



Ferrofluid by Felice Frankel, 2002

More than Pretty Pictures:

The Visual Representation of Science and Engineering

with Felice Frankel

Scientific images and graphics are often treated as afterthoughts - added simply to communicate finished results. This talk argues the opposite: visual representation is central to thinking, discovery, and explanation in science and engineering. Drawing on examples from research and teaching, research scientist and photographer Felice Frankel shows how constructing photographs, diagrams, and data visualizations not only communicates complex ideas but also clarifies them—revealing gaps in reasoning and sharpening questions. The talk also considers the opportunities and risks of AI and digital image manipulation, underscoring the need for transparency, ethical standards, and visual literacy.

Currently a research scientist in ChemE with support from MechE, Felice has been at MIT since 1994. She began her tenure at the Edgerton Center and at that time, moved on to the School of Science where Dean Bob Silbey recognized her contribution to research. She is a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship among other awards.

(www.FeliceFrankel.com). She was previously a senior research fellow in Harvard University's Faculty of Arts and Sciences in the Initiative for Innovative Computing (IIC), and a visiting scholar at Harvard Medical School's Department of Systems Biology.



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