



# Digital Detroit: Rhetoric and Space in the Age of the Network

*Jeff Rice*

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Since the 1967 riots that ripped apart the city, Detroit has traditionally been viewed either as a place in ruins or a metropolis on the verge of rejuvenation. In *Digital Detroit: Rhetoric and Space in the Age of the Network*, author Jeff Rice goes beyond the notion of Detroit as simply a city of two ideas. Instead he explores the city as a web of multiple meanings which, in the digital age, come together in the city's spaces to form a network that shapes the writing, the activity, and the very thinking of those around it.

Rice focuses his study on four of Detroit's most iconic places—Woodward Avenue, the Maccabees Building, Michigan Central Station, and 8 Mile—covering each in a separate chapter. Each of these chapters explains one of the four features of network rhetoric: folksonomy, the affective interface, response, and decision making. As these rhetorical features connect, they form the overall network called Digital Detroit. Rice demonstrates how new media, such as podcasts, wikis, blogs, interactive maps, and the Internet in general, knit together Detroit into a digital network whose identity is fluid and ever-changing. In telling Detroit's spatial story, Rice deftly illustrates how this new media, as a rhetorical practice, ultimately shapes understandings of space in ways that computer applications and city planning often cannot. The result is a model for a new way of thinking and interacting with space and the imagination, and for a better understanding of the challenges network rhetorics pose for writing.

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