

## Technodocumentary

Did you know that 8 out of 10 women wear the incorrect bra size? No? Well neither did I up until a few years ago, when I found myself hunting through the mall for “Hiring” or “Help Wanted” signs. At sixteen, I found myself with very few choices, since most places wanted someone at least eighteen to be able to work late, or overtime. However I did not know what awaited me behind those doors of the JCPenney interview room, one of the few places that responded to my application. I did not realize that I would be in for such a wild ride of learning various technologies, and what this in turn would teach me. According to Barney, Hemingway, Black, and Bixler, technology is the use of objects (material) and applications (non-material) to improve the efficiency of everyday life.

JCPenney is a department store chain that spans across the nation, and our managers and supervisors instilled in us the importance of great customer service. “Great,” I thought, this will be easy since I have worked in customer service from a young age as the daughter of a small business owner. Then I found out the department I would be effectively using my customer service skills in – dreaded, and ever so awkward lingerie department. My favorite topic became telling everyone I worked at JCPenney, so then they could assume I worked in the Junior’s department, but I would ALWAYS correct them and spread my cheer of working in the Lingerie department. I left many red cheeked and with plenty of nervous giggles. Essentially my manager thought that placing me in the lingerie department would effectively teach me new technologies of how to help others reach the perfect fit in their undergarments.

As Blair discusses in his writings, visual arguments are helpful in selling a product. Looking around at the lingerie department was no different. Blair states, “Visual communication occurs without the mediation of words or language in the literal sense.” (Blair 347) Our department implored the use of visually appealing images on the walls of the displays to allow our customer the desire to purchase various products. Seeing a feminine bra on a model always looks more appealing than just seeing it on a hanger, especially since most images used the “feminine touch.” Goffman explains,

"woman, more than men, are pictured using their fingers and hands to trace the outlines of an object or to cradle its surface." (Goffman 29)

Bra fitting is very important to women, because unlike men, we must wear a bra everyday and without one.... Well, let's just say it may not be pretty. The most important thing most women want is a comfortable bra, because otherwise it will dig into their shoulders, leave red marks, or overall just be uncomfortable and sometimes painful. This technology is what separates the sexes in terms of clothes – and for this reason, can represent a woman's femininity. This is probably why so many women prefer "pretty" looking bras, not only do they crave function, but also want to look nice. My job as a bra fitter has taught me to never underestimate the power of good undergarments, and my knowledge always comes in handy when shopping for replacements of my old ones.

## Bibliography

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Goffman, Erving. *Gender Advertisements*. 1. Harper Collins, 1979.