



As We May Think

By Vannevar Bush
(Published: July 1945)

Consider a future device ... in which an individual stores all his books, records, and communications, and which is mechanized so that it may be consulted with exceeding speed and flexibility. It is an enlarged intimate supplement to his memory.

"As We May Think" is a 1945 essay by Vannevar Bush which has been described as visionary and influential, anticipating many aspects of information society. It was first published in *The Atlantic* in July 1945 and republished in an abridged version in September 1945—before and after the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Bush expresses his concern for the direction of scientific efforts toward destruction, rather than understanding, and explicates a desire for a sort of collective memory machine with his concept of the memex that would make knowledge more accessible, believing that it would help fix these problems. Through this machine, Bush hoped to transform an information explosion into a knowledge explosion.

Vannevar Bush (1890—1974) was an American electrical engineer and administrator who developed the Differential Analyzer and oversaw government mobilization of scientific research during World War II. He emphasized the importance of scientific research to national security and economic well-being, and was chiefly responsible for the movement that led to the creation of the National Science Foundation.

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