



The Affect Theory Reader

Melissa Gregg (Editor), Gregory J. Seigworth (Editor)

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This field-defining collection consolidates and builds momentum in the burgeoning area of affect studies. The contributors include many of the central theorists of affect—those visceral forces beneath, alongside, or generally *other than* conscious knowing that can serve to drive us toward movement, thought, and ever-changing forms of relation. As Lauren Berlant explores “cruel optimism,” Brian Massumi theorizes the affective logic of public threat, and Elspeth Probyn examines shame, they, along with the other contributors, show how an awareness of affect is opening up exciting new insights in disciplines from anthropology, cultural studies, geography, and psychology to philosophy, queer studies, and sociology. In essays diverse in subject matter, style, and perspective, the contributors demonstrate how affect theory illuminates the intertwined realms of the aesthetic, the ethical, and the political as they play out across bodies (human and non-human) in both mundane and extraordinary ways. They reveal the broad theoretical possibilities opened by an awareness of affect as they reflect on topics including ethics, food, public morale, glamor, snark in the workplace, and mental health regimes. *The Affect Theory Reader* includes an interview with the cultural theorist Lawrence Grossberg and an afterword by the anthropologist Kathleen Stewart. In the introduction, the editors suggest ways of defining affect, trace the concept’s history, and highlight the role of affect theory in various areas of study.

Contributors

Sara Ahmed
Ben Anderson
Lauren Berlant
Lone Bertelsen
Steven D. Brown
Patricia Ticineto Clough
Anna Gibbs
Melissa Gregg
Lawrence Grossberg
Ben Highmore
Brian Massumi
Andrew Murphie
Elspeth Probyn
Gregory J. Seigworth
Kathleen Stewart
Nigel Thrift
Ian Tucker
Megan Watkins

The Affect Theory Reader Details

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From Reader Review The Affect Theory Reader for online ebook

Emma says

though i really liked happy objects, Sarah Ahmed's contribution, and Patricia Clough on the political economy of the biomediated body

Jessica Zu says

Only read relevant chapters, Ahmed's and Grossberg's essays are very interesting, in different ways. I also like Clough's essay on the economy of affect. the role of media (especially biomedia) in this economy. but what I realized the most is that I have to read Deleuze and Guattari in order to understand the affective turn in cultural studies.

Juliekantor says

Some of the essays are fantastic, Clough, Anderson, Thrift, Massumi, Berlant, Stewart.

Kristine says

I didn't really understand this but I felt like I did lol!

William says

very good outline of the emergent critical field.

Andy Jackson says

A handful of interesting essays - but overall, too much theory, not enough affect, ironically...

Liz says

Still have mixed emotions about Affect Theory AS a thing that crossed literary and psychological spaces AS such. It feels like it's being co-opted to mean too many things and falls in to the same pitfalls that Deleuze and Guattari often do by taking "as-if" to mean "is".

Leilani says

I couldn't even finish it, the collection was so all over the place. I think the topic of affect theory is just too broad for me to get interested...

Rebecca says

A good introduction to affect theory, its history, and to its different theoretical tendencies and tracks. Some of the essays are perfect examples of the most vapid, mystifying, and self-congratulatory habits of thinking and writing in cultural studies theory. Other essays are stimulating & thoughtful and suggest that this concept of affect could be useful in the effort to understand aspects of experience.

Mills College Library says

152.4 A2565 2010

David Carver says

After a century dominated by the "linguistic turn," affect theory offers a much more complicated but much less ultimately stifling theoretical vision of politics, culture, gender, art, knowledge, and society for the contemporary scholar. The essays in this book are of two main sorts: example-driven, such as Massumi's essay on threat in the neoconservative era of double-conditional preemption; and theory-driven, such as nothing I can remember, as these tended toward an obfuscation that did not reflect precision so much as artificial significance. Based on the writers and topics collected for this book, the challenge for Western academia under the influence of affect studies will be how to reverse the model of the previous century's academic approach to cultural studies: from unified-theory confusion to multiplicitous pragmatism.

Leif says

Affect theory: here it is. Some good essays, some... tedious; problematically, dense layers of mystification in most essays, even the best. I have mixed feelings about it, but the collection itself is a landmark and worth noting as such.
