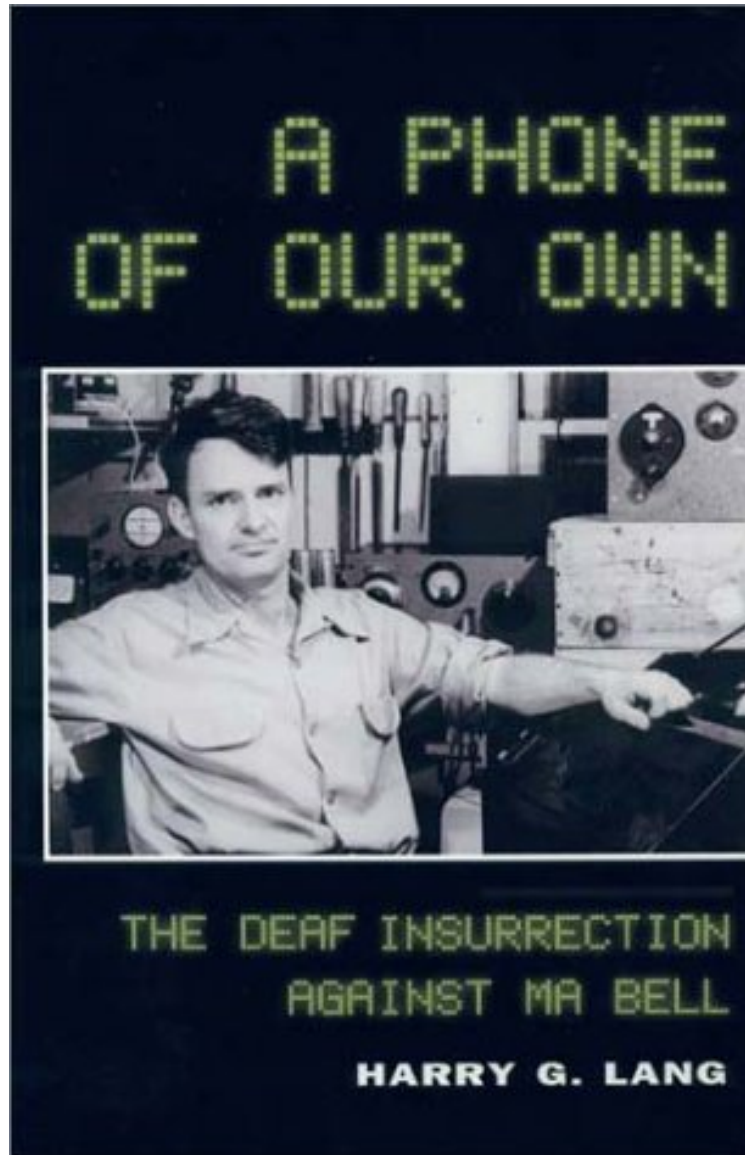


(Download ebook) A Phone of Our Own: The Deaf Insurrection Against Ma Bell

A Phone of Our Own: The Deaf Insurrection Against Ma Bell

Harry G. Lang

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#2622587 in Books 2000-05-03Ingredients: Example IngredientsOriginal language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.00 x 1.00 x 6.00l, 1.50 #File Name: 1563680904256 pages | File size: 26.Mb

Harry G. Lang : A Phone of Our Own: The Deaf Insurrection Against Ma Bell before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Phone of Our Own: The Deaf Insurrection Against Ma Bell:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Great story about a battle for equal access!By K. L SadlerAs always, Dr. Harry Lang writes about topics pertaining to the Deaf world and its ongoing attempt to make their way in a hearing world. This book is a magnificent story about the battle between big corporations and a small group of people who

were striving to find a way to communicate with each other and with the hearing world. It is very ironic that Alexander Graham Bell was attempting to find a way to assist the Deaf (his own wife was Deaf) when he started developing the phone, yet his creation became the bane of our existence. Until the development of the computer and email, the phone was the ultimate barrier for those with hearing impairments to participate in the 'normal' world through education, employment, and necessities such as calling the doctor for an appointment. Dr. Lang tells the story of 3 courageous and very different men who wanted to rectify this communication deficit for the hearing impaired community. What started out in homes and garages much as the history of PCs did in the San Francisco Bay Area, spread throughout the U.S., and much of the effort had to be spent trying to get corporations such as ATT to cooperate. It is unbelievable the amount of obstacles raised by the very group who would benefit (in increased revenue from a priorly non-using community) were the ones who made things so difficult for these men. Yet persistence from all of them led to an invention/tool which is much used now and taken for granted by all of us who became deaf later in life. This history is well-written and well-documented, and it should be required/recommended reading for those in communications, as well as those who are deaf or who work with the deaf. Changes in the TTY, increased private/public computer use, and changes in federal laws such as the ADA and rulings by the FCC have led to increased use of this method of communication, and the increasing availability of TTYs in public places. It has also led to innovations in computer use, and prompted attitudinal changes which were much needed. Karen Sadler, Science Education, University of Pittsburgh

2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Remarkable story of innovation the enduring human spirit. By Midwest Book Review Less than one percent of the 85 million telephones in the U.S. and Canada in 1964 were used regularly by the deaf. That's when Robert Weitbrecht (physicist with the Stanford Research Institute), James Marsters (orthodontist), and Andrew Saks (businessman) started the process that led to deaf people around the world possessing an affordable phone system that they could use. All three of these enterprising men were also deaf. Harry Lang's *A Phone Of Our Own: The Deaf Insurrection Against Ma Bell* is the fascinating story of how these three diverse men collaborated to solve the technical difficulties of developing a coupling device for a teletypewriter that would translate sounds into discernible letters. With the help of an expanding corps of deaf advocates, ATT and FCC resistance to this technological innovation was overcome and a portable, fully accessible, and affordable telephone system came into being for the deaf community. *A Phone Of Our Own* is a remarkable and enduring story of innovation and the enduring human spirit.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. *A Phone of Our Own* By Alan L. Fuchs A phone of our own. From the very first sentence of the introduction "For nearly a century after the advent of the voice telephone, we deaf people were without a phone of our own". Author Harry G. Lang takes the reader by the hand and brings the very personal struggle of the Deaf people to the reader. He brilliantly brings to the public eye not only the Deaf persons responsible for bringing us the TTY that we enjoy so much, but also the countless numbers of Deaf people who worked tirelessly behind the scenes. It is not a book about one Deaf person but many Deaf people in their ongoing struggle to communicate. This book is a masterpiece of writing and brings a renewed pride within the Deaf community. I highly recommend this book for everyone, Deaf and hearing.

In 1964, of the more than 85 million telephones in the United States and Canada, less than one percent were used regularly by deaf people. In that same year, three enterprising deaf men, Robert H. Weitbrecht, James C. Marsters, and Andrew Saks, started the process that led to deaf people around the world possessing an affordable phone system that they could use. Harry Lang's *A Phone of Our Own: The Deaf Insurrection Against Ma Bell* tells how these three men collaborated to solve the technical difficulties of developing a coupling device for TTYs that would translate sounds into discernible letters. More remarkably, and with the help of an expanding corps of Deaf advocates, they successfully assaulted the American Telephone and Telegraph Company (ATT), which in its efforts to protect its monopoly, smashed old TTYs to keep them from being used for potentially competitive purposes. *A Phone of Our Own* is an entertaining and engrossing story of how Deaf people fought and won, and changed the world for the better for deaf people everywhere.

The best parts of this well-researched book describe the talents and personalities of the major players and the eventual cooperation from many sources that has allowed the deaf to enhance their personal, social, and professional lives by using a "phone." This account chronicles a most important leap for deaf communication from the 1960s through the 1990s, of which many of the hearing population are unaware.