

Coming to Our Senses: Affect and an Order of Things for Global Culture

Dierdra Reber

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Coming to Our Senses positions affect, or feeling, as our new cultural compass, ordering the parameters and possibilities of what can be known. From Facebook "likes" to Coca-Cola "loves," from "emotional intelligence" in business to "emotional contagion" in social media, affect has become the primary catalyst of global culture, displacing reason as the dominant force guiding global culture. Through examples of feeling in the books, film, music, advertising, cultural criticism, and political discourse of the United States and Latin America, Reber shows how affect encourages the public to "reason" on the strength of sentiment alone. Well-being, represented by happiness and health, and ill-being, embodied by unhappiness and disease, form the two poles of our social judgment, whether in affirmation or critique. We must then re-envision contemporary politics as operating at the level of the feeling body, so we can better understand the physiological and epistemological conditions affirming our cultural status quo and contestatory strategies for emancipation.



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