

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-09501-4 - *Affective Communities in World Politics: Collective Emotions after Trauma*

Emma Hutchison

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Affective Communities in World Politics

Emotions underpin how political communities are formed and function. Nowhere is this more pronounced than in times of trauma. The emotions associated with suffering caused by war, terrorism, natural disasters, famine and poverty can play a pivotal role in shaping communities and orientating their politics. But until recently the political roles of emotions have received only scant attention.

This book contributes to burgeoning literatures on emotions and international relations by investigating how “affective communities” emerge after trauma. Drawing on several case studies and an unusually broad set of interdisciplinary sources, the book examines the role played by representations – from media images to historical narratives and political speeches. Representations of traumatic events are crucial, the book argues, because they generate socially embedded emotional meanings, which, in turn, enable direct victims and distant witnesses to share the injury – as well as the associated loss – in a manner that affirms a particular notion of collective identity. While ensuing political orders often re-establish old patterns, traumatic events can also generate new “emotional cultures” that genuinely transform national and transnational communities.

EMMA HUTCHISON is a RESEARCH FELLOW in the School of Political Science and International Studies at the University of Queensland, Australia. Her work focuses on emotions and trauma in world politics, particularly in relation to security, humanitarianism and international aid. She has published widely on these and related topics in scholarly books and international journals, including *International Theory*, *International Political Sociology*, *Review of International Studies*, and the *European Journal of Social Theory*.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-09501-4 - Affective Communities in World Politics: Collective Emotions after Trauma

Emma Hutchison

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-09501-4 - *Affective Communities in World Politics: Collective Emotions after Trauma*

Emma Hutchison

Frontmatter

[More information](#)



CAMBRIDGE STUDIES IN
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: 140

Affective Communities in World Politics

EDITORS

Christian Reus-Smit

Nicholas J. Wheeler

Evelyn Goh

EDITORIAL BOARD

James Der Derian, Theo Farrell, Martha Finnemore, Lene Hansen,

Robert Keohane, Rachel Kerr, Jan Aart Scholte, Peter Vale,

Kees van der Pijl, Jutta Weldes, Jennifer Welsh, William Wohlforth

Cambridge Studies in International Relations is a joint initiative of Cambridge University Press and the British International Studies Association (BISA). The series aims to publish the best new scholarship in international studies, irrespective of subject matter, methodological approach or theoretical perspective. The series seeks to bring the latest theoretical work in International Relations to bear on the most important problems and issues in global politics.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-09501-4 - *Affective Communities in World Politics: Collective Emotions after Trauma*

Emma Hutchison

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

 CAMBRIDGE STUDIES IN
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

- 139 Patricia Owens
Economy of force
Counterinsurgency and the historical rise of the social
- 138 Ronald R. Krebs
Narrative and the making of US national security
- 137 Andrew Phillips and J. C. Sharman
International order in diversity
War, trade and rule in the Indian Ocean
- 136 Ole Jacob Sending, Vincent Pouliot and Iver B. Neumann
Diplomacy and the making of world politics
- 135 Barry Buzan and George Lawson
The global transformation
History, modernity and the making of international relations
- 134 Heather Elko McKibben
State strategies in international bargaining
Play by the rules or change them?
- 133 Janina Dill
Legitimate targets?
Social construction, international law, and US bombing
- 132 Nuno P. Monteiro
Theory of unipolar politics
- 131 Jonathan D. Caverley
Democratic militarism
Voting, wealth, and war
- 130 David Jason Karp
Responsibility for human rights
Transnational corporations in imperfect states
- 129 Friedrich Kratochwil
The status of law in world society
Meditations on the role and rule of law

Series list continues after index

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-09501-4 - Affective Communities in World Politics: Collective Emotions after Trauma

Emma Hutchison

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Affective Communities in World Politics

Collective Emotions after Trauma

EMMA HUTCHISON



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-09501-4 - Affective Communities in World Politics: Collective Emotions after Trauma

Emma Hutchison

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781107095014

© Emma Hutchison 2016

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2016

Printed in Milton Keynes by Lightning Source UK Ltd

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data

Names: Hutchison, Emma, 1980– author.

Title: Affective communities in world politics : collective emotions after trauma / Emma Hutchison, the University of Queensland.

Description: New York : Cambridge University Press, 2016. | Series: Cambridge studies in international relations ; 140 | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2015042957 | ISBN 9781107095014 (hardback) Subjects:

LCSH: Political psychology. | Emotions – Political aspects. | Psychic trauma – Political aspects. | Group identity – Political aspects. | International relations – Psychological aspects. | BISAC: POLITICAL SCIENCE / International Relations / General.

Classification: LCC JA74.5.H86 2016 | DDC 327.101/9–dc23

LC record available at <http://lcn.loc.gov/2015042957>

ISBN 978-1-107-09501-4 Hardback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-09501-4 - Affective Communities in World Politics: Collective Emotions after Trauma

Emma Hutchison

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

For my family

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-09501-4 - Affective Communities in World Politics: Collective Emotions after Trauma

Emma Hutchison

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Contents

<i>List of Figures and Tables</i>	page x
<i>Preface</i>	xi
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xiv
Introduction	1
Part I Conceptual Framework	29
1 Trauma and Political Community	33
2 Theorizing Political Emotions	72
3 Representing Trauma and Collectivizing Emotions	111
Part II The Emotional Constitution of Political Community	153
4 Emotions and National Community	157
5 Emotions and Transnational Community	183
6 Trauma, Grief and Political Transformation	211
Conclusion: Affective Communities and Emotional Cultures in International Relations	267
<i>Bibliography</i>	302
<i>Index</i>	339

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-09501-4 - Affective Communities in World Politics: Collective Emotions after Trauma

Emma Hutchison

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Figures and tables*

4.1	Front page of <i>The Australian</i> , October 14, 2002	<i>page</i> 170
4.2	Front page of <i>The Australian</i> , October 15, 2002	172
4.3	Front page of <i>The Australian</i> , October 18, 2002	173
4.4	Front page of <i>The Weekend Australian</i> , October 19–20, 2002	176
4.5	Front page of <i>The Australian</i> , October 21, 2002	179
5.1	Front page of <i>The New York Times</i> , December 28, 2004	191
5.2	Front page of <i>The New York Times</i> , January 7, 2005	193
5.3	Front page of <i>The New York Times</i> , December 30, 2004	197
5.4	Front page of <i>The New York Times</i> , January 2, 2005	198
5.5	Front page of <i>The New York Times</i> , January 5, 2005	205
6.1	Chronology of China’s “Century of National Humiliation”	217

Preface

This book contributes to burgeoning literature on emotions and international relations by investigating how “affective communities” emerge after traumatic events. While trauma is frequently conceptualized as an individual, isolating experience, this book examines how representations – from media images to historical narratives and political speeches – make traumatic events collectively meaningful. Representations are crucial, the book argues, because they mobilize socially embedded emotional meanings, which, in turn, enable direct victims and witnesses to share the injury and loss in a manner that affirms a particular collective sense of identity. Representations of trauma can thus help to constitute bonds between individuals. They illuminate how and to whom individuals feel emotionally attached. While emotions mobilized after trauma often re-establish prevailing political orders and patterns, traumatic events can also generate new “emotional cultures” that genuinely transform national and transnational communities. The communities that ensue can be conceived of as “affective communities” in so far as they are necessarily constituted through, and distinguished by, social, collective forms of feeling.

One fundamental premise therefore focuses my inquiry: emotions permeate the complex, overlapping social structures that undergird decision making and collective action in world politics. Emotions are a fundamental, unavoidable and inherent dimension of human life, and thus of all social and political life. However, world politics has been traditionally perceived as a realm where, above all, precision, instrumentality and hence a technical, calculated, emotional-less rationality must necessarily prevail. Numerous scholars meanwhile show that the vision of an emotion-free rationality is a chimera. Rationality necessarily contains emotions, just as thinking does feeling. Emotions cannot be removed from political decision making, because emotions exist at the core of human life. Even if we try to hold our emotions at bay, they have always already shaded our inner-most thoughts and perceptions

of the world around us. But these seemingly individual emotions are always already collective and political. Emotions are embedded in and structured by particular social systems and, as such, are interwoven with the dominant interests, values and aspirations of those systems.

An investigation into the emotional underpinnings of political communities is important to international relations because it helps us to understand what motivates and drives political actors. This is as much the case with individuals, such as political leaders or diplomats, as it is with collectives, such as states or social movements. Understanding that emotions lie beneath all political perceptions provides important signals and critical clues as to why particular international actors respond and behave in the ways that they do. While this book examines the dynamics at stake in times of trauma, the ensuing implications are much broader. Emotions permeate all political events and issues. Individuals and political communities attribute meaning, value and priority to political phenomena by drawing upon socially cultivated affective and emotional dispositions.

Revealing that emotions are situated at the core of political perceptions and behaviors is thus significant because it assists scholars and analysts to puzzle together how particular political situations come to be. Emotions tell us things. While they are often hidden and inaudible, neglected and refuted, when uncovered and taken seriously, the political insights they provide are invaluable for analyzing politics and policy and for ascertaining what strategy might be best formulated next.

My argument regarding the links between emotions and political communities goes against some strands of international relations scholarship, particularly those who are concerned that such a move may “anthropomorphize” the state. It is true that attributing state actions with emotions and emotionality can be fraught. But, to me, it is a commonsensical proposition. Once we appreciate the “situatedness” of emotions, it becomes apparent that communities of all sizes provide an anchor to become attached to and potentially motivated by. To claim that political collectives – including nation-states and even international and transnational organizations – act in part on socially attuned emotions is merely to invoke the argument that it is exactly within such collective social structures that our emotions take on shape and meaning. This is not to claim that emotions within these structures and ensuing communities are homogenous, or that individual allegiances do not overlap to constitute different,

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-09501-4 - Affective Communities in World Politics: Collective Emotions after Trauma

Emma Hutchison

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Preface*

xiii

intersecting, potentially contradictory “affective communities.” It is merely to argue that in particular circumstances, and through particular activating representations or frames, emotions can be mobilized in ways that make possible collective, political ends. Emotions can become receptacles of political agency and power. Emotions can help to affect political change, or they can be summoned in service of the status quo, for what may be for the better or for the worse. An appreciation of how such collective emotions operate – how emotions can become entrenched or act as sites of resistance – has in this way direct implications for how scholars and practitioners engage and try to resolve some of the world’s most pressing political, security and ethical problems.

Acknowledgments

Writing this book has been as much a part of a personal search to understand trauma as it has been a scholarly one. Formally, it began some time ago, as my PhD dissertation, but my ruminating about trauma, emotions and community started long before this, as a consequence of my own experiences. In one sense, even to me, what I have endured seems very different from the political trauma I examine in this book. I am reluctant even to label my own experiences “trauma.” Yet, in another sense, there are synergies that suggest that the boundaries between my life and my research are not so black and white. This book would not be what it is without the intersection between the two.

Relatively young – aged eighteen – I was diagnosed with a chronic health condition that, quite literally, made me see the world anew. It was end-stage renal failure, and I was given twelve months until I would need to start dialysis. It was to be only three. The seamless, carefree vision of reality as I knew it was over. Like the instances of political trauma I write of, normal life was replaced with one filled with uncertainty, contingency and doubt. Over the next few years, until I received and fully adjusted to my first kidney transplant, I went through something in the way of suffering that has come to embody a trauma. It is sometimes still hard to believe that it has all happened to me. But kidney failure is by no means the worst that can happen to anyone – in fact, I strangely believe I’m the better for it. Great things have come. Facing something that seems so incomprehensible, I’ve come out the other side better. Myself, my family and my closest connections are stronger because of it. I say this even despite the fact that I am now back on dialysis, my transplant having failed last year.

The impetus for this book thus emerged from a search to understand how we can find meaning in shocking, incomprehensible, traumatic things, and how that meaning can help us to turn things around, to flourish rather than languish. How do we make meaning from

Acknowledgments

xv

trauma? How does pain shape us? Can the sight of another's trauma inspire those who witness to care? How are we engendered to perceive of some suffering as so traumatic that it warrants a response, while others are left to suffer in silence? The links between emotions and community are central to such questions. But too often in world politics we see these questions left out. With this book I have thus sought to bring them back in. Investigating the intersections between emotions and community is more than just about understanding how trauma can constitute political communities. It is about how we live and interact. It is about how and for whom we really care, and why is it that we do in the ways that we do.

Just as my experiences have pushed me to understand the meaning of trauma, they have also challenged me to understand the meaning of community. This has been a task that has seemed, at least personally, neither straightforward nor easy. Writers such as David Morris and Elaine Scarry intuit much when they stress that chronic pain seems to break down understanding, building up "walls of separation." This book has thus also emerged from my own grappling – from my fears and my hopes – that when in pain, despite our darkest moments, we are never wholly alone.

While this book began as a PhD dissertation, it has in the five years since been almost completely transformed. Many colleagues and scholars have helped me to get it to where it is now. Reviewers from Cambridge University Press provided invaluable insights and queries that pushed me to take the manuscript further than I would have done otherwise. Tim Dunne and Chris Reus-Smit helped to keep my changes for CUP focused. David Campbell, Jenny Edkins and Barbara Sullivan also read an earlier iteration of the book. Their in-depth, encouraging feedback prompted me to rethink aspects of my approach. Many scholars reviewed parts of the book, either as draft chapters or in article form. For their probing comments and questions, I would particularly like to acknowledge Janice Bially Mattern, Katharine Gelber, Susanna Hast, Karin Fierke, Lauren Leigh Hinthorne, Andrew Linklater, Iver Neumann, Kate Manzo, Jonathan Mercer and anonymous reviewers of articles from which select parts of following chapters are based.

A warm thank you must go to the intellectual home from which inklings of this book first sprung: the School of Political Science and International Studies at the University of Queensland (UQ). Ever since my undergraduate days, UQ has provided me with a supportive

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-09501-4 - *Affective Communities in World Politics: Collective Emotions after Trauma*

Emma Hutchison

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

institutional and scholarly environment. Academic staff – now colleagues – have never ceased to encourage me. I hope that the same kind of intellectual curiosity and rigor that permeates my department bears out in the pages that follow. I owe a special debt to two further scholars who while at UQ have supported and challenged me, taking time to review and discuss my work at length: Prudence Ahrens and Richard Devetak. Cindy O’Hagan also deserves a special mention, as it was she who while at UQ first enticed me away from studying Mandarin into the wider world of international relations. She has remained a constant source of energy, insight and questions for me since. Thank you also to Constance Duncombe, who has been a sheer wonder to work with over the past year and a half. Her invaluable research assistance has kept me lunging toward the finish line. For their collegiality, friendship and ongoing conversations about my work and this book over the past decade, I thank Alex Bellamy, Stephen Bell, Morgan Brigg, Anne Brown, Shannon Brincat, Mark Chou, Sara Davies, Suzanne Grant, Marianne Hanson, Marguerite La Caze, Madeleine-Marie Judd, Sebastian Kaempf, Matt McDonald, Xzarina Nicholson, Andrew Phillips, Heather Rae, Tricia Rooney, Angela Setterlund, Caitlin Sparks, Elizabeth Strakosch, Emily Tannock, Heloise Weber, Martin Weber, Gillian Whitehouse and Erin Wilson. Some of these scholars have since moved on from UQ, but I am honored that they remain colleagues and, in some cases, close friends.

This book has also benefited from many workshops, panels, seminars, email exchanges and conversations with friends and colleagues in the academic community. Many of these connections have been concentrated on emotions and world politics, and have provided a rich source of insight, inspiration and debate. One such workshop, which preceded a special forum section on “Emotions and World Politics,” co-edited with Roland Bleiker, brought together scholars who helped me to crystallize the contribution of this book. For these and other scholarly discussions that have been key to my thinking about emotions and associated aspects of world politics, my sincere thanks go to Linda Åhäll, Ken Booth, Frank Costigliola, Neta Crawford, Tuomas Forsberg, Thomas Gregory, Lene Hansen, Marcus Holmes, Lily Ling, Simon Koschut, Katrina Lee-Koo, Renée Jeffery, Swati Parashar, Laura Shepherd, Oliver Richmond, Brent Sasley, Jacqui True and Wes Widmaier.

Various grants and fellowships made it possible for me to continue to focus on researching and writing this book, even when times of ill

Acknowledgments

xvii

health have taken over. An Australian Research Council Discovery Grant (DP110100546) on “how images shape responses to humanitarian crises” undertaken together with Roland Bleiker and David Campbell allowed me to remain in academia. Last year, I was awarded a UQ Postdoctoral Fellowship for Women. Before this, I spent part of 2010 as a Postdoctoral Fellow at the European University Institute (EUI). I am especially grateful to the late Peter Mair and everyone at the Department of Social and Political Science at EUI who were so welcoming during my stay. At earlier stages of my research I also enjoyed two visiting fellowships at the Australian National University. Thank you to the Canberra Branch of the Australian Federation of University Women and the UQ Graduate School for making these fellowships possible.

As an Associate Investigator in the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence in the History of Emotions, I have also been fortunate to forge connections and glean insight from emotional historians that I might not have otherwise. Thank you to all at the Centre who have made my AI status and funding possible. For their intellectual and institutional support, special thanks go to Merridee Bailey, Ann Brooks, Lucy Burnett, Jane Davidson, Peter Holbrook, Barbara Keys, David Lemmings, Andrew Lynch, Katrina Tap, Tanya Tuffrey, Stephanie Trigg and Charles Zika.

Cambridge University Press has been a particularly supportive publisher during the sometimes winding process of completing this book. Thank you to series editors Chris Reus-Smit, Nick Wheeler and Evelyn Goh for supporting the book from the very beginning. Thank you also to the Political and Social Sciences publisher, John Haslam, as well as the Politics, Sociology and Psychology editor, Carrie Parkinson, who have patiently guided me through the various publishing processes. I would also especially like to thank all at Cambridge University Press for their understanding during times when my deteriorating health further delayed the manuscript’s delivery.

Parts of this book draw on from material previously published elsewhere. Chapter 4 has been adapted from “Trauma and the Politics of Emotions: Constituting Identity, Security and Community After the Bali Bombing,” *International Relations*, 24.1 (2010), 65–86, copyright © Sage. Chapter 5 expands on “A Global Politics of Pity? The Emotional Construction of Solidarity after the 2004 Asian Tsunami,” *International Political Sociology*, 8.1 (2014), 1–19, copyright © Wiley. I thank the publishers for permission to reproduce passages.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-09501-4 - *Affective Communities in World Politics: Collective Emotions after Trauma*

Emma Hutchison

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Finally, the people I owe the most thanks to are also the hardest to know how to begin to thank. It is impossible to articulate the role Roland Bleiker has played in supporting me through the production of this book. As my colleague, collaborator and first reader, he has helped me to find my scholarly voice and communicate my passion with both order and care. As my confidant and partner, he is somehow – remarkably – always right beside me. His everyday optimism and out-of-the-box thinking are a constant source of wonder. Together, we look beyond life’s traumas. I cannot imagine this book – and indeed, life – without him.

My final thank you is for my family: my parents, Roslyn and Brian Hutchison, and my brothers, Fergus and Darren. They have for long been my support crew, helping to celebrate the good times and beside me when things seem to go bad. Since I was little they have watched and wondered as I retreated with books. While encouraging me with questions, they also know when to pull me out and keep me grounded. Without them, I would not be where I am today. They have always helped me to do what I do and be who I am. This is why, in appreciation and with much love, I dedicate this book to them.