Picturing the Book of Nature: Image, Text, and Argument in Sixteenth-Century Human Anatomy and Medical Botany

by Sachiko Kusukawa


Sachiko Kusukawa has long been a prominent figure in the study of early modern European culture. Her previous work, Picturing the Book of Nature: Image, Text, and Argument in Sixteenth-Century Human Anatomy and Medical Botany, is a seminal study that has won her international recognition. In this book, Kusukawa explores the role of images and text in the development of early modern science, focusing on the works of Andreas Vesalius and Leonhart Fuchs.

Kusukawa argues that the use of images and text in scientific works was not simply a means of illustrating information, but was an integral part of the argument itself. She examines the ways in which images and text were used to establish and justify scientific claims, and how they were used to communicate scientific knowledge to a broad audience.

Kusukawa's study is based on a detailed analysis of the works of Vesalius and Fuchs, and she provides a wealth of examples from their texts to illustrate her points. She also draws on a wide range of other sources, including contemporary medical and botanical texts, in order to provide a comprehensive picture of the role of images and text in the development of early modern science.

Kusukawa's book is a fascinating and compelling study that will be of interest to scholars of early modern science, as well as those interested in the history of science and the history of ideas. It is a must-read for anyone interested in the development of early modern science and its impact on society.

Reviewed by J. Robert St. Leger, Department of History, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.