



# Figures of the Text: Reading and Writing (in) La Fontaine (Purdue University Monographs in Romance Languages)

*Michael Vincent*

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The works of Jean de La Fontaine have invited an extraordinary variety of readings in the three centuries since their composition. By engaging selected fables and tales with contemporary notions of intertextuality, reader reception theory, and grammatology, *Figures of the Text* raises questions about what “reading La Fontaine” meant in the 17th century, and what it means today. The study integrates a theory of reading and a theory of textual production by drawing attention to those aspects of the text that figure writing and reading, for instance: scenes of reading; other modes of writing (emblems, hieroglyphics); inscriptions and epitaphs; proper names; and citation (proverbs, maxims, allusions); the relation of represented orality to textuality, of textuality to corporeality, and of textuality to the visual arts (ekphrasis); and the archaeology of textual figures, such as labyrinths, textiles, and veils.

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