

The Information Society and the Black Community

John T. Barber, Alice A. Tait

Does the Information Age promise egalitarianism and democracy, or will it simply reinforce long-standing social and economic inequalities? This collection of essays analyzes the emerging role of African-Americans in post-industrial society from a variety of communications research perspectives. Accepting W.J. Wilson's theory of a socially and economically isolated African-American underclass, Barber and Tait ask the logical question: what next? *The Information Society and the Black Community* is a critical examination of the prospects and pitfalls of a historically disadvantaged group in a period of rapid technological advances and economic growth.

Adopting Frank Webster's theory of the Information Society as a framework for organization and development, the book is divided into five sections that look at technological, economic, occupational, spatial, and cultural aspects of the relationship between the African-American community and the Information Society. Part One analyzes data on African-American use of information technology, and examines how the new flow of information might effect African-American social and cultural images. Part Two focuses on African-American participation in the ownership and control of information industries. Part Three treats professional training and employment patterns affecting African-Americans in the Information Age. Part Four centers around the potential uses of information technology in solving social, political, and economic problems. Part Five addresses the growing connections of the African-American community to Africa and the rest of the world via information technology.

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