

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910463228603321
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Titolo	Optiques [[electronic resource]] : the science of the eye and the birth of modern French fiction // Andrea Goulet
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Philadelphia, : University of Pennsylvania Press, c2006
ISBN	0-8122-0205-8
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (281 p.)
Collana	Critical authors & issues
Disciplina	840.9/3561
Soggetti	French fiction - 19th century - History and criticism French fiction - 20th century - History and criticism Vision in literature Electronic books.
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Bibliographic Level Mode of Issuance: Monograph
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references (p. [227]-259) and index.
Nota di contenuto	Frontmatter -- Contents -- Introduction. The Epistemology of Optics: Seeing Subjects, Modern Minds -- Part I. Realism and the Visionary Eye: Balzac's Optics of Narration -- Chapter 1. Second Sight and the Authorial chambre noire: Les Chouans, Louis Lambert -- Chapter 2. "Tom her dans le phenomene ": Mterimages in La Maison Nucingen and Le Bal de Sceaux -- Chapter 3. Alternative Optics: Seraphita, La Recherche de l'absolu, and La Peau de chagrin -- Chapter 4. "Effets de lumiere," or a "Second" Second Sight: La Fille aux yeux d'or -- Part II. Tenebrous Mfairs: Romans policiers and the Detecting Eye -- Chapter 5. Cuvier, Helmholtz, and the Visual Logics of Deduction: Poe, Doyle, Gaboriau -- Chapter 6. Learning to See: Monsieur Lecoq and Empiricist Theories of Vision -- Chapter 7. Sealed Chambers and Open Eyes: Leroux's Mystere de la chambre jaune -- Part III. Villiers, Verne, and Claretie: Toward a Fin-de-Siecle "Optogrammatology" -- Chapter 8. Death and the Retina: Claire Lenoir, L 'Accusateur, and Les Freres Kip -- Chapter 9. Optogram Fiction: Communication, Doubt, and the Fantastic -- Chapter 10. Tropical Piercings: Nationalism, Atavism, and the Eye of the Corpse -- Chapter 11. The Fin-de-Siecle Logic of the Mterimage: Hysteria, Hallucination, and Villiers's L'Eve future -- Epilogue. The Afterimage of Reference: Optics and the nouveau roman -- Notes -- Index -- Acknowledgments

Sommario/riassunto

Andrea Goulet takes the study of the novel into the realm of the visual by situating it in the context of nineteenth-century scientific and philosophical discourse about the nature of sight. She argues that French realism, detective fiction, science fiction, and literature of the fantastic from 1830 to 1910 reflected competition between two modern visual modes: a not-yet-outdated idealism and an empiricism that located truth in the body. More specifically, the book argues that key narrative forms of the nineteenth century were shaped by a set of scientific debates: between idealism and materialism in Honoré Balzac's *Comédie humaine*, between deduction and induction in early French detective fiction, and between objective vision and subjective vision in the "optogram" fictions of Jules Verne and others. Goulet aims to revise critical views on the modern novel in a number of ways. For instance, although many literary studies focus on the impact of cinema, photography, and painting, *Optiques* asserts the materialist bases of realism by establishing a genealogy of popular fictional genres as fundamentally optical, that is, as articulated according to bodily notions of sight. With its chronological and interdisciplinary scope, *Optiques* stands to contribute an important chapter to the study of literary modernity in its scientific context.
