

## Abstract 1

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## **“I had to go off in the dark somewhere and swear a bit” – Narratives of emotion work in festival management**

Analysing the culture of a festival organisation helps us understand how staff members collaborate and work with each other in a stressful environment; the organisational culture is directly linked to the success or failure of a festival (Getz, 2010, Larsen, 2011). The culture of a festival organisation also partly shapes how staff members deal with their emotions. Understanding emotion work as part of festival management is therefore crucial in regards to knowing how to work with each other. Emotion work is “the act of trying to change in degree or quality an emotion or feeling” (Hochschild, 1979, p. 561); it not only entails knowing and effectively dealing with one’s own emotions, but also knowing how to properly conduct oneself in order to be able to lead others and their emotions (Hochschild, 1979, Lupton, 1998). Emotions, however, always need to be understood in their social and cultural context as embodied and constructed (Lupton, 1998). The organisational context shapes how emotions are experienced and dealt with in everyday interactions and workplace cultures. Within organisational settings it may only be acceptable to express certain emotions in front of other employees or managers due to particular organisational norms and cultural practices (Thoits, 1989, Domagalski, 1999, Vince, 2001).

An ethnographic case study with the Queensland Music Festival (QMF, 2011) has been conducted from February – August 2011 and forms the basis for this paper. I analysed seven stories and narratives (Cortazzi, 2001, Frank, 2002) that my participants told in order to make visible their emotion work practices as an embodied dimension of festival management. I also analysed my ethnographic field notes in order to find similarities and differences in emotion work as experienced by staff members and myself, the researcher. In my analysis I followed a holistic-content narrative analysis approach (Lieblich, et al., 1998) emphasising how emotion work was shaped by the values, principles and culture of the organisation. I particularly highlight how staff members and members of the creative team engaged in emotion work as part of working professionally. Certain emotions, such as anger, were not shown in front of the community or in front of each other, but rather held back. On the other hand, positive emotions, excitement and joy were constantly shared with others on the team as well as with the researcher contributing to a positive atmosphere despite the high workload. I aim to contribute to Getz’s (2007, Getz et al., 2010) framework for understanding and creating knowledge about festivals by emphasising emotion work as an important part of festival

management within certain organisational cultures and values. From a practical perspective, festival managers can benefit from understanding how the organisational culture shapes staff members' emotion work practices in effectively building relationships and working with each other even during the most stressful time.

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