

2008

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### Recommended Citation

Pruchnic, Jeff (2008) "The Invisible Gland: Affect and Political Economy," *Criticism*: Vol. 50: Iss. 1, Article 11.  
Available at: <http://digitalcommons.wayne.edu/criticism/vol50/iss1/11>

# THE INVISIBLE GLAND: AFFECT AND POLITICAL ECONOMY

Jeff Pruchnic

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*The Affective Turn: Theorizing the Social*, ed. Patricia Ticineto Clough with Jean Halley. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007. Pp. xiii + 313. \$84.95 cloth, \$23.95 paper.

*The Affect Effect: Dynamics of Emotion in Political Thinking and Behavior*, ed. W. Russell Neuman, George E. Marcus, Ann N. Crigler, and Michael MacKuen. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007. Pp. 453. \$60.00 cloth, \$24.00 paper.

Certainly one of the primary impacts of the renewed interest in affect within the humanities and social sciences has been the problematizing of our traditional notions of social construction or cultural causality. The contention that the bulk of our feelings appear tied to fairly robust and physiologically instantiated “affect programs” has led humanities theorists to challenge previously dominant theories of social and ideological construction and to adopt a more empathetic stance toward research of the “hard sciences.” At the same time, the works of canonical philosophers who have more traditional homes in the humanities, such as Descartes, Aristotle, and Spinoza—thinkers who wrote before the drawing of disciplinary lines and who created theories that *Affect Effect* contributor Michael A. Neblo calls “psychologies with political intent” (27)—have enjoyed a renaissance within the social sciences and become for many a crucial adjunct to unpacking empirical research on autonomic responses. Much research in both of these exchanges has revolved around the complex parsing of cultural and subjective “triggers” for affective experience in relation to the material functions and response mechanisms of the endocrine and nervous systems.

The root causes for the *turn* to affect, however, may be much easier to map. One might, for instance, chart the rise of interest in affect as a response to the popularity of “post-

human" theory over the past decade. While many of the capacities previously taken as the unique domain of humans have been replicated in mechanical realms, affect has often been positioned, as in the work of N. Katherine Hayles, as a property that remains singular to humanity. Similarly, one could index the turn to affect in relation to changes in the technological resources and stylistics of aesthetic media, such as cinema. In this genealogy, a line could be drawn tracing movements from the early "cinema of attractions" (e.g., *Arrival of a Train at La Ciotat*, 1896), to the birth of narrative film proper (*The Great Train Robbery*, 1903), to the era of pastiche and narrative recycling (to keep with the train theme: *Throw Momma from the Train*, 1987), and, finally, to the popularity of films that stage a return of sorts to the cinema of attractions by targeting viewers' affective responses explicitly through the use of nonlinear sequencing and other devices (*Trainspotting*, 1996, and subsequent films such as *Run Lola Run*, 1998, and *Requiem for a Dream*, 2000, analyzed by Jamie "Skye" Bianco in her contribution to *Affective Turn*). However, the shift that intersects these others and informs some of the strongest work in both of the anthologies under review here is perhaps best described in reference to political economy—that is, if one takes the term "political economy" in its broadest sense to describe both how value is created

within culture and the complicated mediations between individual and group identities within such a process. This genealogy might begin with Adam Smith's paradigmatic gesture of "the invisible hand" of the market (one that survives in modified form today in free market enthusiasm of the Hayekian variety). It is this invention of Smith's that fascinated the young G.W.F. Hegel and inspired the latter's conception of "the ruse of reason" to foreground the complex interactions between the conscious and unconscious motivations of the individual as well as between the motivations of an individual and the collective. This latter structure, and in particular its further transposition by Marx, is the one most clearly being worked through and against in the pages of *Affective Turn* and *Affect Effect*, while their contributors assay the intensities of immaterial labor and the influence of human physiology on political belief and decision making in an era of post-ideological critical theory.

As the title suggests, *Affective Turn* positions recent work on affect in the humanities and social sciences as a pivotal shift comparable to earlier "turns" ("linguistic," "ethical," etc.) in these disciplines, and there is much that is convincing and provocative about the work collected here to justify this comparison. All of the essays were originally composed while their authors were completing doctoral work in such areas

as sociology, women's studies, and cultural studies, and participating in projects administered by the Center for the Study of Women and Society at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. As such, they tend to share a focus on a fairly narrow and consistent set of sources for their theoretical foundations, most notably the works of Gilles Deleuze, philosophers that were important to Deleuze's conception of affect (primarily Baruch Spinoza and Henri Bergson), and thinkers who at least in some way made their bones as interpreters of Deleuze or these other philosophers (Brian Massumi, Manuel DeLanda, Keith Ansell Pearson). These relatively uniform influences are balanced, however, by a dedication to taking the capaciousness of the Spinozistic definition of affect as both capacities to affect and be affected quite seriously. As editor Patricia Ticineto Clough writes in her excellent and thorough introduction, in this collection "affect is not only theorized in terms of the human body" but is also "theorized in relation to the technologies that are allowing us both to 'see' affect and to produce affective bodily capacities beyond the body's organic-physiological constraints" (2). Similarly, contributors spill a large amount of critical ink foregrounding what Clough refers to as "the intensification of self-reflexivity" in information technologies, human bodies, media systems, and hypercapitalism that make it

difficult to diagram the boundaries between the personal and collective operations of affect (terrain also covered in somewhat more restricted terms in Clough's 2000 book, *Autoaffectation: Unconscious Thought in the Age of Technology*). Overall, the contributors' willingness to extend their theorizing of affect beyond human subjectivity, and at times into inorganic realms, is salutary during a time when discussion of affect is often dominated by a focus on subjective experience.

This admixture of the human and nonhuman is at the heart of the first two of four subject clusters that organize *Affective Turn*, coded by Clough as mapping conceptual shifts "From Traumatized Subjects to Machinic Assemblage" and "From the Body as Organism to Non-Organic Life." Both categories anchor contributions that attempt to think of subjectivity as "beyond" or otherwise in opposition to the limits of psychoanalysis and performativity theory. The most stylistically experimental chapters in *Affective Turn* are gathered under these clusters, including autoethnographic and performative accounts of such topics as child abuse, geographical displacement, and suicide. These pieces juxtapose and integrate various registers of response to their subjects, such as the switching between personal experience, poetry, and her relatives' histories in Hosu Kim's "The Parched Tongue," which diagrams the traumas of migration

across several generations. Deborah Gamb's "Myocellular Transduction: How My Cells Trained My Body-Mind" likewise combines poetic components, autoethnographic descriptions of the author's physical training, media accounts of marathon training, and glosses of Masumi's work in describing mind-body reflexivity on both a societal and personal level. The authors of these chapters defer from offering explicit conclusions or arguments; rather, their thick descriptions of affective experience attempt to perform the affective responses and experiences under review as much as they work to articulate them within a critical framework. A similar methodology was also recently explored in Kathleen Stewart's autoethnographic *Ordinary Affects* (2007), and as in that book, these segments in *Affective Turn* provide an addition and counterbalance to the more traditionally analytical and argumentative material within those same chapters and the others within the collection.

Entries in the other two subject clusters organizing *Affective Turn* take a more systemic approach to their treatments of affect and the uses of affect theory, organizing their interventions in relation to two intersecting models for mapping affect within social and economic systems: Deleuze's late-life writings on Foucault and power, and autonomist-influenced work on affective labor (most notably the

essay of the same name by Michael Hardt, who also penned the preface to *Affective Turn*, and his frequent collaborator Antonio Negri's "Value and Affect"). The former cluster, described by Clough as responding to the movement "From Discipline and Representation to Control and Information," engages the transition from a Foucaultian model of disciplinary power focused on confined sites of training and the creation of relatively "stable" role-based identities, to its retrofitting in Deleuze's work on "control societies," in which value can be increasingly extracted from any kind of subjectivity or bodily capacities whatsoever.

Though the responses to this pairing are admirably diverse (including Jamie "Skye" Bianco's provocative tracking of control mechanisms in the "non-human temporalities" of contemporary cinema and Karen Wendy Gilbert's dizzying attempt to extend bi-philosophical conceptions of the body in relation to symbiogenesis, cell phase-state, and bioenergetics), the chapter that perhaps most productively pursues this line is Greg Goldberg and Craig Willse's "Losses and Returns: The Soldier in Trauma." Goldberg and Willse take up one of Foucault's primary examples of the subject of disciplinary power—the soldier—to index the coexistence of disciplinary and control models of power used in extracting value from U.S. soldiers serving

in Iraq. As Goldberg and Willse document, the capacities of the soldier-body are still certainly worked the same “disciplinary” way they have been for centuries—U.S. soldiers continue to receive extensive training and drilling in bodily comportment, as well as psychological “preparation” for the violence and trauma they may inflict and experience. However, they also have ears for how these techniques are overlapped by strategies and practices more in line with the “lighter and faster” forces of “control” (a coexistence also marked, the authors’ note, in Foucault’s own late-life writings on biopower). On the one hand, training is no longer confined to physical sites, or even to individuals already inside the military, as exemplified by Goldberg and Willse’s description of *America’s Army*, the video game/recruiting tool for that branch of the armed forces (or, as stated on the official website, a system that “provides young Americans with a virtual web-based environment in which they can explore Army career opportunities within an entertaining setting that is tailored to their interests and aptitudes”). On the other hand, the growing number of traumatized and injured bodies created by the war has also produced its own regime of biopolitical negotiations (such as the calculus that returning soldiers must consider when requesting antidepressants to cope with the trauma they have experienced, or in

navigating the bureaucracy of disability benefits) as well as much value for growing biopolitical economies of therapy (both physical and mental) and medical research. As the authors argue in alluding to the double meaning of their essay’s title, such phenomena force us to rethink our traditional conception of critically wounded soldiers “as the loss of a fighting force” as one in which “the trauma of the Iraq war . . . offers unexpected returns: opportunities such as the financialization of health, illness, and injury . . . as well as the development of new rehabilitative technologies, all of which offer the possibility to modify and extend governmental management and the administration of mutations of life” (281). Although the bureaucratic torment of returning soldiers and the uses of wounded soldier-bodies for scientific research have been very much in the news, Goldberg and Willse’s contribution is notable for its deft analysis of both the coexistence of “disciplinary” and “control processes” within contemporary biopower and, more generally, the value of Foucaultian theories of biopower in thinking through affect and affective economies. During a time in which the party line on Foucault’s biopower writings configures it as either a contradiction or correction to his earlier work on discipline, and the most notable use of Foucault’s late work in relation to affect theory has been Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick’s positioning of the popu-

larity of (at least some interpretations of) his “repressive hypothesis” as one of the primary reasons one must turn away from such work and toward affect theory, such an intervention is both timely and welcome.<sup>1</sup>

Similar concerns over changes in training and the organization of work form the core of chapters organized as responses to theories of affective labor, which take up fashion models (Elizabeth Wissinger), health-care workers (Ariel Ducey), unpaid domestic laborers (David Staples), and sex workers (Melissa Ditmore) as subjects. Wissinger presents fashion models as “key players in the expansion of an affective economy, including its global economy” through personal interviews with those in the industry and a carefully crafted genealogy of how the growth of model “celebrity” proceeded in conjunction with media and information technologies (233). For Wissinger, the modeling industry is a key site for diagnosing affective economies and modeling one of the best examples of “the effort to amplify and modulate the flow of affect by embodying an image or stimulating an energy not immediately assimilable to consciousness” (243). Ducey similarly makes deft use of personal interviews in her treatment of health-care workers who not only perform clear examples of affective labor but also are at the center of an affective economy of education and training organized around the desire for attributing

“meaningfulness” to that occupation. As Ducey writes, opportunities for education and training for health-care workers offer a largely paradoxical resource for those pursuing a vocation that is “more than just a job”: “The training and education industry can offer itself as a vehicle for achieving meaning while the industry’s existence—in fact, its regeneration and growth—depends on the fact that meaning perpetually vanishes” (195). As Ducey goes on to argue, the cultivation of this desire often obscures concern over the inequitable wage of health-care workers, while at the same time the “profits” of this desire accumulate around the health-care “industry” rather than its practitioners.

These chapters on affective labor also most explicitly foreground the difficulty of integrating affect into theories of political economy and possibilities for political action. Although contributors ably map how affect creates value in contemporary capitalism, they struggle somewhat with determining the value of affect—or, more precisely, the value of affect theory—in changing our responses to economic and cultural practices. Granted, many of the authors explicitly position their projects as diagnostic rather than prescriptive in nature. Wissinger concludes by suggesting that thinking about “preindividual forces of affectivity and bodily energies” provides a “new angle” on how imagining technologies constitute bodies (255).

Ducey similarly defers focus on possible responses to affective labor, arguing that since affect “is not subject to the usual forms of measurement and analysis . . . the political responses its modulations call forth are emergent and unpredictable” (205). The essays that do focus most explicitly on such responses are, ironically, those in which theories of affective labor are a starting-off point rather than a consistent resource in their analysis. As such, their conclusions tend to follow descriptions of the new importance of affect in economics and culture with fairly traditional suggestions for intervention based on collective organization and political recognition. For example, Melissa Ditmore concludes her sharp analysis of the Dunbar Mahila Samanwanya Committee, an organization that promotes the safety and welfare of its sixty thousand Indian sex workers, by noting irony “in the fact that the DMSC works with immaterial affect laborers in the world’s oldest, but as yet unrecognized, profession to advance their cause at a far deeper, more meaningful and effective level than has been achieved by recognized workers in affect labor” (184). However, the productive interventions identified here are fairly traditional, and because of the relative singularity of what Ditmore calls “the world’s oldest form of affective labor” (both generally and particularly in India, where the laws governing sex work are fairly ambiguous), it is difficult

to imagine how the examples given here might be translated to other forms of affective labor (such as health care, “women’s work,” and modeling, to use the other industries assayed in this subject cluster) (170). Similarly, David Staples contributes a notable argument that affective labor is best approached through a Bataille general economy rather than a restricted political economy, but his conclusion suggests that the best response to the devaluation of “women’s work” is to quantify the time of that labor; drawing on Derrida’s work on gift economies, Staples states that although the “ethical duty or responsibility implicit in child care cannot be measured, or estimated, or valorized as such,” the “time of child care can,” and can also be rewarded based on its duration, a measure he sees occurring in the commodification of child care generally and in the 1999 rewriting of the constitution of Venezuela in particular (145). Both the conclusions marking the unpredictability of future response and those relying on fairly traditional strategies of intervention speak to the relative difficulty of following up analyses of the operations of affect with techniques for mobilizing affect productively.

All of which is to say, though *Affective Turn* does a better job of introducing readers to the central issues surrounding the study of affect in the humanities and social sciences than any single work I am aware of,



its value comes as much from the way it underscores sticking points or aporias in this work as from the individual accomplishments of its contributors. Indeed, the above concerns are perhaps better taken not as criticisms of *Affective Turn* but of the segment of “the affective turn” to which the authors are most commonly responding—work, notably that of Sedgwick and Massumi, that has positioned affect theory as a productive alternative to “critique” in its traditional sense: a “way out” of the ostensibly moribund focus on relationships of dominance and subversion and the identification of this or that phenomenon as ideologically or socially constructed. Certainly such an endeavor has had a salutary effect on the contemporary critical terrain, both through its emphasis on the often-neglected role of human physiology and nervous processes in human subjectivity and ideation, as well as its antagonism toward the idea that beliefs and predispositions can somehow be made privative or defused when exposed to rational critique. However, the question of how to deploy these insights within the traditionally “rational” ecology of research in the humanities and social scientists has proven to be a thornier issue.

One could, for instance, abandon traditional registers of academic criticism, as do the more experimental and autoethnographical chapters in *Affective Turn*. These works remain somewhat unsatisfying, how-

ever, because even though they may succeed in producing a “feeling” of or for the affective phenomena under review, the motivational or persuasive import to the work is much less clear. One could also simply emphasize the importance of affect as a critique of “critique” itself, as do Goldberg and Willse, who in their piece marvel that even after the impact of deconstruction, “academic scholarship continues to engage media objects as exterior, applying theory against them to interpret or reveal their meanings and truths” (265). Similarly, Bianco positions her work as an intervention into the dominance of psychoanalytical and ideological approaches to film criticism. Yet, I take it, though such paradigms have not necessarily entered “straw man” territory at this time, we are seeing diminishing returns on such calls as they continue to multiply. Perhaps most telling is the emphasis, behind these approaches and throughout much of the work within the volume, on affect as not only primary in many dimensions of experience but also, unlike experience itself, ultimately irreducible and “unrepresentable.”

Such an emphasis makes the critical edge of the majority of chapters more what we might code “aesthetic” than rhetorical, or more focused on the description of affects and affective processes rather than their possible manipulation. The influence for this approach, it seems, is at least partially Massumi’s “The Autonomy

of Affect,” which looms large over much of *Affective Turn*. The terms and phrases used there to describe affect and affective “intensity”—“unassimilable,” “outside expectation and adaptation” (85), “in excess of any narrative or function line” (87), “irreducible excess” (87)—are recurrently paraphrased and alluded to throughout the volume.<sup>2</sup> In *Affective Turn*, as in Massumi’s article, such depictions, as much as they are meant to be in some way “post-postmodern,” seem to at least equally *take us back* to a certain type of pseudo-modernist aestheticism. Indeed, the references cited above ring most clearly as descriptions of “the sublime” more than anything else. Perhaps, as Negri contends in another oft-cited work that also emphasizes the “immeasurability” of affect, “the Sublime has become normal.”<sup>3</sup> However, it seems we have yet to find the way to move from describing affective processes in aesthetic terms to producing strategies for mobilizing those processes, or, perhaps more precisely, how we might use our recognition of the affective dimension of politics to leverage affect for political purposes.

For this reason it was immensely valuable to read *Affective Turn* in conjunction with *Affect Effect: Dynamics of Emotion in Political Thinking and Behavior*, which takes a rather different approach to affect theory in both method and perspective. The focus for the majority of the contributions is on discrete

processes of affective response, many of which are empirically or clinically assayed by the authors and related to current research in psychology and neuroscience. The majority of the authors are also much more modest in their claims for the difference made by using affect theories of motivation and decision making as opposed to other models. For instance, Peter R. Nardulli and James H. Kulinski, though noting the “enrichment” provided through attention to emotion in their analysis of the influence of anxiety on political desires, candidly conclude that omitting this focus would have produced no substantial change in their predictions (a conclusion they take to foreground a need to be wary of translating micro-level operations of affect to higher-level political patterns). Contributors to *Affect Effect* additionally draw on a much more diverse set of sources for their affective theories, many of which are listed in the four-page chart included in the editors’ introduction and covering ground from William James’s work on affective tagging to contemporary psychiatry.

However, the most sustained engagement throughout *Affect Effect* is the variety of responses to the theory of “affective intelligence” developed by coeditor George E. Marcus in 1988 and expanded more recently by Marcus in *The Sentimental Citizen: Emotion in Democratic Politics* (2002),<sup>4</sup> and by Marcus and coeditors W. Russell Neuman and

Michael MacKuen in their book *Affective Intelligence and Political Judgment* (2000).<sup>5</sup> Drawing on research into the brain's limbic region, affective intelligence theory posits two primary systems driving political thinking. The "dispositional" system, maintained by familiarity and the positive affects of enthusiasm, motivates individuals to continue relying on their existing conceptions and perspectives. The "surveillance" system, triggered by unfamiliar and uncertain contexts and the concomitant negative affect of anxiety, motivates people to break with habituated responses, seek additional information, and engage in more deliberative decision making. As Marcus, Neuman, MacKuen, and Luke Keele write in their contribution to the collection, affective intelligence theory departs from the conventional thinking of theories of rational choice or bounded rationality by suggesting that while rationality is "critical to the managing of uncertain conditions," it is "not well suited to the familiar realm of habit," given its relative inefficiency in relation to the scarcity of available human cognitive resources (127). As an intervention into research on political thinking, affective intelligence theory is perhaps most notable for foregrounding how affect can be leveraged to explore the context or conditionality, what the above authors call the "important 'if then' component," that drives a person's responses to political stimuli.

This emphasis on context and the feedback that takes place between the body and thought as well as between disposition and novelty is reflected in the definition of affect and emotion (terms used interchangeably in the volume) applied in *Affect Effect*. As the editors write, contributors identify affect as an "evolved cognitive and physiological response," or, drawing on the work of psychologist Klaus Scherer's work, the simultaneous recruitment of mental and somatic resources that occurs in reaction to events that appear to have significance to the individual experiencing them (9). Affective intelligence theory is also central to the sections on "micro" and "macro" models of political behavior that form the bulk of the collection, and chapters in these areas are largely dedicated to testing, refining, and extending the theory's contentions. In the section on micro models, David P. Redlawsk, Andrew J. W. Civettini, and Richard R. Lau argue that more attention needs to be paid to the precise thresholds guiding what impact affects such as enthusiasm and anxiety will have on the information-seeking behavior and political judgment of voters. They also (as do Leonie Huddy, Stanley Feldman, and Eric Cassese in their chapter) attempt to draw a clearer distinction between affects of anxiety and anger (often lumped together as "negative emotion" in research into affective intelligence) and the differing responses they can

provoke. As Huddy, Feldman, and Cassese write in reference to their study of responses to war in Iraq, anger promotes a reduced perception of the risks of the war and support for military intervention, whereas anxiety largely heightens perceptions of risk and reduced support (228). Anger, as well as fear, is also a central concern for Ted Brader and Nicholas A. Valentino, who study the self-reported feelings of a group of white Americans toward increasing immigration and map them in relation to party identification and other categories relating to “symbolic dispositions” (such as prejudices and group identity) and “material circumstances” (such as economic interests). Marion R. Just, Ann N. Crigler, and Todd L. Belt take up the study of a different affect that has also been underthematized in affective intelligence research—hope—and use it to suggest that a more interactive (rather than dualistic) view of cognition and interactive is necessary (as do Michael L. Spezio and Ralph Adolphs earlier in the volume). Though none of these entries necessarily contradict the foundations of affective intelligence theory, they do a stellar job of refining those contentions and identifying areas where more research is needed and where sharper conceptions need to be drawn.

One of these areas is of course how affective intelligence might need to be thought of differently when considering the electorate or

public as a whole rather than the specific responses of individuals or small groups being studied. The entries on macro models ably navigate this difficult ground while also illustrating more attention to the particulars of how information and appeals are disseminated in public discourse. Doris Graber’s chapter uses monthly Pew surveys from 1986 to 2003 to identify which news stories most profoundly captured the attention of the public. Although her conclusion—that stories about events resulting in massive loss of life or physical damage were the most affecting—is not necessarily surprising, it puts a finer point on arguments made elsewhere in the volume foregrounding the importance of fear and anxiety in the political tenor of the public, and Graber pays admirable attention to how particular components of media coverage (the use of sound, the technical quality of the footage, etc.), in addition to their subject matter, influence impact. Also of note is David C. Leege and Kenneth D. Wald’s chapter on the role of “cultural identification” in party strategies and the importance of demographic targeting in campaigning. The authors commendably pay equal attention to “the way elites politicize appeals and the manner in which voters process these appeals” (294), and their study of the primary examples under review—the wooing of white evangelicals by Republicans and white business and professional

women by Democrats—is equally meticulous in charting how large swathes of the electorate have shifted priorities from their economic interests to their cultural “values” and identifications. While drawing significantly on affective intelligence theory, Leege and Wald also suggest the need to extend that theory’s findings to account not just for the defection of party partisans but also for the increasing importance campaign strategists place on “demobilizing” or influencing the opposing party’s faithful to stay home on Election Day (315).

Multiple chapters in the volume wrestle with what I take to be one of the more striking or unsettling conclusions derived from research into physiological and affective functioning in relation to politics: the automatic or even “machinic” processes that drive the majority of political behavior. On the one hand, as mentioned in the introduction to this review, affect is often deployed, particularly in the humanities, as a distinctive criterion to preserve human singularity against artificial information systems and processes. Similarly, as Marcus, Neuman, and MacKuen reveal in *Affective Intelligence and Political Judgment*, their theory was largely anticipated and inspired by Herbert A. Simon’s 1967 article “Motivational and Emotional Controls of Cognition,” in which Simon introduces his concern with the impact of emotion on human thinking in

reference to debates over the differences between human and mechanical “intelligence.”<sup>6</sup> However, subsequent research of affect has somewhat paradoxically underscored the similarities between at least some major parts of human behavior and “mechanical” processing.

Take, for example, John A. Bargh and Tanya L. Chartrand’s “The Unbearable Automaticity of Being” (an article not included but multiply cited in *Affect Effect*), which argues that “most of daily life is driven by automatic, nonconscious mental processes” that develop from “the frequent and consistent pairing of internal responses with external events.”<sup>7</sup> Among other research, the authors review a number of studies (by themselves and others) on the effects of stereotypes on behavior in support of their thesis. For instance, subjects “primed” with words relating to stereotypes of the elderly (“Florida,” “sentimental,” etc.) subsequently behaved in line with the stereotype (walking slowly down hallways, having difficulty with their short-term memory). In another series of experiments, participants were subliminally presented with the faces of young African Americans; their subsequent behavior was markedly more hostile (as opposed to the control groups in the experiments), presumably based on their conceptions of that group. Given this last example, some readers might take Bargh and Chartrand as being a tad blithe in their conclusion

that we should consider “automatic” affective processes as “mental butlers” acting “in our service and best interests” and who “know our preferences . . . so well that they anticipate and take care of them for us, without having to be asked” (476).

Responses by authors of *Affect Effect* to the role of such “automaticity” and affect as a whole in explicit relation to political behavior tend toward a mixed tone of concern and resignation. For instance, Dan Cassino and Milton Lodge, responding to the conclusion that the “evaluation of social objects and, perhaps, of most of our mental experience is automatic,” write: “Affect may be more efficient than other means of processing, and it may be the only avenue open for many citizens. It is also easily fooled, however, and can easily lead us to fool ourselves. Our mere likes and dislikes can tell us something about a political figure, but they become dangerous when they become reasons unto themselves. Moreover, the political appeals made to us are increasingly designed to appeal to affect, rather than reason, and, in so doing, may mislead us even more” (121).

These responses are appropriate, given limitations on attention and cognitive resources, but research on “automaticity” might also goad us to rethink the treatment of affective theory in the humanities, where, as Clare Hemmings argues, several influential theorists—Hemmings’s primary targets here are Sedgwick

and Massumi—tend to foreground what she calls “the optimism of affective freedom” while associating the negative aspects of affective processing as part of “the pessimism of social determinism” that affect theory is supposed to free us from.<sup>8</sup> More specifically, a focus on the automatic or machinic nature of affective response might help us rethink concrete strategies for the strategic manipulation of affect for political purposes, a point I return to below.

The final section of *Affect Effect* presents future directions for research and outreach. Rose McDermott contributes an entry on the need to more fully integrate neuroscience research into our theories of the interaction between affect and cognition. Neuroscience can be a particularly rich resource for political psychology, McDermott argues, because it provides clues to how we process and relate to our past affective experiences, and “the process of memory encoding and activation may be as important for understanding relevant political processes as accurately understanding the actual emotional experience” (397). A chapter by Arthur Lupia and Jesse O. Menning focuses on the potential for combining game theory and theories of affect. This combination may seem an unlikely one, as game theory traditionally takes rational choice as primary, a contention usually troubled in affect theory. However, the authors write, game theory often provides a fuller appreciation

of the importance of the emotional reactions of players than it is given credit for, and, I take it, given the continued popularity of largely computer model-driven game theoretic scholarship in mainstream political science research, the integration of affect theories into this field has much potential.

Perhaps the most provocative entry in this category (as well as the volume as a whole) is a chapter on “The Affect Effect in the Very Real World of Political Campaigns” authored by Dan Schnurr. In addition to being an academic researcher and teacher, Schnurr also practices what the editors term (in good humor) “the black art” of campaign consulting (335). He writes that his two occupations have very different motivations—“a researcher wants to learn, and a practitioner wants to win”—as well as often dim views of each other’s members: consultants taking academics to be “ivory-tower idealists,” and academics just as likely to view consultants as “poorly educated vocational workers” (356). Schnurr very carefully and compellingly relates the specific arguments made in previous chapters about the role of affect in politics to his own work in, and reflections on, various campaigns. This comparison is of course a very useful and timely one, given the focus on affective appeals and the “authenticity” of candidates in U.S. elections over the past decades. Indeed, as I write these words, pundits have come to the near

unanimous conclusion that Hillary Clinton’s surprise win in the 2008 New Hampshire primary race can be attributed to voters’ positive response to the “vulnerability” or sensitivity she displayed during a teary-eyed appearance at a campaign function a few days earlier. Earlier in the week Bob Wickers, a consultant for Mike Huckabee’s campaign, was quoted as claiming one of the major impacts of the wins by both Huckabee and Barack Obama in the Iowa Caucus was how it showed voters “it was ‘okay’ to vote for the candidate they find appealing,” regardless of the candidate’s relative lack of experience.<sup>9</sup>

Schnurr focuses, as do the majority of contributors of *Affect Effect*, on the success of such emotional appeals over more traditional evidence-based strategies, but he leverages his consulting experience to also illustrate the importance of niche campaigning and demographic targeting. His arguments, presented as a series of lessons ranging from “Candidate Biography Reinforces Message Credibility” to “Never Underestimate a Clinton,” provide insight into many specific strategies of recent campaigns, such as George W. Bush’s infamous “Mission Accomplished” appearance and John Kerry’s photo opportunity while obtaining a hunting license. Schnurr concludes by returning to his relatively unique position among contributors to the collection as both an active consultant and, he adds in the

interest of a “full disclosure,” a registered Republican. Urging his colleagues to “put aside their own concerns and prioritize the spread of knowledge over the achievements of their own political preferences” (374), he offers a fairly traditional positioning of such knowledge as capable of producing both “good” and “evil” effects. More interesting, though, may be an admission Schnurr makes just before this conclusion: “I have reconciled myself with the idea that Democratic students in my classes will probably apply the lessons I have taught toward the advancement of political goals of which I am a dedicated opponent” (374). Many affect theorists in the humanities with progressive political goals have underscored the greater acumen of political conservatives in affective political strategizing. For instance, Massumi ends “The Autonomy of Affect” by mentioning that in North America members of “the far right” rather than the “established left” have been more attuned to the political potential of affect (105–06); Lauren Berlant has somewhat gloomily argued that one of the lessons of Kerry’s failed presidential bid is the difficulty of translating Bush’s “shamelessness” about his record and decisions to leftist political strategies that would seem to necessarily have to focus more on the ambiguity and complexity of political decision making.<sup>10</sup> What’s often unspoken in such calls, even as it seems to be foregrounded in treatments of

the affectivity and “automaticity” of contemporary politics, is that the appropriation of affectively attuned strategies from the right and for the left may require the adoption of practices often taken to be manipulative, deceitful, or contradictory to the values behind political objectives—that the call for “post-criticality” in passing beyond traditional concerns of how practices may “enforce” or “resist” the dominant order may require the sacrifice of a certain ethical clarity for us to move from descriptive accounts of affect to rhetorical strategies for manipulating these forces.

As a whole, *Affect Effect*, much as *Affective Turn*, provides an excellent introduction to the contours of current thought on the role of affect and the affective processes of the body, one that often appears all the more elusive for having a material “location” in human physiology. Such a configuration often makes affect appear both ubiquitous and comprehensively unaccountable, a replacement of the “invisible hand” of rational chance with the “invisible gland” of affective processes now driving political economy. Both of these volumes are excellent examples of the difficulties of such accounting and have much to offer in regard to the possibilities for future work.

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## NOTES

1. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performance* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002), 9–13. With regard to (re) evaluations of Foucault's late work, and in particular the use of Foucaultian theory in thinking through contemporary economics, see Jeffrey T. Nealon's recent *Foucault beyond Foucault: Power and Its Intensifications since 1984* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008).
2. Brian Massumi, "The Autonomy of Affect," *Cultural Critique* 30 (Autumn 1995): 88.
3. Antonio Negri, "Value and Affect," trans. Michael Hardt, *boundary 2* 26, no. 2 (1999): 87.
4. George E. Marcus, "The Structure of Emotional Response: 1984 Presidential Candidates," *American Political Science Review* 82, no. 3 (1988); Marcus, *The Sentimental Citizen: Emotion in Democratic Politics* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002).
5. George E. Marcus, W. Russell Neuman, and Michael MacKuen, *Affective Intelligence and Political Judgment* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 6–7.
6. Herbert A. Simon, "Motivational and Emotional Controls of Cognition," *Psychological Review* 74, no. 1 (1967): 29–39.
7. John A. Bargh and Tanya L. Chartrand, "The Unbearable Automaticity of Being," *American Psychologist* 54, no. 7 (1999): 464, 468.
8. Clare Hemmings, "Invoking Affect: Cultural Theory and the Ontological Turn," *Cultural Studies* 19, no. 5 (2005): 551.
9. Michael D. Shear and Perry Bacon Jr., "Huckabee Wins Iowa's Republican
10. Lauren Berlant, "Unfeeling Kerry," *Theory & Event* 8, no. 2 (2005).  
Caucuses," *Washington Post*, January 4, 2008, A01.