

Cyborg Mommy

(Everything I Know About Computers
I Learned From Mother)

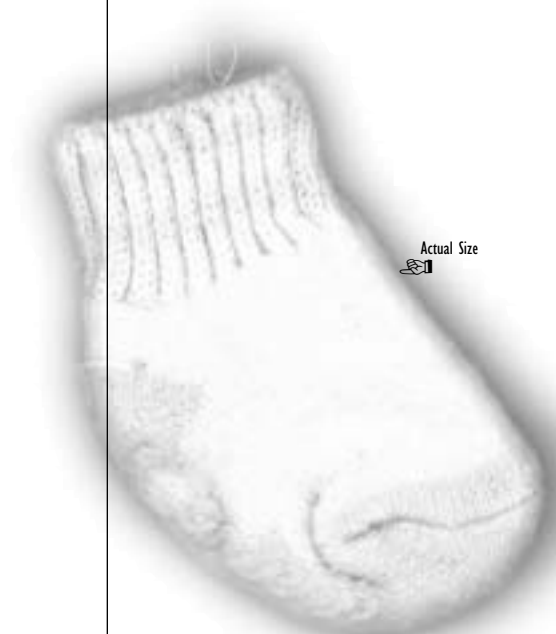


Cyb(ernetic) Org(anism)
MFAY2K

As machines and bodies increasingly become fused, Cyborg Theory celebrates, criticizes, and condemns the process. The machine/body relationship is at once liberating and oppressing. While movies and fiction depict the Cyborg as a futuristic superhuman or technological monster, my new body of work proposes that it is actually your average Mother and Housewife that are among the first so-called Cyborgs.

The machine has extended the body of the mother for centuries as she tended the stove, cranked the washer, peddled the sewing machine, and vacuumed the house, but she hardly exists in discussions of technological culture, except as a consuming unit for manufacturing and advertising or in the case of reproductive technologies – the body that carries the baby. There has been little or no discussion about the postpartum technologizing of the mother and child. With microchips embedded in everything from toys and greeting cards to thermometers and baby monitors, increasingly, the mother/child relationship is mediated, complicated and enhanced by machines. We are encouraged to feed our infants information as if we were storing data on a hard drive with a push to begin “programming” their brains in utero.

What is a cyborg mother to do? Here’s to the recognition of the Cyborg Mommy – the Cyborg as oppressed and the Cyborg as liberated. These works attempt to initiate a dialog that includes the invisible women without whom there would be no technological world. Cyborg Mommy is an ongoing body of work that includes video, multimedia CD ROM, performance, costume, books, digital ephemera and printed matter.



Mother taught me everything I know.

PATTIE BELLE HASTINGS

Artist's Statement



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“...Then we enjoyed *Cyborg Mommy: Everything I Know About Computers I Learned from Mother*, by Pattie Belle Hastings, who proposed that multitasking was long ago discovered by our mothers, the first de facto cyborgs. Her costumed appearance and taped voice accompanied the projection of a CD-ROM about the cyborg as oppressed self. A perfect closing for a perfect take-off day.”

“A Dac Dialogue,” from the Hypertext Kitchen, www.hypertextkitchen.com/Features/DAC2.html, by Susana Pajares Tosca, who is finishing a PhD thesis on Hypertext and Literature in the Complutense University of Madrid, Spain.

“Cyborg Mommy” is a costumed performance persona that embodies hybridity, parody, and capitulation in the merging of flesh and technology, woman and machine. The “Cyborg Mommy” multi-media performance/presentation consists of simultaneous projections of the multimedia CD-ROM and Cyborg Mommy’s disembodied head as she defines and demonstrates how it is that everything she knows about computers she learned from Mother. The piece is approximately 45 minutes long. The CD-ROM documents are embedded with image, sound, video, and are hyperlinked to each other and with dozens of websites that are cyberfeminist, hip mother, and cyborg in content.

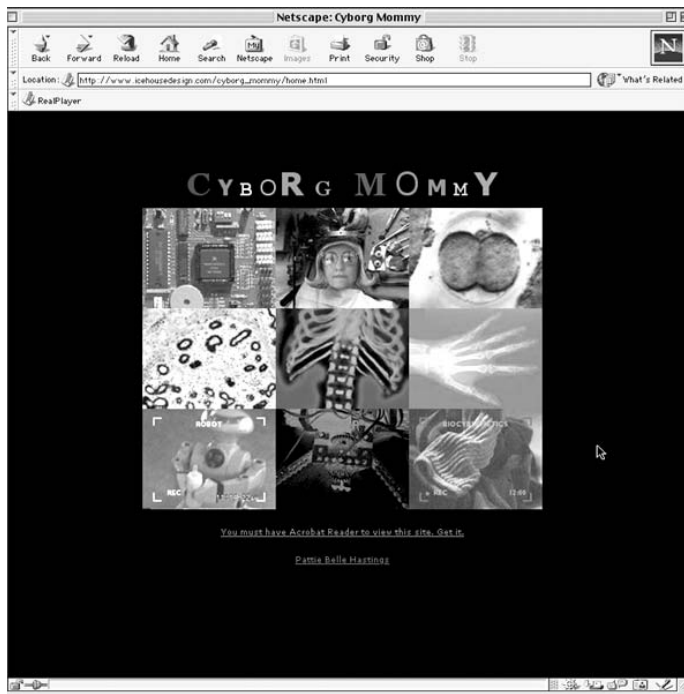
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**Performance,
Screening Room
and Website**



Images are from the Digital Arts and Culture 2000 Conference (DAC 2000) in Bergen, Norway (8/00) and from a performance/installation at Vermont College in Montpelier, Vermont (2/00).



The web site features extracts of documents from the CD ROM and is uniquely constructed using only PDFs to deliver content.

www.icehousedesign.com/cyborg_mommy/home.html



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