

Exploring the creative art of living

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psychological help practice**

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Content

- * Exploring the creative art of living
 - * Some examples
- * Objectivity in society and university
- * Emotions
- * Qualitative research and emotions
- * Analytic use of emotions

Exploring the creative art of living ?

- * Social world: the creative art of living ?
- * Do we have agency ?
- * Are we able to shape our lives ?
- * Are we shaped by structure (institutions, social economical conditions, etc.)?
- * the creative art of living lies in the tension between agency and structure
- * Research focus is on meaning and emotions: subjective experience of social life (symbolic interaction)

Exploring the creative art of living ?

- * Explorative qualitative research

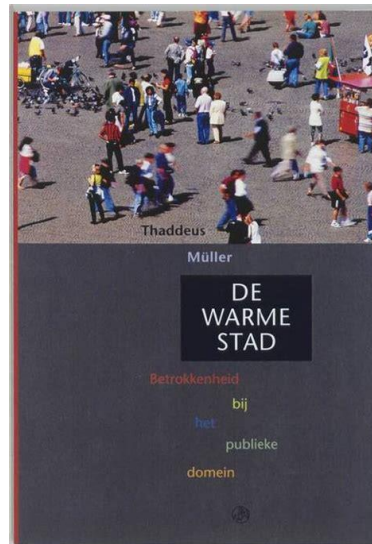
the creative art of explorative qualitative research
Lies in the tension between improvisation and
procedure

Improvisation: intuition, emotions, involvement and
creativity.

Hooligans (1988): The stigma of the Amsterdam Ajax hooligans?



The warm city (2002): feeling at home in Amsterdam public space ?



Academic Fraud (2011): what is his narrative ?



Lou Reed Fans (2011): what does Lou Reed mean to them?



Cannabis Shops in Canada (2017): Amsterdam academic



Objectivity in Science and Society

- * Objectivity and Science
- * Ideal of the rational researcher
- * Emotions disturb one's perception

Objectivity in Science and Society

- * Ancient Greeks, Christianity , Middleclass
- * Binary oppositions
- * Reason against emotions
- * Spirit against body
 - * Mental labour versus physical labour
 - * Discipline/ civilisation versus savagery
 - * Men versus women
 - * High against low
 - * Upper (middle) class against working class
 - * Modern versus traditional

Objectivity in Science and Society

- * Civilised society: middle class
 - * Disciplining of emotions (physicality) has status
 - * **Frontstage and backstage** (Goffman)
 - * Strict division between **private and public**
- * Cultural transformation since the sixties: informalisation process
 - * Lessening of the division between private and public
 - * Emotions in the public realm: emotion tv

Objectivity in Science and Society

- * Science

- * Centre of the intellect, of logic
 - * Discipline, civilisation
- * The central value is objectivity, no bias (no hidden agenda, no prejudices)
- * Validity and reliability are endangered by personal and emotional involvement
- * These have to be shut out

Emotions

- * How do emotions work?
- * What are emotions?

Emotions

- * They do not just happen (out of the blue)
 - * They are related to culture and interaction
 - * Gender, Class, Generation
- * The interpretation of a situation
- * Physical reaction
- * Interpretation of a physical reaction as a specific emotion

Qualitative research and emotions

- * Fieldwork is done by ‘your’ self
- * Interactions and relations
- * These are always related to emotions
- * How to we deal with emotions?

Qualitative research and emotions

- * Do not deny your emotional / personal involvement
- * Be or become aware of these your involvement
- * Why are emotions relevant for criminology ?
- * Emotions are indications of the social world we study
- * Emotions show researchers the way to meanings, rules, shame, boundaries between private and public

Qualitative research and emotions

- * Lofland et al (2006)
- * Analysing social settings. A guide to qualitative observation and analyses
- * Fieldwork: difficult, insecure, uncomfortable

Qualitative research and emotions

- * **Information overload (fear, anxiety, insecurity)**
 - * **Beginning: what is relevant, am I missing anything, I am doing a good job**
 - * “I cannot get it al”
- * Recognize patterns
- * Prolonged systematic observations

Qualitative research and emotions

- * Deception and Fear of Disclosure (guilty am I open and honest towards my respondents)**
- * I am a cheater**
- * “Someone will find out”**

Qualitative research and emotions

- * **Distance and Surrender**
- * Loathing
- * Hard to accept, because it contrasts with trust and rapport
 - * Racists
 - * Gay-Bashing
 - * Rapists
 - * Paedophiles

Qualitative research and emotions

- * **Marginalisation (beginning)**

- * Ethnicity, gender, age
- * Snow & Anderson: homeless: narcs & religious nuts
- * Lonely, fear and alienation
- * Slowly feel more comfortable
- * Duration and transformation: Anderson became arrested

Qualitative research and emotions

- * **Sympathy & identification**

- * Over-rapport
- * Over-identifying

- * **Converting; going native**

- * **The ideal approach:**

- * Non-judgmental understanding of the inner life and practices of our informants without actually adopting their perspective or point of view

Qualitative research and emotions

- * **Physical danger: anxiety, stress**
- * Gangland; hooliganism
- * Fieldwork Under Fire: Contemporary Studies of Violence and Survival (Nordstrom & Robben 1995)



Analytical use of emotions : The researcher as an instrument/tool

Analytical use of emotions

- * This is a reflexive process: our emotions influence our research, and our research can affect us emotionally. This emotional dialogue between our inner feelings and our research can be an important intellectual resource. (Campbell 2001).

Analytical use of emotions

- * Emotionally engaged research can:
- * (...) open up space for new questions, ideas, and interpretations; challenge fundamental concepts, such as claims to truth, subjectivity, objectivity, and experience, allowing new approaches to methods, theory, and knowledge to be explored. (Blakely 2007)

Analytical use of emotions

- * How does an acknowledgement and analysis of emotional experiences during research add value to understanding the social world that we study?
- * Three examples from:
 - * Whiteman, G., Müller, T., & Johnson, J. M. (2009). Strong emotions at work. *Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management: An International Journal*, 4(1), 46-61.

Analytical use of emotions

- * G's story
- * stakeholder theory in mining community in Guyana
- * Threatened in hotel
- * Interviews showed that local women were being raped by miners.

Analytical use of emotions

- * One time I had to save a girl who was 16. The Coastlanders raped her. (...) When they were almost finished with she, a boy came to wake me up. They drunk her. They had her in one those bush toilets, 16 or 17 men. She didn't complain to the police (...) The local word for that is “they bank the girl”.
- * Shocked, repulsed

Analytical use of emotions

- * Devoid of the flesh, blood, fear and humiliation of girls and communities affected by mining and logging
- * What the hell can stakeholder theory say about banking a girl? Not much
- * This tells us quite a lot about the limitation of stakeholder theory

Analytical use of emotions

- * T's story
 - * Communitas: we-feeling
- * Feyenoord-Ajax; violence, singing and winning
- * 1988: little analytical use of emotion
- * But it showed the meaning of violence and disorder and being together
- * It showed another (male) form of 'communitas'

Analytical use of emotions

- * J's story
- * Observing an execution
 - * 35 witnesses: nobody showed emotions, during or after the execution
 - * Quasi-medical
- * Drives his car and records his observation in a tape recorder

Analytical use of emotions

- * Suddenly he bursts into tears
- * He realizes this is not about the man that died
- * But about his part in the execution
- * Detached observer; one of the participants

Analytical use of emotions

- * He felt responsible for what happened:
- * The bureaucratically rationalized ritual of state execution is a very degrading one, for all parties concerned; we are rendered less moral and less human.
- * As a result he started to pay attention to similar experiences with other persons

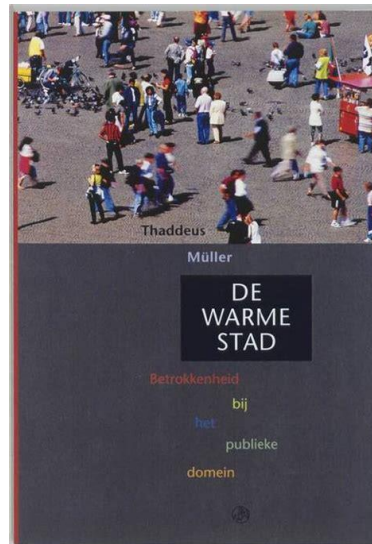
Analytical use of emotions

- * Enriched understanding of the social contexts we were studying
- * Identifying previously overlooked data and challenge existing theory
- * Improve sociological interpretation\generate additional questions

Analytical use of emotions

- * Gendered perspective on stakeholder theory
- * Male emotions related to violence and physicality: intimacy and power
- * Enriched the analysis on the symbolic nature of capital punishment

The warm city (2002): the perspective of new urbanites



Hooligans (1988): male intimacy



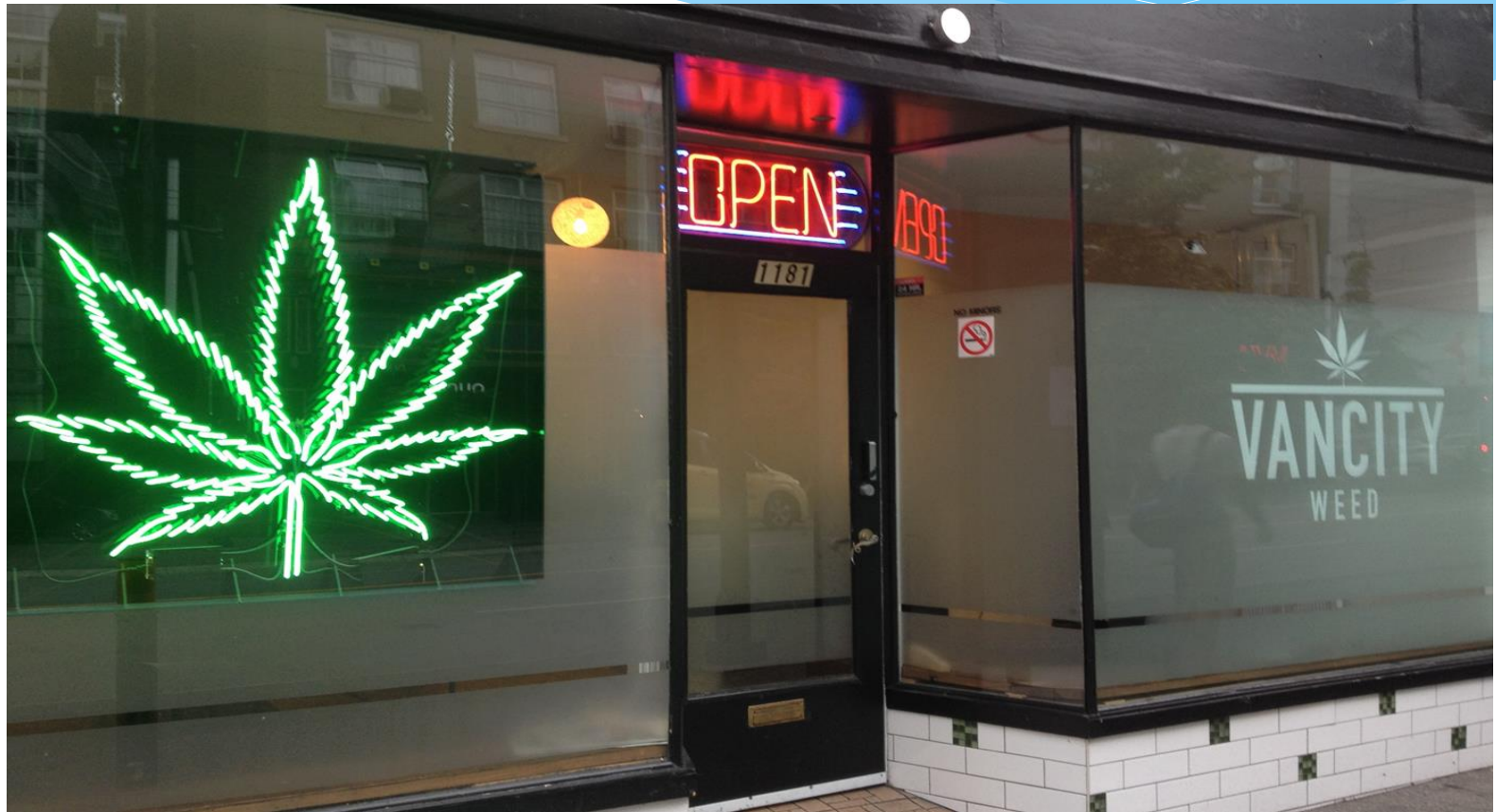
Academic Fraud (2013): fraud as part of neo-liberal academic training



Lou Reed Fans (2013): part of a wider community



Cannabis Shops in Canada (2017): stigma and the social construction of a counter narrative



Final remarks

By reflecting on our personal / emotional involvement we can explore the creative act of living in **a fundamental and innovative** way:

- * Enrich understanding of the social / emotional contexts we are studying
- * Identify previously overlooked data and challenge existing theory
- * Improve sociological interpretation\generate additional questions