

Making exceptions: media art and everyday life

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Abstract

The objective of this paper is to develop a concept of exceptionality as a useful contrast to the concept of everyday life and the domestication of media artefacts as they have been developed in the literature. First, I demonstrate that media objects that carry symbolic communication are not fixed in the time and space of everyday life. Instead, the articulation of forms of symbolic communication such as painting and television are continually negotiated by the individuals and social groups that use these objects. In the second part of the paper, I consider how artists employ the concept of exceptionality as a strategy for contrasting media objects from the rhythms of everyday life. The analysis of several examples of artworks suggests that by making use of exceptionality, media artists are able to interrupt commonplace activities including the processes of domestication and convert them into useful resources.