



A Nation Transformed by Information: How Information Has Shaped the United States from Colonial Times to the Present

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This book makes the startling case that North Americans were getting on the "information highway" as early as the 1700's, and have been using it as a critical building block of their social, economic, and political world ever since.

By the time of the founding of the United States, there was a postal system and roads for the distribution of mail, copyright laws to protect intellectual property, and newspapers, books, and broadsides to bring information to a populace that was building a nation on the basis of an informed electorate. In the 19th century, Americans developed the telegraph, telephone, and motion pictures, inventions that further expanded the reach of information. In the 20th century they added television, computers, and the Internet, ultimately connecting themselves to a whole world of information.

From the beginning North Americans were willing to invest in the infrastructure to make such connectivity possible. This book explores what the deployment of these technologies says about American society. The editors assembled a group of contributors who are experts in their particular fields and worked with them to create a book that is fully integrated and cross-referenced.

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