

Introduction. Situated affectivity: Taxonomies, technologies, and threats

Leonardo Massantini

In recent years, theories of situated affectivity have gained a central place in the philosophy of emotions. Derived from the 4E framework of cognition (i.e., embodied, embedded, extended, and enactive), these theories argue that affective phenomena such as emotions, moods, and feelings are not limited to intracranial processes. Instead, they may be co-caused or even co-constituted by bodily and environmental elements. The current debate is expanding at a considerable rate, and the articles selected for this focus discuss three major and interrelated problems that characterize this expansion. The first problem concerns the precise nature of the relationship between body, environment, and affectivity. Scholars addressing this problem often choose to analyze and expand upon current taxonomies that classify the ways in which the body and the environment can support or even co-constitute affective phenomena. The second problem concerns the potential negative effects that can result from affective scaffolding. Indeed, in the last decade or so, describing the scaffolded environment not only as a resource but also as a potential or actual threat has become a major concern, especially for researchers interested in the political aspects of philosophy of mind. The third problem concerns the study of new and emerging technologies through the lens of situated affectivity. How do technologies such as social media, robotics, and artificial intelligence fit into the framework of situated affectivity? Can we use situated affectivity to analyze and even predict their potential benefits and harms? To what extent do we need new, technology-specific taxonomies to fully grasp their affective implications?

The focus opens with Stephan and Walter's insightful discussion of the concept of political mind invasion between online and offline affectivity. In the second article, Piredda counters the idea of social media as an affective scaffold that is inherently detrimental to one's mental health. She does so by showing that photographs in social media can be used to support personal narratives. The focus continues with Saarinen, who shows how the notion of transformative scaffolds, such as paintings by grieving artists, can regulate marked shifts

in one's experiential world. The collection concludes with two papers devoted to robotics. In the first, Fussi shows how a philosophical approach inspired by situated affectivity can help us redefine problems in robotics, such as the distinction between service robots and social robots, the relevance of the uncanny valley effect, and the impact that the introduction of robots can have on individuals and communities. In the last paper, Massantini, Pirni, and Dario show how situated affectivity can be applied to occupational exoskeletons to understand the theoretical aspects of a robotically altered embodiment in the workplace.