

Telephone Etiquette

Nobody asked but ...

What is going on? Have you encountered people who, in the middle of public places, hold their mobile phones out at crooked arm's length, horizontally, while using the speaker feature, apparently max'd? The thing is that you often must hear both sides of the conversation. I don't want to hear any side of the conversation. As a voluntaryist, I recognize the natural right to do as you will, but I also expect the acceptance of the responsibility not to force unwanted circumstances on innocent fellow occupants of a public space. Recently, I was in a busy medical waiting area, and I was minding my own business. There were two women, separately, who interacted with their phones. One got a call, whereupon she immediately went outside to finish the conversation. The other got a call, whereupon she held the phone out, screen facing the ceiling, and conducted a two-way conversation with some third party. Everybody in the room was regaled with both sides of the convo. She didn't even tell her interlocutor that she, at the far end, was being shared in a strange space in this way. What kinds of thought processes were involved here?!?! Sadly, this was not an isolated case. Are these people late arrivals from Mars?

— Kilgore Forelle