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Faces seen, heard, and felt: The intermedial haptic archive in facial measurement training

Since the 'Cognitive Revolution' of the mid-twentieth century, considerable empirical research in psychology, linguistics, and computer science is dedicated to investigating whether there are prototypical emotions specified by biology and universally recognized across cultures. The Facial Action Coding System (FACS), today's leading standard for taxonomizing the nonverbal language of the physiognomy, has supported findings for this theory of emotions as functionally discrete types. Applying FACS, a researcher measures the sign vehicles of the face by describing the surface appearance of muscular movement that is visible to an observer's classificatory gaze. This method depends upon the archiving of media documents. FACS was discovered using documentation of facial expressions in societies unexposed to mass media, developed using photograph and video transcription of expressions modeled by the researchers themselves, and is deployed using databases or stimulus sets of images that are face-coded and emotion-labeled. To problematize the media genealogies of physiognomic science, and the semiotic structures of its principally visual epistemology, I probe the FACS Training Workshop originated by psychologist Erika Rosenberg, the only Workshop endorsed by FACS principal investigator Paul Ekman. How are facial signs encoded in the documentation of Indagine, Lavater, Darwin, Lombroso, Bertillon, Tomkins, and Ekman by the media specificities of these face-readers' archival practices? To what extent has the archiving of media documents for FACS systematized the ontological commencement of a scientific paradigm for measuring face sign vehicles, as well as a nomological commandment in the media ecosystem through which their referent emotion categories are e-valuated? And how does the intermediality between the symbolic representation (Thirdness) in the *FACS Manual* and the sensuous quale (Firstness) of the Workshop participant support the composition, reference, and transformation of mediated statements about the face through an ocular, auditive, and haptic semiosis? I propose that the FACS Workshop functions as a haptic archive for the media documents of the 'physiognomics of the age,' and through the critical analysis of its media specificities present a challenge to the sustained hegemony in the Western cultural imaginary of physiognomic science as ocularocentric; connect these information-carrying images with the aesthetic images from which they are artificially divided in media histories; and call for future archives of face images to center around the perception of touch, both for better efficacy in the analogue coding and digital algorithms of facial expression analysis, as well as towards a more complex research of emotion based on sign vehicles of the face.