Graeme Gooday and Karen Sayer, **Managing the Experience of Hearing Loss in Britain, 1830–1930**. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017. Pp. xx + 126. ISBN 978-1-1374-0687-3. £44.99 (hardcover).

At the beginning of Graeme Gooday and Karen Sayer's *Managing the Experience of Hearing Loss in Britain, 1830–1930*, the authors note that one in every six people in the United Kingdom will experience hearing loss at some point in life, which is a statistic that has 'remained stable over time' and that is 'mirrored worldwide' (p. 1). With this context in mind, the authors turn to testimonials from journalists, physicians and letter writers in order to investigate the emotional experience of hearing loss before the emergence of the National Health Service. They take as their focus the period from 1830 to 1930, arguing that the condition of hearing loss was isolating and difficult to manage socially during this time, in part because hearing loss was more stigmatized than the loss of vision. Amidst this 'cultural invisibility' (p. 8), those with partial or complete hearing loss attempted to maintain social communications by navigating what was a complicated market for assistive technologies and services during a moment when categories of deafness were diverse and regularly changing.

The study begins in the 1830s, by exploring how the categories surrounding deafness developed alongside changing understandings of the causes of acquired hearing loss, such as ageing and illness. Chapter 2 positions deafness as an umbrella term from the early nineteenth century up until the First World War, one which included auditory experiences ranging from mild hearing loss to severe–profound loss. The category 'hard of hearing' was the most 'pervasive' (p. 17). As physicians began to realize that most forms of hearing loss were incurable, and as they abandoned attempting to cure it in turn, treatment of hearing loss shifted toward offering guidance on the range of supports available. Chapter 3 explores the advice that was offered to those who experienced hearing loss by both physicians and disinterested vendors (who were looking to profit from the sale of assistive devices). The chapter also highlights the pushback from sociologist and writer Harriet Martineau against medical advice; as a 'self-confident "deaf" person' (p. 31), she 'put forward her own example' (p. 31) in the hopes of helping others, encouraging the use of hearing trumpets over other options. Chapter 4 identifies two alternatives to medical devices: lip-reading and writing. But just as medical options had their advantages and disadvantages, so too did lip-reading and writing: lip-reading required well-lit conditions and proximity, while writing often resulted in 'withdrawal from conventional sociability' (p. 59). Chapter 5 catalogues options, besides lip-reading and writing, that were available to those who wished to take part in conversations with the hearing. The chapter focuses on two hearing aid companies, the Rein Company and Hawksley. Both companies offered a catalogue of products, from devices that could be disguised in hats or in hair combs to conspicuous aids for those who were 'comfortable with displaying their "hard of hearing" status' (p. 66). Some assistive devices were even marketed for specific social contexts, such as concerts and public gatherings. Rein's materials were high-quality and personalized, sold only to those who visited the company's headquarters. Hawksley emerged as a mail-order-based alternative for those who could not visit a store in person. Chapter 6 shifts to the early twentieth century, when economic and industrial constraints, alongside the emergence of eugenic projects, contributed to increased stigma for those who were hard of hearing. By focusing on the projects and speeches of Percival MacLeod Yearsley and James Kerr Love respectively, the authors point to a temporary return to the medicalization of deafness, which emphasized preventing deafness. Finally, Chapter 7 focuses on campaigns for the rights of deaf people that developed amidst this climate, including the *Deaf and Dumb Times* and its successor publications and the National Institute for the Deaf (NID). These organizations faced many challenges, but attitudes towards those with hearing loss changed after the First World War, when both soldiers and those on the home front experienced hearing loss from explosions, resulting in a new category of deafness known as the 'war-deafened'. As a result, efforts were launched to protect

the welfare of the 'war-deafened' and to ensure that this population was aware of reliable vendors for assistive devices.

Gooday and Sayer's well-researched account of what it was like to be deaf in the Victorian period will be of interest to scholars across several fields. It is difficult to recover in depth the 'lived experience of hearing loss' (p. 24), but Gooday and Sayer make great strides in this direction by drawing from a range of sources, such as advertisements, speeches by medical professionals, literature, museum holdings, opinion pieces by those who were hard of hearing and letters. The book will find a home among scholars in the history of medicine and in the history of emotions. It will also be of interest to curators looking for more information on how various technological solutions for hearing loss were purposed and adapted by their users. Most of all, the study contributes heavily to the field of disability studies. As the authors note, 'disability history has not conventionally treated the hard of hearing as part of its remit, and the category "disabled" is refused in Deaf history' (p. 7). This study thus fills a gap in disability history by focusing on how hearing loss was managed on a day-to-day basis. It offers a sense of the options that were available to those with hearing loss, such as lip-reading, writing and hearing trumpets. By incorporating a range of evidence of the 'changing circumstances' (p. 119) and diverse experiences of hearing loss up until the founding of the NID, Gooday and Sayer position this study as a starting point for an array of future projects, including investigations of the adaptions made to hearing-related artefacts that have been left behind, studies of the educational work of those who taught lip-reading, and research on the growth of the disciplines of otology and audiology.

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Push-buttons are part and parcel of the economic, cultural and political texture of today's big-data capitalism. How did this communication and control interface become so widespread? What lies behind the gesture of pushing a button? This excellent book at the intersection of media studies, history of technology and cultural history deals with the materiality of power. It advances towards a genealogy of the digital present (in the double sense of the importance of fingers and of binary logic) through the history of an interface that reconfigured how humans interacted with each other and with technological systems.

Power Button focuses on the period of the emergence and early adoption of push-buttons in wealthy urban contexts in the United States (1880–1925). The book is solidly grounded in a vast and extremely rich set of textual and visual sources, ranging from patents, commercial catalogues and technical journals to popularization magazines, fiction and advertisements. This variety of sources allows for a historical analysis of the design, production, circulation and (mis)use of push-buttons, as well as their entanglement with the emergence of an ideal of 'digital command'.

One of the main arguments of the book is that push-buttons became such a successful interface because they materialized a certain ideal of technological delegation that promised instant gratification while black-boxing all the sociotechnical infrastructure and power relations behind them. Manufacturers and advertisers constructed an imaginary of effortless, foolproof, ergonomic, automatic 'digital command' that could instantly fulfil anyone's desires with the 'mere touch' of a button regardless of strength or technical skill.

In addition to analysing the early cultural history of this ideal, Plotnick's attentive gaze uncovers and describes a complex phenomenology of actual interactions that demonstrates how the push-buttons used to operate an elevator, ring a doorbell, call for a servant, turn on the light, trigger