

Mythinformation

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Mythinformation

The almost religious conviction that a widespread adoption of computers and communications systems, along with broad access to electronic information, will automatically produce a better world for humanity.

Good revolutionaries” inform citizens about the goal, the means, and the coming new order

- **Goals**

Starting with the French Revolution, the term revolution is tightly connected to a deliberate change towards

- Social justice
- Freedom
- Democracy

- **Means**

- How will the revolutionaries manage the violence and military [they have used for revolutionary purposes] once they are in control?

- **Institutional details**

- Frequent open elections?
- Decision making, administration, law enforcement

Breaking down the political arguments of computer romantics:

- People need more information
- Information is knowledge
- Knowledge is power
- Increasing access to information enhances democracy and equalizes social power

Consequences of a revolution...

- The consequences of computerization need to be carefully thought through and planned to ensure that the outcomes are desirable.

Some areas to consider:

- The surveillance state and self-surveillance
 - Issues of privacy and freedom
 - People become passive and compliant in the face of surveillance
- The alteration of patterns of human sociability
 - Because computers are deliberately introduced to eliminate social layers previously needed to get things done and do away with the reasons people had for being together

 - Without human buffers between institutions of power and individuals, the latter will be more susceptible to external pressure
- The increasing mobility and un-locatability of power ("rhizomacy")
 - Instantaneous action at any point on the globe, not limited by geography

Questions???

- **When everyone has a computer, everyone will be equally powerful? No.**
- Such a development might give previously disadvantaged people more social influence, but it will not rock the balance of power.

Questions???

- **Do we really lack information? – No, not really**
- Information alone does not create knowledgeable citizens.
- People need an educated ability to gain knowledge and to act effectively based on that knowledge.
 - To transform information to knowledge
- That ability does not come just by having access to information.

