Editorial

In the Netherlands, there has been a lot of fuss about the quality of the computer-aided design of a new stamp, the first definitive stamp to depict our new queen, Beatrix. * Since I am both a stamp-collector and a computer fan, the issue is intriguing me.

Most of the fuss is between art-lovers attacking the primitiveness of the computer in depicting our queen, and other art-lovers defending the designer's right to use a computer as a new instrument to produce art.

Of course, this is a very old discussion, on the real merits of the arts and their producers. Nevertheless, it illustrates the point in my last editorial: what is the added value of electronic information processing? It is nice to show that we are clever enough to produce less-clever robots, but you do not need a stamp to do so.

I have the feeling that some of the present penetration of technology into everyday life is a bad substitute for the use of our own brains (Art Elias: vol. 1, no. 4—do you hear me?). In most West European countries there is a value-added tax on it. Why?

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* See p. 62.