

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910460328303321
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Titolo	1816 : America rising // C. Edward Skeen
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Lexington, Kentucky : , : The University Press of Kentucky, , 2003 ©2003
ISBN	0-8131-5015-9
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (317 p.)
Disciplina	973.5/1
Soggetti	Political culture - United States - History - 19th century National characteristics, American Electronic books. United States History 1809-1817 United States Politics and government 1809-1817 United States History War of 1812 Influence
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Includes index.
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references (p. [237]-289) and index.
Nota di contenuto	Cover; Title; Copyright; Contents; Acknowledgments; Introduction; 1. Year Without a Summer; 2. Legacy of the War of 1812; 3. The Fourteenth Congress Begins; 4. A Tariff and a Bank; 5. Compensation Act of 1816; 6. Internal Improvements; 7. Fourth of July Celebrations; 8. National Defense; 9. State Developments; 10. Crime and Punishment; 11. The Humanitarian Impulse; 12. Election of 1816; Epilogue; Notes; Bibliographical Essay; Index; A; B; C; D; E; F; G; H; I; J; K; L; M; N; O; P; Q; R; S; T; U; V; W; Y
Sommario/riassunto	""The year 1816 found America on the cusp of political, social,cultural, and economic modernity. Celebrating its fortieth year of independence, the country's sense of self was maturing. Americans, who had emerged from the War of 1812 with their political systemsintact, embraced new opportunities. For the first time, citizens viewed themselves not as members of a loose coalition of states but as part of a larger union. This optimism was colored, however, by bizarre weather. Periods of extreme cold and severe drought swept the northern states and the upper south throughout 1816, which was someti

