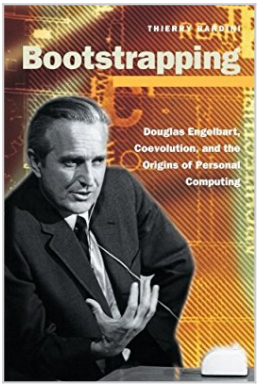

Bootstrapping: Douglas Engelbart, Coevolution, and the Origins of Personal Computing (Writing Science)

By Thierry Bardini

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Bootstrapping analyzes the genesis of personal computing from both technological and social perspectives, through a close study of the pathbreaking work of one researcher, Douglas Engelbart. In his lab at the Stanford Research Institute in the 1960s, Engelbart, along with a small team of researchers, developed some of the cornerstones of personal computing as we know it, including the mouse, the windowed user interface, and hypertext. Today, all these technologies are well known, even taken for granted, but the assumptions and motivations behind their invention are not. *Bootstrapping* establishes Douglas Engelbart's contribution through a detailed history of both the material and the symbolic constitution of his system's human-computer interface in the context of the computer research community in the United States in the 1960s and 1970s. Engelbart felt that the complexity of many of the world's problems was becoming overwhelming, and the time for solving these problems was becoming shorter and shorter. What was needed, he determined, was a system that would augment human intelligence, co-transforming or co-evolving both humans and the machines they use. He sought a systematic way to think and organize this coevolution in an effort to discover a path on which a radical technological improvement could lead to a radical improvement in how to make people work effectively. What was involved in Engelbart's project was not just the invention of a computerized system that would enable humans, acting together, to manage complexity, but the invention of a new kind of human, "the user." What he ultimately envisioned was a "bootstrapping" process by which those who actually invented the hardware and software of this new system would simultaneously reinvent the human in a new form. The book also offers a careful narrative of the collapse of Engelbart's laboratory at Stanford Research Institute, and the further translation of Engelbart's vision. It shows that Engelbart's ultimate goal of coevolution came to be translated in terms of technological progress and human adaptation to supposedly user-friendly technologies. At a time of the massive diffusion of the World Wide Web, *Bootstrapping* recalls the early experiments and original ideals that led to today's "information revolution."

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- Sales Rank: #227768 in Books
- Brand: Brand: Stanford University Press
- Published on: 2000-12-01
- Released on: 2000-12-01
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.25" h x .87" w x 6.13" l, .99 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 320 pages

Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review
Some revolutions are thoroughly televised. When Douglas Engelbart first demonstrated small-w windows and a funny wooden device called a mouse back in 1968, interest jumped quickly and he became the progenitor of the PC. Now, less widely known than the successful entrepreneurs who made billions from his innovations, his story deserves deeper attention as an outstanding example of practical creative research. Communications professor Thierry Bardini examines the scope of his work before and during his tenure at the Stanford Research Institute in *Bootstrapping*, a thoughtful history of an underreported story.

Bardini cleverly sidesteps the postmodern superanalysis of his colleagues to present a clear, straightforward glimpse into Engelbart's environment of inspiration. As an engineer familiar with the earliest computers, he quickly came to understand that their complexity could rapidly outpace human ability to cope--and thus was born the concept of the "user." His team used their computing power to determine how best to use their computing power--a reflexive assignment of profound brilliance--and churned out novel concepts and designs faster than their contemporaries could absorb them.

How and why this occurred as it did is the focus of Bardini's research, and students of creativity and the history of computing will have fits of ecstasy that he has compiled his work so accessibly. Better still, *Bootstrapping* shows research done right and is essential reading for R&D types everywhere. --*Rob Lightner*

Review
"Thierry Bardini particularly explores the theoretical and conceptual underpinnings of Engelbart's book. . . . Indeed, the breadth of Engelbart's contributions and influence, documented in meticulous detail, are astonishing. . . ." (*Enterprise & Society*)

"*Bootstrapping* fills an important gap in the story of personal computing." (*Technology and Culture*)

"Anyone who has worked in computer-human interface or in and around Silicon Valley institutions such as SRI, Xerox PARC, IBM Almaden Research Center or Apple Computer will certainly relish this book. Moreover, those in a private, government or non-profit office filled with the fruits of contemporary productivity technology will appreciate Bardini's tales of politics, committees, funding and grants, demos to funders and skeptical management, and all those fascinating projects at PARC and SRI." (*Leonardo Reviews*)

From the Inside Flap

Bootstrapping analyzes the genesis of personal computing from both technological and social perspectives, through a close study of the pathbreaking work of one researcher, Douglas Engelbart. In his lab at the Stanford Research Institute in the 1960s, Engelbart, along with a small team of researchers, developed some of the cornerstones of personal computing as we know it, including the mouse, the windowed user interface, and hypertext. Today, all these technologies are well known, even taken for granted, but the assumptions and motivations behind their invention are not. Bootstrapping establishes Douglas Engelbart’s contribution through a detailed history of both the material and the symbolic constitution of his system’s human-computer interface in the context of the computer research community in the United States in the 1960s and 1970s. Engelbart felt that the complexity of many of the world’s problems was becoming overwhelming, and the time for solving these problems was becoming shorter and shorter. What was needed, he determined, was a

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Carol Frazier:

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Dorothy Pearce:

The reason why? Because this Bootstrapping: Douglas Engelbart, Coevolution, and the Origins of Personal Computing (Writing Science) is an unordinary book that the inside of the book waiting for you to snap this but latter it will shock you with the secret it inside. Reading this book alongside it was fantastic author who write the book in such amazing way makes the content interior easier to understand, entertaining technique but still convey the meaning completely. So , it is good for you for not hesitating having this anymore or you going to regret it. This amazing book will give you a lot of advantages than the other book get such as help improving your talent and your critical thinking approach. So , still want to hold off having that book? If I have been you I will go to the publication store hurriedly.

Tonya Sewell:

This Bootstrapping: Douglas Engelbart, Coevolution, and the Origins of Personal Computing (Writing Science) is great e-book for you because the content that is certainly full of information for you who all always deal with world and have to make decision every minute. This specific book reveal it info accurately using great plan word or we can point out no rambling sentences inside it. So if you are read the item hurriedly you can have whole data in it. Doesn't mean it only will give you straight forward sentences but hard core information with lovely delivering sentences. Having Bootstrapping: Douglas Engelbart,

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