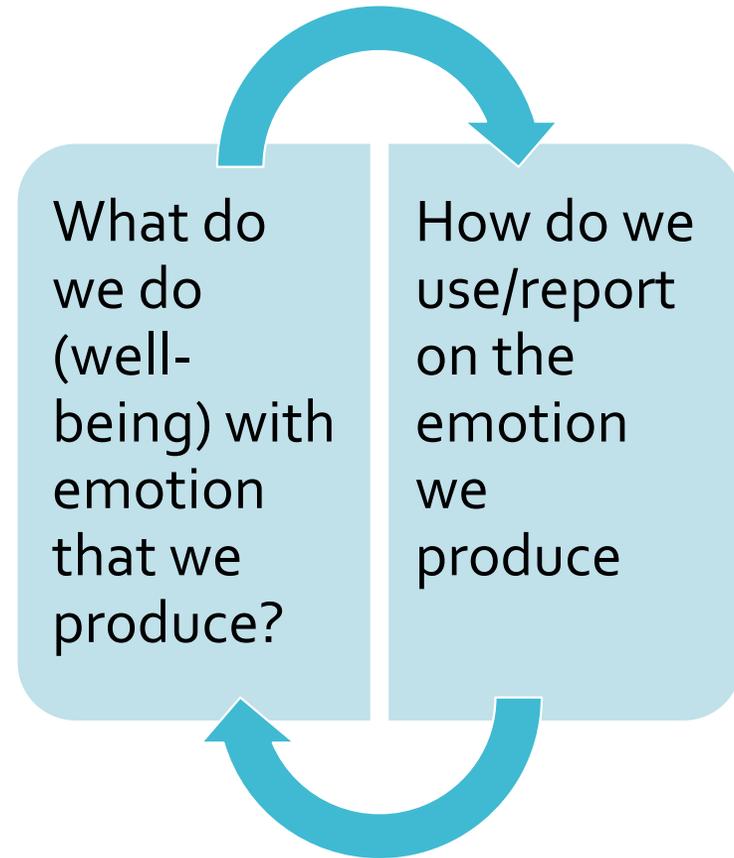


Teaching Emotion: Emotion as a bi-product of research, equipping social scientist to manage this data

Dr. Jo Ferrie Jo.Ferrie@Glasgow.ac.uk

The basic question



- Mostly an issue around qualitative methods – though seen with quants too
- My research around end of life is incredibly emotionally stressful but little support in the academy
- Increasing numbers of PGRs with mental health problems and stress
- Little support, or explicit recognition of the emotional labour of doing research
- Or of vicarious trauma

Outline

1

The problem

- Literature on emotion widely dispersed
- Both in terms of emotion in the field,
- And in terms of reporting it

2

Why it's important

- If we only report words /quotes, we miss half of the information
- Challenge around reliably reporting the emotion experienced

3

What happens next

- Framework needed
 - To capture emotion
 - And report it
- Students/we need an output for emotional labour
- And strategies for well-being

This paper

- Focuses on pedagogic strategies
- In 2017 and 2018 a 2 hour workshop on 'Emotion' was included in an advanced post-grad course 'Applied Qualitative Methods'
- In addition, workshops were held at the Scottish Graduate School of Social Science's Summer School in 2017
- And in their advanced training programme in 2018

Focus of this teaching

Making the Case

- Ethics of only using some data – words are distorted without emotion (field diary and data from Ferrie, Wiseman & Watson, 2013)

Explaining why Emotion has been 'left out'

- Speed at which Qualitative Methods emerged
- Early attempts to systemize qualitative approaches to 'resemble' a scientific method
- Subjectivity (words) vs objectivity (restricted emotional engagement)
- Kleinman & Copp '93; Bellas '99 'distillation to produce discursive evidence'
- Sterilisation of data in practice, to what is considered 'credible' Fine '94 using feminist approaches

Problems in reporting emotion: Ferrie, Wiseman & Watson (2013)

- Actual quote used:
 - 'Patsy (Sob) I just didn't feel like I count'
 - From an interview about her experience of MND, and the trauma of a diagnostic process that was particularly problematic
1. Why this word sob?
 2. Why not use the word 'cried'?
 3. Am I being descriptive (of her emotional content), or is this my emotional content?

1. Sob is the best I could do

- Excerpt from my field diary (not published)
- 'Patsy broke down. Emotion flooded from her. Her face crumpled. Tears came. She bent over in her chair. She gasped for breath in order to speak. Not so distressed that she couldn't speak, but distressed enough that her speech lost its earlier fluency, she stuttered each word and losing a range of intonation as her energy went into articulating each word'

More from the field diary

'Patsy battled to get her words out. I said I was turning off the tape recorder. She sobbed 'no', she wanted her emotion captured for THAT is what she'd signed up to. Her daughter reacted, her face crumpled. I felt mine distort too. Her daughter moved forward mirroring her Mum's bent position. I sat back to give them more space, more time, and room to react, to let them decide what happened next. And I cried, differently, quietly. We co-constructed that emotion. We shared it. I felt it. Patsy understood that she was being listened to. I absorbed some of her fear, in understanding and listening and emotively connecting, I began a process of becoming a Guardian of this data, and it's emotional value. To give you her words without this emotional value doesn't just undermine the message, it undermines her. It allows us to clinically address what is said rather than critically address what it means. If I allow my reader to be unaffected, then I have lost my opportunity for change. I have failed in my Guardianship. For to really tell you what life is like with MND I need you to feel distressed, fearful, anxious. I needed to be upset. And I need to upset you.'

Exercises

- Students are given a 5 minute clip and can choose either “Sophie’s Choice” or “25th Hour”
- Instructed to transcribe, including emotion, and submit for homework
- A 4 line quote is selected from all students and included on a slide for the next week’s teaching
- Firstly, what students noted was that the trigger warning had been valuable. They hadn’t thought about qualitative research as needing a trigger warning.

Excerpts from Sophie's Choice

Male: you may keep one of your children, the other one must go (demonstrating his power/feeling powerful/mighty)

Female: (Desperate, scared, confused) you mean, I have to choose?

Male: You are Polack not a Yid: That gives you a privilege, a choice.

Female: (Desperate, begging) I can't choose! I can't choose!

Male (Aggressive) Be quiet.

German Officer: You may keep one of your children. The other one must go.

Sophie: You mean, I have to choose?

German Officer: You are Polack not a Yid. That gives you a privilege, a choice.

Sophie: I can't choose [almost whimpering], I can't choose! [shaking head, *pleading*]

German Officer: Be quiet.

Nazi Officer: You may keep one of your children. The other one must go.

Sophie: You mean, I have to choose?

German Officer: You are Polack not a Yid. That gives you a privilege, a choice.

Sophie: I can't choose. I can't choose!
German Officer: Be quiet.

SS Officer: You may keep one of your children. The other one must go away.

Sophie: (disbelieving) You mean I have to choose?

SS Officer: You are Polack not a Yid. That gives you a privilege, a choice.

[His tone is softer, gentler. He thinks he's doing her a favour. Sophie would know that whichever of the children isn't chosen will die in one of the camps. The realization of what the SS officer is telling her to do seems to overwhelm Sophie all at once.]

Sophie: I can't choose! I can't choose!

SS Officer: Be quiet.



The workshop is also heavy on literature

- Camacho 2016
- Recognition of personal motivations of being a researcher have an emotional base
- Hume 2007
- Stress in the field was internalized as 'failure' because her discipline's literature had not taught her that stress was 'normal'
- Dickson-Swift et al 2009
- Building rapport with participants is emotional labour. As is dealing with difficult emotions - particularly where the research is difficult (topic or participants)
- Denzin 1984
- To be human, is to be emotional

Reflexivity (and well-being)

- Reflexivity has become a dumping ground. A space where we may excuse our mistakes, seek absolution through the confessional of errors, and possibly the only space where the emotion of the researcher can be credibly discussed
- But using it as a framework to evaluate practice may enable students/us to protect their well-being
 - Take breaks in the field
 - Build this into your timeframe
 - Avoid internalizing as a failure
 - Look for signs of distress
 - And Act: therapy, peer support, supervision, counselling training, reduce the number of participants, self care, write.

Next Steps:

- Emotion, Space and Society is the only journal I'm aware of that really hosts such work? Others?
- I'll follow up with students to re-deliver training as they enter the field and see if this approach has in fact, helped
- The inclusion of a workshop formally, in a course, has allowed students to a) see the need to think through emotional labour before the field and b) given them some strategies to help but perhaps most importantly c) demonstrated that the University recognises this labour is real and difficult

- Camacho, D. (2016) Blurring Boundaries: an emotionally aware caregiver, social worker, and researcher. *Qualitative Social World*. Vol. 15 (5-6)- 682-695
- Dickson-Swift, V., James, E.L., Kippen, S., & Liamputtong, P. (2006) Blurring Boundaries in Qualitative Health Research on Sensitive Topics. *Qualitative Health Research* Vol. 16 (6) 853-871
- Dickson-Swift, V., James, E.L., Kippen, S., & Liamputtong, P (2009) Researching sensitive topics: qualitative research as emotion work. *Qualitative Research*. Vol 9(1) 61-79
- Ferrie, J., Wiseman, P. & Watson, N. (2013)
- Fine, M. (1994) Dis-stance and other stances: negotiations of power inside feminist research. In. A. Gitlin (Ed) *Power and Method: Political activism and Educational research*. Routledge.
- Hume, M. (2007) Unpicking the treads: Emotion as central to the theory and practice of researching violence. *Women's Studies International Forum* 30 147-157