

Edited by BRITTA TIMM KNUDSEN *and* CARSTEN STAGE

AFFECTIVE

METHODOLOGIES

Developing Cultural Research Strategies for the Study of Affect



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Edited by

Britta Timm Knudsen

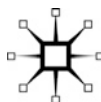
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Elena Trivelli holds a PhD in Media and Communications from Goldsmiths, University of London. Her doctoral research examined the history of alternative psychiatric movements in Italy and the work of Franco Basaglia, with particular reference to community and trauma, affective remembering practices, and forms of distributed unconscious. Her current interest in the medical humanities concerns discussions around the somatic realm in cultural studies, in relation to neuroscientific research, and the implications both for scholarly work and health care services. She currently is a mental health support worker.

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of over 80 publications, including the monographs *Politics, Policy and the Discourses of Heritage in Britain* (2010), *Heritage, Communities and Archaeology*, co-authored with Laurajane Smith (2009) and *The Semiotics of Heritage Tourism*, co-authored with Steve Watson (2014).

Steve Watson is a professor in the business school at York St. John University, United Kingdom, where he teaches a range of subjects, including cultural and heritage tourism. His research is concerned primarily with the representation and experience of heritage, especially through tourism, and he is active in the development of theory that explores the relationship between representational practices and the performative encounters and engagement of tourists with heritage places. He has explored these issues in Greece, Spain and the United Kingdom, and he has a particular interest in Spanish travel writing. Steve has published numerous journal articles and book chapters on the subject of heritage, including his most recent book, *The Semiotics of Heritage Tourism*, co-authored with Emma Waterton (2014).

1

Introduction: Affective Methodologies

Britta Timm Knudsen and Carsten Stage

The aim of the anthology

The motivation for this anthology is a challenge raised in the growing volume of academic work on affective processes – or what is often termed ‘the affective turn’ in contemporary cultural analysis (Clough, 2007; Thrift, 2008; Gregg and Seigworth, 2010; Brennan, 2004; Massumi, 2002; Blackman, 2012; Wetherell, 2012; Leys, 2011; Ahmed, 2004). The challenge under discussion is how to develop and account for methodologies that enable cultural researchers to investigate affective processes in relation to a certain empirical study. The collection’s main methodological focus is thus how to perform empirically grounded affect research. We define an affective method as an innovative strategy for (1) asking research questions and formulating research agendas relating to affective processes, for (2) collecting or producing embodied data and for (3) making sense of this data in order to produce academic knowledge. The aim of this edited collection is therefore not to challenge or deconstruct established methodological categories (e.g., research questions, data production and data analysis), but rather to begin experimenting with how these categories can be used and reinterpreted in inventive ways in order to engage with the immaterial and affective processes of social life. The chapters in the collection deal with the various elements of this definition in different ways: some focus more on starting points and asking questions, others more on the production or sense-making of data through the use of new analytical and conceptual approaches. We do not presume to have solved the methodological challenges of doing affect research once and for all, but hope that the collection will help and inspire researchers and students preparing or developing methodologies for studying affect in new ways.