

Swiss Center for Affective Sciences

LECTURE

Tuesday
May 10th 2016

12:15 - 13:30

Campus Biotech
Room 144.165
9, chemin des Mines
Geneva

From the folk concept 'being moved and touched' to the theoretical emotion 'kama muta': Theorizing and data on a social emotion and its causes

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Being moved or touched is an emotional experience that can cause weeping, goosebumps, and sensations of warmth. It has been cultivated for millennia, but psychological science has only recently started to learn more about it. We propose that being moved or touched is a social-relational emotion that regulates communal sharing relations. We hypothesize that it is caused by appraising a sudden intensification of social closeness (indexing communal sharing). In our talk, we review our studies where we asked people about their past experiences of being moved, where we asked people right after they saw moving videos, and where we asked them while they were watching videos. Our data are in line with the hypothesis that social closeness is a predictor of being moved. We will also discuss our approach to conceptualizing emotions in general and being moved and touched in particular, and why we believe that studying the folk concept referred to by the vernacular term 'being moved', or its equivalents in other languages might not be sufficient. Instead, our proposal is to introduce a theoretically defined emotion, which we call 'kama muta', and consider vernacular terms as its culturally variants ■

Swiss Doctoral School in Affective Sciences

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