)u ' 've in It
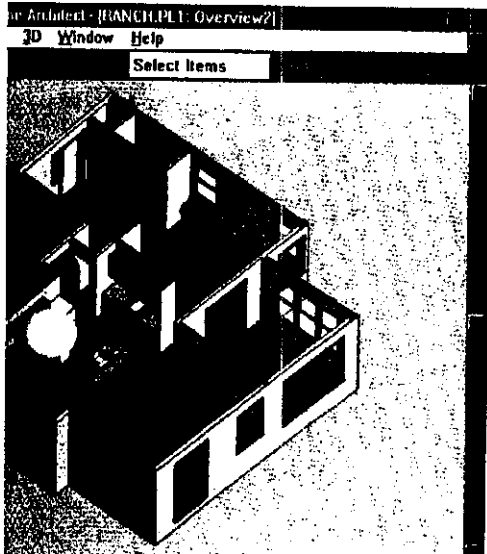
1g revolution has brought us some really ugly
)ne with a computer can be a graphic designer.
m one menu, some clip art from another, some
nd go to town. What you end up with may not be
/en legible, but at least it's yours.
owning a computer does not make you a graph-
! the popularity ol'the new genre of home-design
1puter doesn't make you an architect either.
)me Architect is a good example of this new
 pretty useful. It makes drawing floor plans fair-
e walls and windows around, or drag furniture
It lets you see what your new rumpus room will
•enderings of the design from the vantage point
ces manifests of materials that you can export to
ith you on your fool's errand to the bank.
lems may undermine this program's approach.
ritchen of your dreams. You draw the walls. You

J a **computer** doesn't make you an architect.

, appliances, and furniture into place. You
itchen in 3-D. You run **"Plan Check,"** which will
installed an exhaust fan where you need one or
:d your new kitchen with an entrance.
not warn you that you don't have enough
e a decent meal. It won't tell you that maybe
1k 20 feet away from the dishwasher, or that a
-facing windows will be dark, cold, and cheer-
w where north is.

a ten-page chapter called "An Introduction to
ich falls rather short of what you really need.
! Architect package ought to come on a CD-
a multimedia presentation of *Mr. Blandings*
and a hypertext version of *A Pattern Language.*
? you an instant architect, but at least you
. about what you're getting yourself into. -

erbund: (800) 521 6263, +1 (415) 382 4400.

Look Ma! No Gloves!

Gloves and goggles aren't the only way to navigate
virtual worlds. LEEP Systems' Cyberface 3 Virtual
Reality Workstation offers another way. Looking like)
a cross between a submarine periscope and a desk
lamp, the Cyberface is actually an exquisitely
counter-balanced back-lit LCD display that is
strapped on your head and rests in front of your eyes.
Once in place, every turn or movement of your head is
transmitted down an RS-232 serial interface to a host
computer (not included).

   With the appropriate software, you can use the six
buttons on the top of the Cyberface to control your
motion through the virtual world, using different
combinations to move you forward, backward, faster,
or slower. A speaker placed over each ear can be used

Cyberface 3: a different way to navigate virtual worlds.

to play synthetic stereo sound, further enhancing the
illusion of reality. The counter balance kept me from
getting a stiff neck even after prolonged use.

   What the Cyberface lacks is binocular vision: Each
eye looks at the same 71 -mm-wide display. LEEP's
engineers claim that stereo is overrated. In any case, I
didn't notice that both of my eyes were looking at a
single screen during my tour of cyberspace.

   The Cyberface comes with drivers for popular
modeling software such as Sense8, Straylight,
VREAM, and Computer Explorations. For those who
have the cash and the desk space, Cyberface can be an
elegant tool for virtual exploration. - *Simson L.
Garfinkel*

Cyberface 3 Virtual Reality Workstation: US$14,660. LEEP Systems:+1
(617) 647 1395, e-mail leep@world.std.com.

Sonic CD

I was watching the thanksgiv-
ing day parade in New York
City hoping to get a look at the
raw Sonic Hedgehog balloon.
And what does the little blue
nut do? He pokes his eye into a
lightpole, deflating himself and
dragging the pole down on the
crowd. Go Sonic! Was this his
special way of saying "I'm back
on the scene and ready to roll?"

   The Sonic CD marks the third
and best visit from the Sega
superstar. Go with him to his
home planet Mobius, where he
battles Robotnik once again. In
the past he's saved his animal
friends, this time he's saving the
flowers. He's doing the only job
he knows, playing the mediator
between culture and nature.
Meet his friend Amy Rose, a
pink hedgehog. Race against
the Anti Sonic, a robotic dop-

The Blue guy rules on CD.

pelganger. And coolest of all,
become baby Sonic, a little blue
pea kind of dude. YES! Hanging
with Sonic is always a good time.

   This is the reason to buy a
Sega CD player. A full CD of
Sonic adventures, 50 levels of
adrenaline. The music is great,
the colors wild and the graphics
fantastic.

   After the parade, Mayor-elect
Rudy Giuliani was asked how he
liked the parade. "Well, it was a
disappointment not to see
Sonic," was his immediate
response. Wow, here's a politi-
cian for the digital age, one
who's buddies with Sonic and
ready to race down the true
digital superhighway with him.
New York City, there still is hope.
- *Steve Speer*

Sonic CD: $49.95. Sega: (800)
872 7342, +1 (415) 591-7529.

Understandin

U nderstanding Hype
lour de (electronic
library or a coffee tab
domain of interactive
pages. For *an* old-styl
just graphics and text
virtually - evoking th
describes and predict

   The book's two Bri
"interactive program:
different media and c
in a variety of ways th

   The book itself beg
including an innovat
main forms of media
nicely illustrated vig
nevar Bush, Douglas

brief sociological in
technical discussior
suitably detailed dis
finishes up with a r
those with professi
of European produ

   Digital converge
Hypermedia grows
once volume, and r
ing. In short, this is
work; when we gel
like this can be ma
book, then the age
- *Jordan Gruber*

Understanding Hypermedia