshop held in Atlanta during ISA 2016 and with a budget of \$10,434. The second is for a follow up meeting, most likely during ISA 2017 in Baltimore, with a budget of \$4,151.

Budget and Expenses			
Items	Budget Amt.	Expense Amt.	Budget Details
Room Rental	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	1x conference room @ \$200 each
LCD Projector Setup	\$ 350.00	\$ 350.00	1x projector @ \$350 each
Wired Internet Connection	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	1x wired internet connection @ \$200 each
Power for laptops	\$ 48.00	\$ 48.00	3x laptop power connections @ \$16 each
Coffee Breaks	\$ 270.00	\$ 270.00	2x breaks with 1.5 gallons of coffee @ \$135 each
Hotel Costs	\$ 6,666.00	\$ 4,497.21	9x NA participants , and 12x participants from abroad
Per Diems	\$ 2,700.00	\$ 2,175.00	9x NA participants @ \$75 each, and 12x participants from abroad @ \$150 each
Atlanta Total	\$ 10,434.00	\$ 7,740.21	

A more complete breakdown of individual participant expenses can be found in the attached document. Our expenses for Atlanta came under budget for a few reasons:

- two participants from overseas were unable to attend;
- two participants did not claim hotel expenses;
- there is a calculation error in the original per diem budget, the original amount should read \$2,475, not \$2,700.

We would ask the ISA Grant Committee to roll the difference (\$2,693.79) over to the budget up of the follow up meeting in 2017.

Reflections on the Venture Grant Process

While the participants generally had positive comments about the workshop process, several individuals commented on the poor state of the facilities. Around 9am a very loud fan came on in the room and made the entire session difficult to hear. (The sound is very distinct on the audio recordings of the workshop as well). We asked the staff to turn the fan off, but the room became intolerably hot.

The Conveners would like to take this opportunity to thank ISA staff, the ISA Grant Committee, and in particular the timely support of Dr. Lembe Tiky in assisting in this process.