



The Dao of Rhetoric (SUNY series in Communication Studies)

Steven C. Combs

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Examines the ways Daoist (Taoist) thought may contribute to an understanding of human communication.

In the first book to systematically deal with Daoism (Taoism) from a rhetorical perspective, author Steven C. Combs advances the idea that the works of Daoist (Taoist) sages Laozi (Lao Tzu), Zhuangzi (Chuang Tzu), and Sunzi (Sun Tzu) can be fused into a coherent rhetorical genre, which can then form a methodology for rhetorical criticism. This notion of Daoist rhetoric enables critics to examine discourse from new vantage points with novel processes and concepts that honor the creativity and complexity of human communication. Combs also critically examines four contemporary films—The Tao of Steve, A Bug's Life, Antz, and Shrek—to amplify rhetorical Daoism, to indicate clear differences between Western and Daoist values, and to offer fresh perspectives on individuals and social action. The book argues that Daoism provides a lens for viewing limitations of current Western rhetorical theorizing, positioning Daoist rhetoric as a potent critical perspective in the contemporary, postmodern world.

Steven C. Combs is Associate Professor of Communication Studies at Loyola Marymount University.

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