



On a Silver Platter: CD-ROMs and the Promises of a New Technology

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When the new medium of CD-ROMs emerged, industry figures and critics alike proclaimed their virtually unlimited potential. Adapting material from well-established media like television and film, CD-ROMs have quickly transformed genres such as science fiction and horror. At the same time, the realities of actual CD-ROMs often fall short of their utopian visions. *On a Silver Platter* marks a "coming of age" for CD-ROMs as a commercially and aesthetically significant medium demanding critical attention. Greg Smith brings together media scholars such as Lisa Cartwright, Henry Jenkins, Janet Murray, and Scott Bukatman to analyze how CD-ROMs offer alternatives to familiar places—to museums, to cities, and especially to classrooms. Examining specific CD-ROM titles, including, *Sim City*, *Civilization*, and *Phantasmagoria*, the contributors argue that CD-ROMs are complex texts worthy of close consideration, both for how they have changed our understanding of space and genre, and for how they will impact the development of future media. By examining particular CD-ROM texts and contexts, *On a Silver Platter* probes this new medium for insight and understanding into the current state of multimedia and into the future of technology.

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