
BASE

SIEF Working Group

It has been a long time since there has been a working group newsletter. My apologies for this! (The past year did not entirely go to plan - to put it in a British, understated kind of way). Since then, the working group has grown steadily in size and we now have over 50 members from all over Europe and the USA. We will also have our 2nd working group workshop in Barcelona in October. You will find more information here.

Communication matters

This is just a reminder that we have a group mailing list: base@lists.siefhome.org.

The group mailing list allows us to share information and questions and facilitate group discussions. Most of you should have received an email confirming your subscription to the mailing list. If you have not received the email by the end of June, please let Kerstin (basewg@siefhome.org) know.

CfP: BASE workshop, 29-30 Oct 2018 in Barcelona

29 and 30 October 2018

Venue: Institució Milà i Fontanals (CSIC), C/ Egipcíaques 15, 08001 Barcelona, Spain (<http://www.imf.csic.es/>)

Local convenors: Begonya Enguix Grau (benguix@uoc.edu), Josep Martí (jmarti@imf.csic.es)

Working group president: Jonas Frykman, Working group secretary: Kerstin Pfeiffer, email: basewg@siefhome.org

Research on bodies, affects, senses and emotions has today spread beyond the bounds of philosophy, sociology and psychology. Interest in these concepts now ranges across fields from anthropology, ethnology, folklore, literature, history, cinema studies, gender studies, sport, religion and linguistics to computer studies, to name but a few examples. Underlying this proliferation of interest, bodies, affects, senses and emotions take on a role as a fundamental means of understanding the social nature of human beings and their relation to material culture.

Building on our inaugural workshop in Lund (2016), the working group panels at the Göttingen SIEF congress (2017) and looking forward to the upcoming SIEF congress in Santiago in 2019, our 2nd

workshop seeks to explore the work which is currently being done by working group members and other scholars researching on body, affects, senses and emotions in diverse and creative ways.

We invite 20-minute presentations and papers from scholars across the disciplines in the arts & humanities. Proposals should be concerned with the focus of the working group - bodies, affects, emotions, senses - but can take a variety of perspectives (historical, synchronic etc).

Proposals of no more than 300 words, accompanied by a max 100-word biography, should be submitted to Begonya Enguix benguix@uoc.edu, Josep Martí jmarti@imf.csic.es and to basewg@sieffhome.org by **Friday 28 September 2018**.

The workshop program will be confirmed in early October.

Workshop organisers:

Begonya Enguix Grau, Universitat Oberta de Catalunya, Josep Martí, Institució Milà i Fontanals (CSIC), Jonas Frykman, Lund University, Kerstin Pfeiffer, Heriot-Watt University Edinburgh

Letter to BASE WG members from Jonas Frykman

Dear BASE working group members,

Drawing on previous meeting in Lund and the discussion that took part in Göttingen 2017 it turns out that many ethnologists and folklorists are doing research on body, affects, senses and emotions in diverse and creative ways. It will be encouraging to meet and find out about this development in Barcelona in October 2018. The arrangement details will be announced by our local hosts later on. Let me just remind you of some of the approaches that have materialized at our earlier meetings. They might seem well-known – which is good. Probably they reflect the importance of keeping some continuity between what we are doing right now and traditions within our discipline.

When body and the senses are in focus most researchers deal with variants of at least two classical approaches. First and foremost a *historical perspective* will have much to reveal about processes of formation of the sense: how to “educate the senses” to paraphrase Peter Gay’s (1984) study of the bourgeoisie in the 19th Ct. Here well-known perspective about socialization habitus and bodily sedimentation is brought to the fore. What has been missing in that kind of work as well as in most studies carried out so far in neighboring disciplines is what makes the formation of affects and emotions tangible, namely the ethnological focus on how learning processes are transmitted via things - clothes, toys, beds, wallpapers... in short, material culture as well as everyday routines. Lately I have been working with the transformation of sexuality in the 40’s and 50’s, a time when discussions among reformers and politicians ran high and romance was everywhere on screens and magazines. Still when looking at actual practices I was amazed to find how unyielding sexual behavior and conduct remained unchanged from previous epochs, mostly because they were made parts of a material order in the home that did not change that drastically. Discourse and conduct seldom were in consort.

Secondly and perhaps most obvious for many of us working with affects is to approach a certain field which implies focusing on the *synchronic*. In most such studies theories of practice are being brought to the fore. Just to give an example, most of the contributions to the book “Sensitive Objects: Affect and Material Culture” (eds. Frykman & Povrzanović Frykman 2016) take cases from the field as their point of departure. Hauge’s analysis of Black Metal is describing the interobjectivity between a certain rock musician and the place with trees, waterfall, grass and the old mill where he writes and performs. Or Hjemdahl Mathiesen who writes about how a successful hotel manager must keep attuned to the physical rooms, pictures, and people in organizing her innovative business - the building talks and she listens.

Examples like these have been presented in papers discussed during our previous meetings, whether it has been about sport, religious practices, migration, theatrical performances or student housing. My point in bringing it up here is that when writing about Body, Affect, Senses and Emotions the diachronic as the historical approach are two directions that are constantly interwoven.

Please notify Kerstin (basewg@siefhome.org) and our local organisers, Begonya Enguix Grau (benguix@uoc.edu) and Josep Marti (jmarti@imf.csic.ed) if you intend to meet up. And give also some feedback if you are prepared to take part in a panel in Santiago that will be suggested by Maja Povrzanović and me.

Yours,

Jonas Frykman

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Have a lovely summer and hopefully see you in Barcelona in autumn!

Kerstin (basewg@siefhome.org)