



Under Suspicion: A Phenomenology of Media (Columbia Themes in Philosophy, Social Criticism, and the Arts)

By Boris Groys

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The public generally regards the media with suspicion and distrust. Therefore, the media's primary concern is to regain that trust through the production of sincerity. Advancing the field of media studies in a truly innovative way, Boris Groys focuses on the media's affect of sincerity and its manufacture of trust to appease skeptics.

Groys identifies forms of media sincerity and its effect on politics, culture, society, and conceptions of the self. He relies on different philosophical writings thematizing the gaze of the other, from the theories of Heidegger, Sartre, Mauss, and Bataille to the poststructuralist formulations of Lacan and Derrida. He also considers media "states of exception" and their creation of effects of sincerity? a strategy that feeds the media's predilection for the extraordinary and the sensational, further fueling the public's suspicions. Emphasizing the media's production of emotion over the presentation (or lack thereof) of "facts," Groys launches a timely study boldly challenging the presumed authenticity of the media's worldview.

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Under Suspicion: A Phenomenology of Media (Columbia Themes in Philosophy, Social Criticism, and the Arts) By Boris Groys Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #2494942 in Books
- Brand: Brand: Columbia University Press
- Published on: 2012-05-01
- Original language: German
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.40" h x .80" w x 5.60" l, .79 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 232 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

The archives where cultures preserve what they deem important for collective memory are rightfully under 'media-ontological suspicion,' Boris Groys argues. If indeed the medium is now the message, the message is that the 'submedial space' beneath the signs comprising the archive remains infinitely inaccessible. So long as we can't understand this submedial space, 'the medium of all media,' we should be suspicious of the force that upholds our cultural archives. How such suspicion has become the new subject and space of subjectivity is the politically inflected story Groys tells with his unique blend of philosophical acumen and ironic expression.

(Michael Kelly, Department of Philosophy, University of North Carolina at Charlotte)

About the Author

Boris Groys is Global Distinguished Professor in the Faculty of Arts and Science at New York University and senior research fellow at the Academy of Arts and Design in Karlsruhe, Germany. A Russian émigré to Germany, he received his Ph.D. in philosophy from the University of Münster. His books in English include *The Total Art of Stalinism: Avant-Garde, Aesthetic Dictatorship, and Beyond*; *Art Power*; *Going Public*; and *History Becomes Form: Moscow Conceptualism*.

Carsten Strathausen is associate professor of German and English at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

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