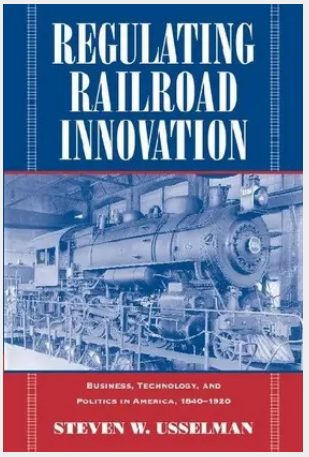
Usselman

Regulating Railroad Innovation

Business, Technology, and Politics in America, 1840 1920

Efforts to create and mould new technologies have been a central, recurrent feature of the American experience since at least the time of the Revolution. In Regulating Railroad Innovation, historian Steven Usselman brings this neglected aspect of American history to light. For nearly a century, railroad technology persistently posed novel challenges for Americans, prompting them to re-examine their most cherished institutions and beliefs. Business managers, inventors, consumers, and politicians all strained to contain the forces of innovation and to channel technical change toward the ends they desired. Moving through time from the first experimental lines through the polished but troubled railroad machines of the early twentieth century, Usselman examines diverse forums ranging from legislatures, and evolving corporate bureaucracies to laboratories, engineering societies, and world's fairs. In the process, his book situates technology within the dynamic history of an emergent industrial nation and elucidates its enduring place in American society.

A study of America's efforts to regulate expanding railroad technology.



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