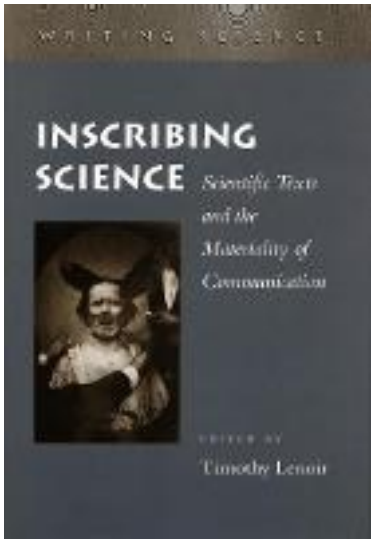
Inscribing Science



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Metaphors of inscription and writing figure prominently in all levels of discourse in and about science. The description of nature as a book written in the language of mathematics has been a common trope since at least the time of Galileo, a metaphor supplemented in our own day by the characterization of DNA sequences as the code for the book of life, decipherable in terms of protein semantic units. An important recent direction in the fields of science and literature studies is to consider such descriptions as more than metaphoric, as revelatory of the processes of signification in science more generally. Nearly everywhere we look, the "semiotic turn" is upon us.

Recent science and technology studies have been characterized by a rich diversity of research directions, manifesting several trends apparently counter to one another. On the one hand stands the rich tradition of detailed microstudies of experiments, instruments, and scientific practice; on the other hand are grouped studies grander in scope, aimed at examining science within the framework of cultural production. This

volume of sixteen essays seeks common ground among these different approaches by juxtaposing work from historically focused science and literature studies with work inspired by poststructuralist philosophy and semiotics.

The contributors are Gillian Beer, Lisa Bloom, Robert Brain, Lorraine Daston, Richard M. Doyle, David Gugerli, Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht, Friedrich Kittler, Timothy Lenoir, Alex Pang, Philip Prodger, Hans-Joerg Rheinberger, Robin Rider, Brian Rotman, Simon Schaffer, and Bernhard Siegert.

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