

Allergies and Allegories



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The first dissertation in the English department to be argued, in part, through a videogame

Uncommon Places: The Multimodal Art of Embodied Invention develops the concept of embodied invention, an epistemology and design philosophy that treats multimodal media such as comics and videogames as heuristics for translating knowledge between bodies, communities, and cultures. In classical rhetoric, invention refers to the art of discovering knowledge through the commonplaces those opinions, beliefs, and values hold that are common to a particular time and place. Rhetors would train themselves in invention by studying commonplace books texts that contained common expressions, phrases, and allegories of a particular community, region, or culture. Drawing on phenomenology, semiotics, and media theory, this dissertation puts forward an embodied account of invention, one that correlates knowledge of the world with one's position or place in the world. In order to make this point effectively, and to demonstrate its applicability to design, a portion of this dissertation is argued through a videogame called Allergies & Allegories.



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