Recherches féministes

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SUMMARIES OF ARTICLES

What if women controled technology ?
Peta Tancred et Karen Messing

The authors underline the way male control of technology is assisted by the social definitions of both technology and gender, and they provide illustrations based on the use of technology in everyday life, in relation to the environment and to the world of work. They introduce the argument that the very conception of technologies is male, as discussed here by Chabaud-Rychter, and they highlight the way that women's qualifications and technological change are handled in a variety of workplace settings, as described also by Soares, Tremblay and de Sève, Lebel and Lavallée. They conclude by supporting women's greater control over technologies in all fields, rather than any withdrawal from their utilisation.

Innovation in a French domestic appliance company : designing for use and designing for production
Danielle Chabaud-Rychter

This article is part of a research project on relations between industrial innovation and the domestic world conducted in a French company manufacturing small household appliances. The study included following the whole design and production processes of multi-function food processors. Two aspects of innovation are analysed here. First, we show how innovators design food processors for use, how they take users into account and how they construct heterogeneous representations of them. Designing for use involves conceiving the actions women will undertake when using the appliance. This brings into question the ways in which innovators prescribe use and write it into the appliance. The second part of this article examines how the product is designed for production as well as the modifications of machinery, workers' posts and female operators' tasks that are involved in the production of a new line of food processor. Other forms of prescribing women's activity are thus implemented by the innovators, and we attempt to analyze here how female workers deal with this.

New technologies = new skills ? The case of supermarket cashiers
Angelo Soares

This article examines the skills involved in what is considered «unskilled» work, that of supermarket cashiers in Brazil and Quebec. The effects of the introduction of new technologies on workers' skills in both societies are also studied. After a brief discussion of the debate on the effects of new technologies on workers' skills, we examine cashiers' skills in non-automated supermarkets so as to analyze the effects of the new technologies on cashiers' skills in both societies. We conclude that the most important skills, social skills, have not been affected by the new technologies.

Creation, technical competence and management : female television producers in Quebec
Estelle Lebel and Marguerite Lavallée

The arrival of numerous women as television producers has coincided with important technological change and strategical evolution of programming, that are menacing for the

profession. The authors investigate the incidence of this situation on women in this profession where their minorization has been reduced with equity programs. The results of a questionnaire focused on the place that female directors occupy and their perceptions of different aspects of their work as compared to their male counterparts show differences at various levels : access to the profession, work status, types of responsibilities, etc. They also reveal an evolution of the profession related to generational differences, marked prejudices regarding the ease of women to carry out their career and women's awareness of the stakes involved in their equitable representation in the profession. The introduction of new technologies in television production, although well accepted by female producers, may sooner or later provoke secondary effects on their presence in the profession.

Persistent and changing forms in the sexual division of labour in a context of technological and organizational transformations
Diane-Gabrielle Tremblay et Monique K. de Sève

During the past few years, new forms of work organisation, of production, «high performance» organizations and the end of the division of labour have become very popular research themes. The introduction of new technologies and new work organisations is seen by some as offering the possibility of questioning the division of labour and therefore of increasing employment equity for women. However, most researchers, particularly male researchers, have not considered gender. It seems relevant to ask whether a re-examination of the division of labour will have an impact on women and man equally. Also, it seems pertinent to ask whether the new skills required by information technologies will be required of both sexes. Our research addresses these issues. In the ten Quebec firms studied, we observed both persistent and changing forms in the gendered division of labour in a context of technological and organizational changes.

Gender socialization, submission and resistance among third year high school students in Quebec
Pierrette Bouchard, Jean-Claude St-Amant et Jacques Tondreau

Through group interviews of third year high school students in the Quebec City area, this article verifies, on the one hand, how gender and class relations manifest themselves in students' school experiences and, on the other hand, what dynamics sustain the production and reproduction of these social relations. The authors have closely examined both boys' and girls' representations of gender identities and their interactions in school. Whatever their socio-economic background or the level of their performances at school, the girls interviewed show that they are clearly conscious of perduring inequalities between men and women. Boys' representations of gender identity reveal submission to «masculine» values, particularly an understanding of women/men relations as limited to sexuality and a difficulty to think «masculinity» outside of heterosexuality. Whatever their socio-economic background or the level of their school performances, they share sexist and heterosexist stereotypes.