

title webAffairs

author Show-n-tell
with an essay by Allucquère Rosanne Stone

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webAffairs is an artist's documentation of an adult video web community. The artist, *Show-n-tell*, tells her story of being a voyeur and eventually becoming part of this community through a series of images and actual chat text. Initially shy, she asks men to show her their rooms. She finds naked men by their computers in their office spaces, living rooms and bedrooms. She collects images of their naked bodies juxtaposed with their surrounding computer equipment.

Eventually she becomes a regular within the community and makes friends. People share their personal crises with her. One woman is living with her boyfriend but is having an affair with another man online... A prematurely retired man is feeling lonely at home and tells her, "*The wife works from 7am to 5pm, comes home, watches TV and falls asleep, sex once a week on Saturday mornings. Now I play on the computer, a great mind gone to waste! I lost 20 lbs since June when I finally stopped drinking, but now I am addicted to these rooms.*"

The main narrative, however, is told through *Show-n-tell's* voice. She participates in the community both as an observer and a performer. After a while she has her own virtual sex show but as a married woman she too negotiates the limits of her explorations within virtual space with her real life partner.

The electronic images gathered in chatrooms are transformed as photographic stills in the book. Because of the limits of the technology the image disintegrates into pixels which speak to a new sensibility in image making. The text also takes on an electronic accent. The members of virtual communities have transformed the English language by using acronyms that are incomprehensible to the outsider and yet are understood even by non-English speakers.

This artist's book is a documentation of *Show-n-tell's* navigation through erotic virtual space. But like most documentaries, the material has been electronically edited and graphically redesigned to dramatically communicate her story.

The author “Show-n-tell” was trained as a graphic designer and also as an artist. She has been designing personal work for the medium of the Web practically since its inception the early '90s. She grew up in Turkey and upon graduation from high school came to the U.S. to continue her studies where she has lived and worked ever since. Since 2001, “Show-n-tell” has been working on the project *webAffairs*, documenting and commenting on her participation in the culture of adult video chat rooms. She is currently teaching and residing in the Boston area.