



The Emotional Life of Postmodern Film: Affect Theory's Other (Routledge Research in Cultural and Media Studies)

Pansy Duncan

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Emotion and Postmodernism: is it possible to imagine an odder couple, stranger bedfellows, less bad company? *The Emotional Life of Postmodern Film* brings this unlikely pair into sustained dialogue, arguing that the interdisciplinary body of scholarship currently emerging under the rubric of "affect theory" may be unexpectedly enriched by an encounter with the field that has become its critical other. Across a series of radical re-reappraisals of canonical postmodern texts, from Fredric Jameson's *Postmodernism* to David Cronenberg's *Crash*, Duncan shows that the same postmodern archive that has proven resistant to strongly subject-based and object-oriented emotions, like anger and sadness, proves all too congenial to a series of idiosyncratic, borderline emotions, from knowingness, fascination and bewilderment to boredom and euphoria. The analysis of these emotions, in turn, promises to shake up scholarly consensus on two key counts. On the one hand, it will restructure our sense of the place and role of emotion in a critical enterprise that has long cast it as the stodgy, subjective sister of a supposedly more critically interesting and politically productive *affect*. On the other, it will transform our perception of postmodernism as a now-historical aesthetic and theoretical moment, teaching us to acknowledge more explicitly and to name more clearly the emotional life that energizes it.

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