



Reinventing Knowledge: From Alexandria to the Internet

Ian F. McNeely, Lisa Wolverton

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A dazzling intellectual history of the West served up with verve and insight by two brilliant young historians.

Here is an intellectual entertainment, a sweeping history of the key institutions that have organized knowledge in the West from the classical period onward. With elegance and wit, this exhilarating history alights at the pivotal points of cultural transformation. The motivating question throughout: How does history help us understand the vast changes we are now experiencing in the landscape of knowledge? Beginning in Alexandria and its great center of Hellenistic learning and imperial power, we then see the monastery in the wilderness of a collapsed civilization, the rambunctious universities of the late medieval cities, and the thick social networks of the Enlightenment republic of letters. The development of science and the laboratory as a dominant knowledge institution brings us to the present, seeking patterns in the new digital networks of knowledge. Full of memorable characters, this fresh history succeeds in restoring the strangeness and the significance of the past.

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