



Animating Archives: Making New Media Matter
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Brown University

Matthew Fuller
 Reader, Centre for Cultural Studies
 Goldsmiths, University of London

“Evil Media: Making Good Use of Weights, Chains and Ranks”

Traditional media studies works on power relations in terms of ownership, access, identity, representation and interpretation. Whilst these have their place, in a context in which media are increasingly becoming directly operational, as control systems, and biological, in their closer correlation with the triggering and monitoring of affect and information and at the same time growing more distributed, autonomous and integrated both amongst themselves and with multiple scales of reality, a pragmatics is required which is capable of recognising the collapsing of the technical into the cultural, social and ecological, whilst at the same time being explicitly cognisant of the opportunities for power that such a situation presents.

This given, the evil media approach - developed in collaboration with Andrew Goffey of Middlesex University - works with a broad conception of mediality, that whilst it includes the usual repertoire of systems of signification that can be detached from the body, also works at scales that are beneath the level of the whole body, on brains, neural entrainment and physiologically potent chemicals partially handleable as signals. Alongside these, the approach works extensively with much of contemporary grey media such as expert systems, workflow, databases, human-computer interaction and the sub-media world of leaks, networks and permissions structures that establish what eventually appears as conventional media.

These systems are now far more widespread and functionally significant than those which are most often apparent as media. The relative invisibility, or naturalization through ostensibly neutral technicity, and their fusing of the cultures of the workplace with those of consumption and policing offers numerous opportunities for interesting uses.