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Active Radio: Pacificas Brash Experiment (Commerce and Mass Culture)

Jeffrey Land

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#4029111 in Books Univ Of Minnesota Press 1999-04-01 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.50 x .50 x 5.50l, .54 #File Name: 0816631573200 pages Great product! | File size: 39.Mb

Jeffrey Land : Active Radio: Pacificas Brash Experiment (Commerce and Mass Culture) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Active Radio: Pacificas Brash Experiment (Commerce and Mass Culture):

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A Quick, Illuminating Read for Public Radio Fans By Peter

RichardsonIt's easy to take public radio for granted, but the story of the first listener-sponsored public radio station (and network) shows that challenges to its survival were formidable. Established in 1949 by pacifists with seed money from wealthy Bay Area Quakers, KPFA in Berkeley began airing progressive public affairs and arts programs and soon faced stiff resistance from the FCC, FBI, and Congress. This short (179 page) book, written for general audiences, focuses on the first three decades of this "brash experiment," including the expansion of Pacifica radio to include stations in Los Angeles, New York, Washington D.C., and Houston. In passing, we also hear about Margaret Mead, W.E.B. DuBois, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Pauline Kael, Seymour Hersh, Carey McWilliams, Alexander Meiklejohn, and other voices of dissent and criticism aired on Pacifica. Very worthwhile.

In April 1949, KPFA in Berkeley, California went on the air. From the beginning, the station broadcast an utterly new combination of political commentary and cultural discussion that reflected founder Lewis Hill's vision of a radio station dedicated to creative expression and dissent. In this fascinating account, Jeff Land tells the heroic story of the Pacifica radio network, exploring not only its role in the culture and politics of the postwar world, but also the practical model it pioneered for liberatory alternatives to commercial mass media. A network of five stations (in Berkeley, Los Angeles, Houston, New York City, and Washington, D.C.), Pacifica has been a participant in nearly every progressive political movement of the past fifty years. The network has risked the loss of its licenses, had its transmitters bombed, seen its personnel arrested and jailed, and made errors of judgment and taste. Yet it has pioneered a number of media innovations, listener sponsorship and call-in radio among them. It has also made history: on Pacifica stations, Seymour Hersh broke the My Lai story; the FBI's illegal internal surveillance program was first publicly revealed; the Firesign Theater gave its first performance; and Bob Dylan's "Blowing in the Wind" made its public debut. Using tape archives of radio programs, interviews with participants, and unpublished material on Pacifica, Land chronicles the turmoils and triumphs of this radio network that served as a model for National Public Radio and the Public Broadcasting System. Rich in anecdote, *Active Radio* is both an engaging account of Pacifica's past and an assessment of its significance to postwar culture in the United States.