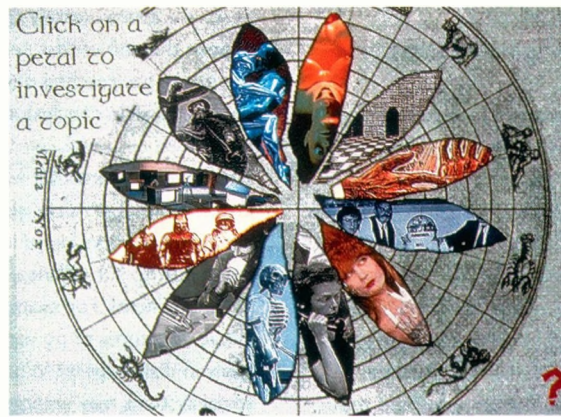


She Loves It, She Loves It Not: Women and Technology

She Loves It, She Loves It Not is an interactive CD-ROM created by Christine Tamblyn in collaboration with Marjorie Franklin and Paul Tompkins. It contains text, sound, movie clips, and images about women's use of technology in the past, present, and future. Over the last two decades, feminists have identified men's monopoly of technology as an important source of male power and argued that women's exclusion from access to technological prowess is a crucial element in their dependence on men. She Loves It, She Loves It Not addresses this issue from several different angles.

The CD-ROM, which was programmed using Macromedia Director, requires a high-end Macintosh computer, a color video monitor, and stereo speakers. The initial interface is a graphic image of a daisy. Each of the petals of the daisy represents a loop of screens with a particular theme: Memory, Control, Power, Communication, Violence, Homunculus, Labyrinth, Interactivity, The Other, Representation, and Ideology. When a viewer clicks on a petal, the loop begins.

Each screen is composed of a headline, a block of text, a static image, and several "buttons" that open up to various elements. The images are derived from various found sources, including comic books, a catalog of robots, maga-



zine advertisements, and art works. The text concisely analyzes the topic from the perspectives of cultural studies, sociology, and film history. A continuously looping sound is also associated with each screen.

Special animated buttons allow viewers to read handwritten letters, watch Quicktime movie clips (digitized at 5.5 frames per second for a defamiliarizing effect), or see "footnote" text with more detailed information about a specific topic. The Quicktime movie clips range from commercials depicting women's enslavement by and subversive use of domestic appliances to industrial film excerpts revealing pervasive gender stereotyping in the workplace and science-fiction film clips that imagine the invasion of women's bodies by futuristic machines. The text contains 84 screens and takes about an hour to view once in its entirety (in one possible configuration).

The visual aesthetic of the piece has a handmade collaged look. Because it deliberately avoids the slick sterility of much computer art, it serves as a prototype for exploring some of the new potentials of the interactive CD-ROM format. Both the form and the content of the work attempt to demonstrate how women might use and have used technol-

ogy differently and how technology might adapt to female learning proclivities and female culture. An integral part of the project is the design of computer interfaces that are more user friendly for women. Because computers have evolved as tools built by men for men to be used in warfare, the current interfaces tend to have a violent, aggressive character. They are hierarchical, mirroring the militaristic male pyramid with its rigid chain of command.

Current interfaces also have a predominantly visual bias, privileging the male gaze and male strategies for control through surveillance of territory. Interfaces designed to be operated by women ought to be multi-sensory, personal, affective, and dynamic. For She Loves It, She Loves It Not, interface development involved creation of a female persona in cyberspace who serves as a guide to the system. The navigation buttons on each screen appear inside an image of this persona, and her voice gives instructions about how to proceed.

By envisioning a more productive relationship between women and technology, this project benefits women who are using new technologies in a variety of academic fields and artistic endeavors. It is designed for exhibit as an art

installation and, because it provides positive alternatives to the negative stereotypes regarding women and technology often inculcated in early educational experiences, as an instructional resource for women students. Just as feminist theorists have stressed the importance of women having access to the position of speaking subjects and "having a voice" in our culture, it is similarly important for women to have role models for computer literacy as computers become an essential communications tool.

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