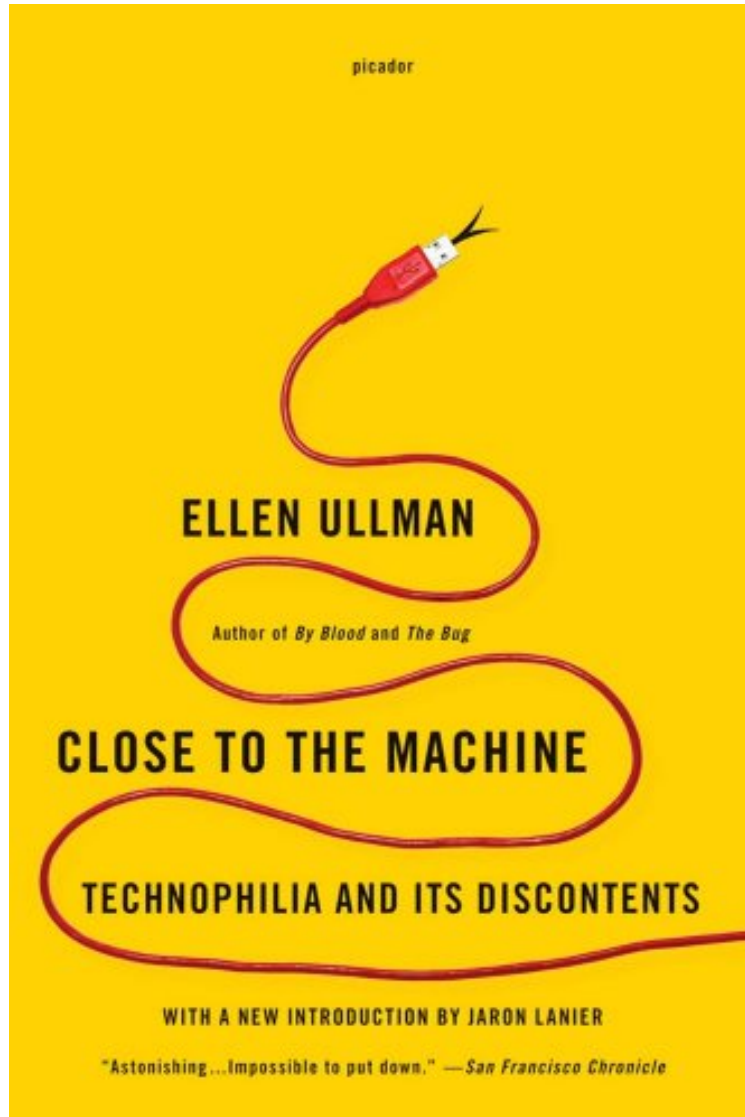


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## Close to the Machine: Technophilia and Its Discontents

*Ellen Ullman*

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**Ellen Ullman : Close to the Machine: Technophilia and Its Discontents** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Close to the Machine: Technophilia and Its Discontents:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. An interesting view into the inner-workings of the programmer's mind  
By C. A. McCloskey I've thoroughly enjoyed reading "Close to the Machine" and am particularly fond of Ullman's honesty and approach in sharing these anecdotes and thoughts with the readers. While some of the programming notes are dated, the mentalities, approaches, and accuracy with which she paints the situations and scenes is timeless. I highly recommend this to any computer professional looking for proof they are not alone and anyone who loves one as a window into their mind.  
1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. I'm blown

awayBy Christian NilssonA must read, explains with such simplicity the complex intricacies of the people who drive or society forward today0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Peter ElliotExcellent! Well written-easily digested

With a New Introduction by Jaron Lanier A Salon Best Book of the Year In 1997, the computer was still a relatively new tool---a sleek and unforgiving machine that was beyond the grasp of most users. With intimate and unflinching detail, software engineer Ellen Ullman examines the strange ecstasy of being at the forefront of the predominantly male technological revolution, and the difficulty of translating the inherent messiness of human life into artful and efficient code. *Close to the Machine* is an elegant and revelatory mediation on the dawn of the digital era.

.com If there is such a thing as a typical computer programmer, Ellen Ullman is not it. She's female, a former communist, bisexual, old enough to be a twentysomething's mom, and not a nerd. She runs her own computer-consulting business in San Francisco and in *Close to the Machine* explores a world in which "the real world and its uses no longer matter." This memoir examines the relationship between human and machine, between material and cyberworlds and reminds us that the body and soul exist before and after any machine. The wit Ullman brings to her National Public Radio commentaries shines through in the prose. "Astonishingly impossible to put down." *San Francisco Chronicle* "Close to the Machine may be the best---it's certainly the most human---book to have emerged thus far from the culture of Silicon Valley. Ullman is that rarity, a computer programmer with a poet's feeling for language." *Laura Miller, Salon* "Part memoir, part techie mantra, part observation on the ever-changing world of computer science... [Ullman is] a strong woman standing up to, and facing down, 'obsolescence' in two different, particularly unforgiving worlds---modern technology and modern society." *The New York Times Book Review* "Fascinating... Chock-full of delicately profound insights into work, money, love, and the search for a life that matters." *Newsweek* "Ullman comes with her tech bona fides intact (she is, after all, a seasoned software engineer). But she also comes with novel material... We see the seduction at the heart of programming: embedded in the hijinks and hieroglyphics are the esoteric mysteries of the human mind." *Wired* "This book is a little masterpiece... I have never read anything like it." *Andrei Codrescu* "For someone sitting so close to the machine, Ellen Ullman possesses a remarkably wide-angle perspective on the technology culture she inhabits." *The Village Voice* About the Author Ellen Ullman is an American computer programmer and author. She has written novels as well as articles for various publications, including *Harper's Magazine*, *Wired*, *The New York Times*, and *Salon*. Her essays and novels analyze the human side of the world of computer programming. Ullman earned a bachelor's degree in English at Cornell University in the early 1970s. She then turned to business programming in the following years. She eventually began writing about her experiences as a programmer in 1995 when she wrote an essay titled "Out of Time: Reflections on the Programming Life." She lives in San Francisco.