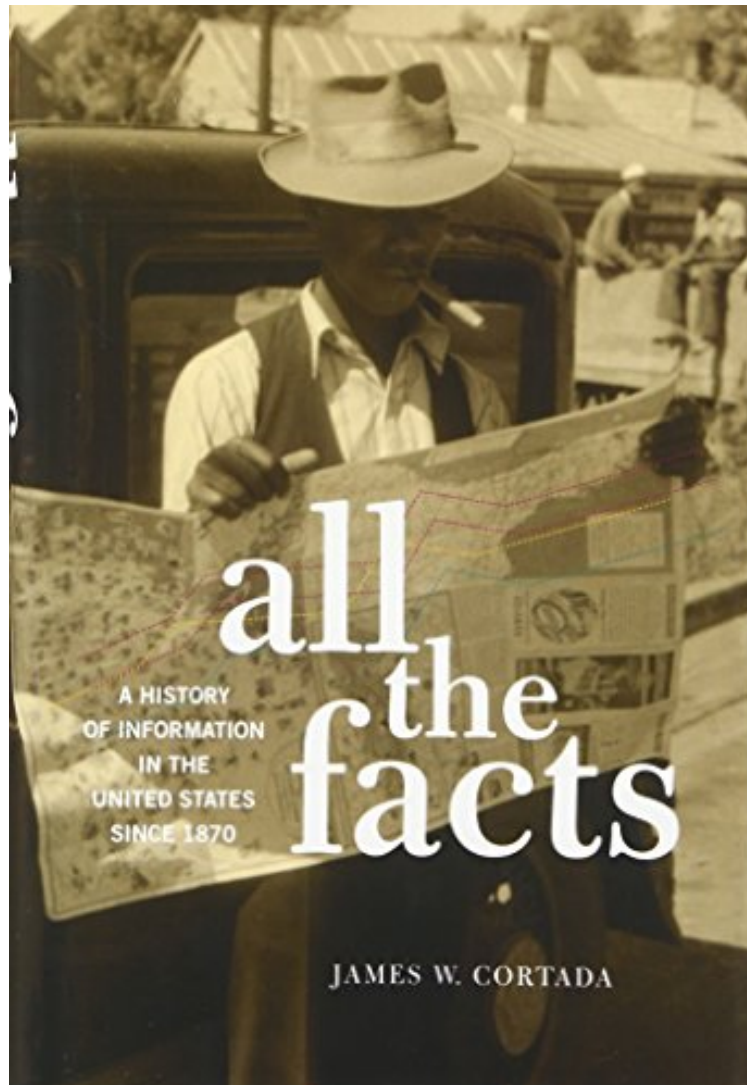


(Ebook pdf) All the Facts: A History of Information in the United States since 1870

All the Facts: A History of Information in the United States since 1870

James W. Cortada

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James W. Cortada : All the Facts: A History of Information in the United States since 1870 before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised All the Facts: A History of Information in the United States since 1870:

All the Facts presents a history of the role of information in the United States since 1870, when the nation began a

nearly 150-year period of economic prosperity and technological and scientific transformations. James Cortada argues that citizens and their institutions used information extensively as tools to augment their work and private lives and that they used facts to help shape how the nation evolved during these fourteen decades. He argues that information's role has long been a critical component of the work, play, culture, and values of this nation, and no more so than during the twentieth century when its function in society expanded dramatically. While elements of this story have been examined by thousands of scholars---such as the role of radio, newspapers, books, computers, and the Internet, about such institutions as education, big business, expanded roles of governments from town administration to the state house, from agriculture to the services and information industries---All the Facts looks at all of these elements holistically, providing a deeper insight into the way the United States evolved over time. An introduction and 11 chapters describe what this information ecosystem looked like, how it evolved, and how it was used. For another vast layer of information about this subject the reader is directed to the detailed bibliographic essay in the back of this book. It includes a narrative history, case studies in the form of sidebars, and stories illustrating key points. Readers will find, for example, the story of how the US postal system helped create today's information society, along with everything from books and newspapers to TV, computers, and the Internet. The build-up to what many today call the Information Age took a long time to achieve and continues to build momentum. The implications for the world, and not just for the United States, are as profound as any mega-trend one could identify in the history of humankind. All the Facts presents this development thoroughly in an easy-to-digest format that any lover of history, technology, or the history of information and business will enjoy.

"[W]ell organized and often insightful. Sections about office work, industrial research, management, computing, and the internet display his prodigious knowledge....All the Facts offers an expansive account of institutional and technological change..."--Josh Lauer, *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*"...Cortada does not disappoint when it comes to breadth....His book serves as a fascinating, exhaustive, and wide-ranging introduction to the concept of information. He made me think, and he has laid bare some fertile soil for future researchers to exploit."--Michael Halpert, *EH.Net*"James W. Cortada has broken new ground in his most recent book dealing with the history of information in the United States since 1870. Cortada advances a new and intriguing scholarly perspective that emphasizes the analysis of the critical role of information in the form of facts and data in shaping social dynamics...Ultimately, Cortada's new historiography not only creates a means for assessing how informational factors tie the past to the present, but also adumbrates the probable direction of future change."--Paul Miranti, *Business History* "Readers can dive into any chapter and glean something useful...Highly recommended."--CHOICE"James Cortada's magisterial history of information is the single most important book ever published on this fascinating and essential topic. Nothing else has even come close. Covering the period from 1870 to the present and totaling over 600 pages, Cortada has provided historians of information-in all its guises-with a deeply erudite tour of the remarkably complex landscape that characterizes how Americans have used information to work, to play, and to earn a living over the past nearly 150 years...This is an exceedingly important book...Cortada has wrought an incredible feat...It is a seminal work by an established and well-regarded historian and will stand for years as the most comprehensive treatment of the history of information in America in the years since the Civil War."--*Information Culture: A Journal of History*"Many scholars have written about the history of information technology and set it in the context of American history; however, this book opens new territory by discussing the history of information itself in American life. This book is a very welcome addition to our understanding of both the history of information and the history of American life from just after the U.S. Civil War to the present. Cortada is especially strong as he tells how big business and the government have shaped American life."--William Aspray, Bill and Lewis Suit Professor of Information Technologies, School of Information, University of Texas, Austin "This encyclopedic compendium provides a brisk and accessible guide to a vast and sprawling theme, which is nothing less than the role of information in the modern United States. It should prove invaluable not only for scholars looking for research topics, but also for general readers intrigued by the evolution of one of the defining hallmarks of our age."--Richard R. John, Professor of History and Communications, Columbia University, and author of *Network Nation: Inventing American Telecommunications* "Cortada's *All the Facts* is a pioneering way of thinking about American economic history, beginning with the Pilgrims and continuing until today. He paints on a broad canvas and adroitly manages a torrent of information about information in demonstrating how government, business, military, religious, household, and academic users of information have often incorporated new ways of accessing information with existing ways. He also identifies intriguing paths that he encourages others to explore."--David Surdam, Associate Professor of Economics, University of Northern Iowa"Finally, a comprehensive highly readable history of practical information which locates its uses in the daily public, private, and professional lives of Americans who, Cortada ably shows, have always lived in an information age. Essential reading for information professionals like engineers, office managers, clergy, lawyers, and educators and health care workers at all levels, as well as general readers whose lives have been enriched by information that in recent decades has greatly increased in volume and speed of access."--Wayne A. Wiegand, F. Williams Summers Professor of Library and Information Studies, Florida State University"[E]xtremely well researched. The footnotes and

bibliography are spectacular."--Steven Lubar, *IEEE Annals of the History of Computing*. About the Author James W. Cortada is the author of over two-dozen books on the history and use of information and computing in American society. His most recent book on the history of information is *The Digital Flood: The Diffusion of Information Technology Across the U.S., Europe, and Asia* (Oxford, 2012). He is a Senior Research Fellow at the Charles Babbage Institute, University of Minnesota.