

What's Going On? Mapping the Affective Work of Media

This presentation is an attempt to illustrate how the turn to affect in media and communication studies offers a way for a deeper understanding of contemporary media culture. With a focus on the affective processes that are at work, I will draw a cartography of the dynamics, power relations and potentialities of various forms of media and media use. This entails a shift from asking what media represent and how media practices are to be differentiated, typologized or categorized to the question of what media and media practices do. What kind of connections are formed, what desires are produced, and what assemblages are materialized? Referring to several case studies, this presentation will illustrate

how power is performed through the modulation of affect and, at the same time, how new potentialities possibly emerge. The presentation will end with a plea for situated, embodied and embedded research, and the challenge for communication scholars to become more attuned to affective processes.

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