



Eloquent Images: Word and Image in the Age of New Media (MIT Press)

Mary E. Hocks, Michelle R. Kendrick

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The emergence of New Media has stimulated debate about the power of the visual to dethrone the cultural prominence of textuality and print. Some scholars celebrate the proliferation of digital images, arguing that it suggests a return to a pictorial age when knowledge was communicated through images as well as through words. Others argue that the inherent conflict between texts and images creates a battleground between the feminized, seductive power of images and the masculine rationality of the printed word. *Eloquent Images* suggests that these debates misunderstand the dynamic interplay that has always existed between word and image. Arguing that the complex relationship between text and image in New Media does not represent a radical rupture from the past, the book examines rhetorical and cultural uses of word and image both historically and currently. It shows that complex, interpenetrating relationships between verbal and visual communication systems were already evident in hieroglyphic writing and in ancient rhetoric and persist in the work of classical rhetoricians, in cultural studies of technology, even in the binary code distinctions of digital environments. The essays blend theory, critique, and design practice to explore the often contradictory relations of word and image. All of them call for theoretically grounded approaches to hypermedia design.

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