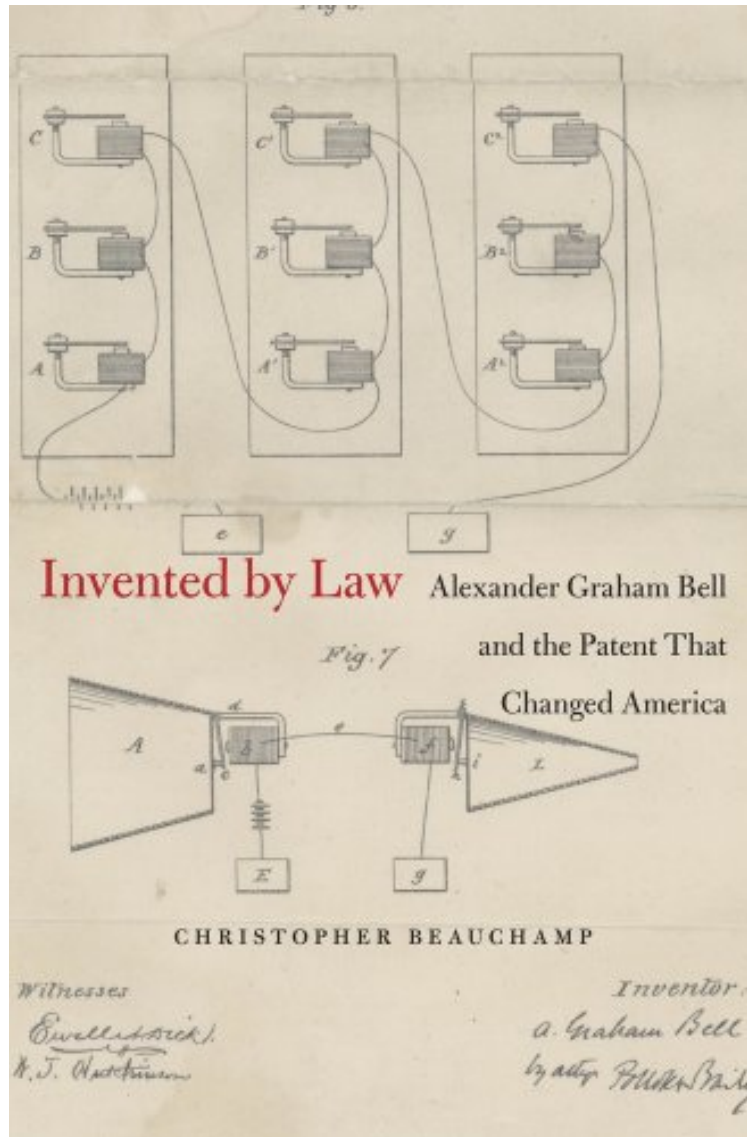


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Invented by Law: Alexander Graham Bell and the Patent That Changed America

Christopher Beauchamp

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Christopher Beauchamp : Invented by Law: Alexander Graham Bell and the Patent That Changed America before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Invented by Law: Alexander Graham Bell and the Patent That Changed America:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. beautifully written, and thoroughly researched book that examines our ...By PatentMavenThis is a fascinating, beautifully written, and thoroughly researched book that examines our

19th century economy through the lens of patent litigation, and in particular, the high-stakes battles of Alexander Graham Bell to enforce his patents on the telephone. Full disclosure: I am a patent attorney. I typically would not read a book like this for fun or relaxation, given my work-day reading load. But this book currently has a home on my bedside table along with some pretty lowbrow novels as well as books on horseback riding and tai chi. Beauchamp tells a fascinating tale and you don't have to be a lawyer, scientist or engineer to engage with the story. Highly recommended.

Alexander Graham Bells invention of the telephone in 1876 stands as one of the great touchstones of American technological achievement. Bringing a new perspective to this history, *Invented by Law* examines the legal battles that raged over Bells telephone patent, likely the most consequential patent right ever granted. To a surprising extent, Christopher Beauchamp shows, the telephone was as much a creation of American law as of scientific innovation. Beauchamp reconstructs the world of nineteenth-century patent law, replete with inventors, capitalists, and charlatans, where rival claimants and political maneuvering loomed large in the contests that erupted over new technologies. He challenges the popular myth of Bell as the telephones sole inventor, exposing that story's origins in the arguments advanced by Bells lawyers. More than anyone else, it was the courts that anointed Bell father of the telephone, granting him a patent monopoly that decisively shaped the American telecommunications industry for a century to come. Beauchamp investigates the sources of Bells legal primacy in the United States, and looks across the Atlantic, to Britain, to consider how another legal system handled the same technology in very different ways. Exploring complex questions of ownership and legal power raised by the invention of important new technologies, *Invented by Law* recovers a forgotten history with wide relevance for todays patent crisis.

Enlarges our understanding of the Bell legacy by inviting us to step back from the myths and the moralizing, the hero worship and the scandal mongering. Though inventors became celebrities in industrializing America, it was not individual ingenuity but the legal wizardry of patents and the shrewd, increasingly influential lawyers who secured them that most powerfully shaped technology, the economy, and society. Beauchamp uses the story of the lawyers who made Bell the inventor of the telephone to show how the patent became a key weapon of market power and the cornerstone of a new legal industrial complex. (Graeme Gooday Boston 2015-05-13) *Invented by Law* shows how an epic late-nineteenth-century contest over intellectual property rights shaped the communications networks of twentieth-century America. Monopoly, Beauchamp concludes, was made and not born, an insight that raises troubling questions about the idealization of patent rights not only in the age of Alexander Graham Bell, but also in our own. (Richard R. John, Columbia University) *Invented by Law* offers an utterly convincing reinterpretation of the legal struggles over the telephone patents and the making of the Bell telephone monopoly. Beauchamp locates lawyers as the leads in a historical drama that used to pay attention solely to inventors and those who claimed to be inventors. But his deeper contribution is to make the rise of the Bell empire both deeply contingent and deeply evocative of the transatlantic capitalist culture that came into being at the end of the nineteenth century. A brilliant work of economic-legal history, one shaped by meticulous and imaginative research and by an iconoclastic historical imagination. (Hendrik Hartog, author of *Someday All This Will Be Yours*) About the Author Christopher Beauchamp is Associate Professor of Law at Brooklyn Law School.