Henry Adams Society

Henry Adams, Technology, and the Threat of Artificial Intelligence

Throughout his career as an historian, Henry Adams relied on industrial and technological data to mark social change and transformation. But at the turn of the twentieth century, he was confronted by new technologies and scientific advances that led him to ponder a technological future that was accelerating, potentially to the point where machines transcend the power of their human creators to control or direct them. His meditation on the new force of the dynamo is but one example of this concern about the future of technology. We seek papers that address any aspect of Adams's relationship to data-driven historical investigations, his fascination with modern technologies and the dangers posed by them, and ways by which his concerns offer guidance as we face a new universe of artificial intelligence and machine learning. Please direct proposals and inquiries by January 28, 2024 to John Orr (orr@up.edu) and William Merrill Decker (william.decker@okstate.edu).