Samuel Mateus (Ed.), **Media Rhetoric: How Advertising and Digital Media Influence Us,** Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2021, 155 pp., $99.95 (hardcover).

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"Visualize, visualize, so that something remains!"
—Brune (1996, p. 151)

Whenever we participate in political debates, argue with the neighbors, convince the teacher to raise a grade, persuade the parents to let us go to a party, or simply tell an exciting story, we practice rhetorical maneuvers. ***Media Rhetoric: How Advertising and Digital Media Influence Us***, edited by Samuel Mateus, is a thought-provoking, all-embracing, educative, yet exciting volume that centers around the impact of persuasive communication reviving through media. The author warns the reader that the book is not about what media is or what terminology we need in the mediated word. Instead, it is about "how media alter the ways we talk, discuss, argue and convince" (p. 2); thus, we are *homo rhetoricus* because we are continuously formed by rhetorical practices that constitute our social self, or as Burke (1969) put it, "We are always in a rhetoric" (p. 1).

The scope of *Media Rhetoric* is to enlighten the reader that rhetoric today is well beyond verbality, and in fact, its ludic and entertaining dimensions, as well as its inherently widening visual and sonic discourses have created a multimodal existence for this discipline. These potentials are the book's spark, which invite the reader and the matrix of persuasive communication on a journey.

The editor of the book, Samuel Mateus, is a professor of rhetoric and communication at Madeira University, and his research field includes media rhetoric with a particular focus on affective rhetoric.

"In the 21st century, rhetoric is much more present in our daily lives and is used by a panoply of professional routines more than ever before," writes the editor in the Introduction, which further encompasses the scope and structure of the book, the definition of scientific terms, and the brief mentioning of each contributor (p. 4). Mateus touches on notions such as the five canons of rhetoric*, homo rhetoricus*, media discourse, and digital rhetoric. Besides his thoughtful introduction to the basis of rhetoric, each contributor is delineated through the author's lens.

Media Rhetoric is organized around three axes: (1) Advertising Rhetoric, (2) Procedural and Digital Rhetoric, and (3) Rhetorical Case-Study. The first part contains 3 chapters, the second part contains 2 chapters, and the last part consists of 1 chapter—all sections written by different scholars who contribute with original theoretical, as well as empirical, perspectives. Mateus notes that the 6 chapters can be viewed as 6 steps toward a deeper understanding of media in rhetoric.

In the first chapter of Part I, "Advertising as a Rhetorical Metagenre," author Ivone Ferreira opens with the conceptualization of the genre, explaining its notions and origin from a rather philosophical point of view. The author touches on Bakhtin's (2007) and Friedrich Nietzsche's (1999) interpretations of rhetorical genres; moreover, the sociohistorical dimensions are further construed. "Rhetorical speech is a live speech of communication" (p. 34), notes the author, in reference to the idea that rhetoric mutates itself, be it online or offline; therefore, we must accommodate ourselves to its changes. Ferreria formulates two important conclusions: (1) an image is not a mediated reality but the reality itself, inviting the viewer to reinforce the created product; and (2) the audience became both the participant and the speaker of the strategic advertising creation.

In the second chapter, "Artwork as Representation in Advertising: A Visual Rhetorical Perspective," authors Fatma Köksal and Ümit Inatçi focus on the introduction of the basic principles of rhetoric, visuality, and advertising. Their essay represents a collection of proofs centered around the need to process the implicit effects of advertising rhetoric and the multidimensional existence of visuality. Rhetorical figures as artful deviations in advertisements (McQuarrie & Mick, 1992) are extensively elaborated and highlighted as one of the most important persuasive tools in marketing, which enhances perceptive effects. The authors conclude that nowadays, advertising is an artwork, which shall be perceived as a piece of art with aesthetic, dual structure, and symbolic representation.

"Every day images overwhelm us, and that is why an image must capture our attention in order to influence" us, formulates the last author of the first part, Carmen Neamtu (p. 63). The chapter, titled "Iconic Rhetoric in the Discourse of Advertising," does not only consist of thought-provoking quotations but further encompasses the importance of the image, the visual path of reading, iconic and linguistic signs, and the visual complexity of images. The author emphasizes ads aiming to place the recipient in the "perfect" mood, the use of colors, music, memorable images, and visual motifs. The author also introduces Barthes's (1977) visual method in depth and, furthermore, mentions the relation between smell and image—all of these adding up to an "indirect approach of rhetoric" (p. 73).

In the first chapter of the second part, "Rhetoric in Videogames: What Makes Games Persuasive?" authors Tauel Harper and Jordana Elliott take a step back from ancient oratory and provide an insight into procedural and digital rhetoric. The chapter concentrates on the diverse accounts of the rhetorical potentials found in games: the cultural content (ethos), the emotion (pathos), and the logical argument (logos) generated by games. "Procedural rhetoric is the implementation of argument through in-game processes," defines Harper and Elliott (p. 85), or as Aczél (2012) suggests, procedural rhetoric "is a practice of using processes persuasively" (p. 11). The authors summarize that games can indeed employ rhetorical strategies, but this can be fulfilled only if the players show true identification with the protagonist of the game.

In the next chapter, "A Rhetorical Framework for Impact Design in Games," author Erik Walsh highlights the behavioral, attitudinal, and textual dimensions of rhetoric in game design. Walsh stresses the idea that impact is key in achieving a goal for gamers; therefore, he approaches the entire chapter from a game designer's point of view: What is impact, game design, and persistent rhetorical effect? Walsh provides the reader with a comprehensive set of answers to this and other questions. Using the words "designer" and

"rhetoric" interchangeably throughout his paper, he proposes 10 rhetorical strategies for impact design (e.g., authenticity, dissonance, complicity, etc.).

In the chapter titled "Brevity, Emotion, and Frugality in Political Media Rhetoric—The Use of Soundbite in Portuguese Political Discourse," Francisca Goncalves Amorim implements a systematic approach in building up her work. Touching on the major changes as well as challenges of persuasion, she describes the radical transformation of political disputes and its rhetorical aspects. This chapter claims that today we are highly digitalized consumers who would rather consume a nonverbal stimulus than a verbal one. Through the example of the 2015 Portuguese parliamentary elections, the author explains what a soundbite (or slogan) is and how it works. Amorim closes the chapter by summarizing the steps political rhetoric shall take for the sake of effective persuasion and better understanding, such as the conscious use of soundbites or shortened political messages.

Overall, Mateus's book successfully paraphrases old clichés about rhetoric and takes a step forward into science, bridging the ancient art of rhetoric and the modern saga of mass media communication. *Media Rhetoric* is a suitable book for anyone—both academician and laymen—interested in image philosophy, digitalization, the art of persuasion, and advertising rhetoric. Although his book could undeniably be considered a successful volume, it could have been even richer if some of the other types of modern-day rhetoric that have always been a good company for humankind (e.g., aural rhetoric, spatial rhetoric, the rhetoric of music, religion, etc.) were mentioned.

Media Rhetoric undoubtedly brings us closer to the complex discipline of oratory and proves that rhetoric is the cradle of entertainment, education, and, most important, human interaction. Or, as the author wisely foArmulates: "The importance of media rhetoric lies in the potential to reintegrate the communicative, mediated, dimension of rhetoric" (p. 9).

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