

# Deathhood, Deaf Culture and the **Wall of Silence**

**Manchester**

**February 15<sup>th</sup> 2020**

**Paddy Ladd**

## 2. Introduction – Wall Of Silence

This is the first UK play to really try and break down the **Wall of Silence** about what has been enacted on Deaf communities worldwide for the last 140 years, and still continues today.  
{*thanks etc*}

- So this presentation is aimed at informing the public.
- Deaf communities have also been denied knowledge of their history, so this is for our people too.
- You are a very wide audience to cover, so bear with me !
- *Who's just seen the play ? Tony Wilson etc*

### 3. Today's Journey

- It's **impossible** to cover everything in the time we have ! So we have to paint a broad picture.
- Deafhood is a complex subject, with full courses, weekend workshops of its own.
- We will introduce you to Deaf cultures, Deaf history, and –briefly- to the Deafhood concept.
- And we discuss the importance of eugenics – and how SLPs are the ‘canaries’ in society’s coalmine.
- Why are Deaf people not seen as politically equal?

# 4. Some Background

Some people confuse Deaf communities with ‘deafness’ – people who lose hearing later in life.

- So let’s re-define ourselves. We are Sign Language Peoples (SLPs) of the world. We exist in every country, have our own national sign languages, and our communities have existed in one form or another for thousands of years.
- Our existence has been documented in ancient Greece and Rome, in ancient Jewish and other Middle-East cultures as far back as 1,300 BC.
- We have our own cultures and artforms, philosophies and pedagogies.
- We communicate globally through the special gift of International Sign. Deaf guides take us inside their national cultures – we don’t need to sit on a tourist bus and take photographs from the outside ;-)
- So we are a Global Nation – and world citizens.
- A lot of problems come from being classified **only** as ‘disabled’. We are **also** a language and cultural minority. Governments and others struggle to comprehend this.

# 5. Our Communities Save Lives

- Our strength lies in our communities and languages.
- Their knowledge and wisdom, passed down through generations, are resources to help those who grow up in isolation from those communities.
- I should know – I was educated in ‘mainstream’ schools, and didn’t learn to sign till I was 22, when I joined the community.
- I was seen as what they call an ‘Oral Success’. But as you will see, that phrase is a lie that has damaged not only myself but millions of Deaf people worldwide.

# 6. Enacted In Your Name ?

- Let's start with a simple question. How many hearing people here know that sign languages and Deaf teachers were banned worldwide for 100+ years ?
- This is called 'Oralism' Does this ideology make any sense to you ?
- It doesn't make any sense to us either !
- We believe that SLPs should be educated to be **bilingual and multicultural.**
- What could possibly be wrong with that idea ?

# 7. Positive Attitudes to SLPs

- So let's have a look at some of the more powerful examples from our histories, before sign languages were banned.
- And when numbers of hearing people viewed Deaf peoples more positively.
- France and the UK 1779 – 1850s (approx.)
- Ottoman Empire, Turkey 1453 – 1919.

# 8. Ottoman Empire

- Evidence shows that hearing people (in this case, Muslims) viewed Deaf people very differently.
- For hundreds of years, this was the greatest empire in the world.
- It covered 1 million square miles, from Eastern Europe to North Africa.
- So for a long time, the Sultans were the most powerful rulers in the world.





# Topkapi Palace



# Topkapi Palace II



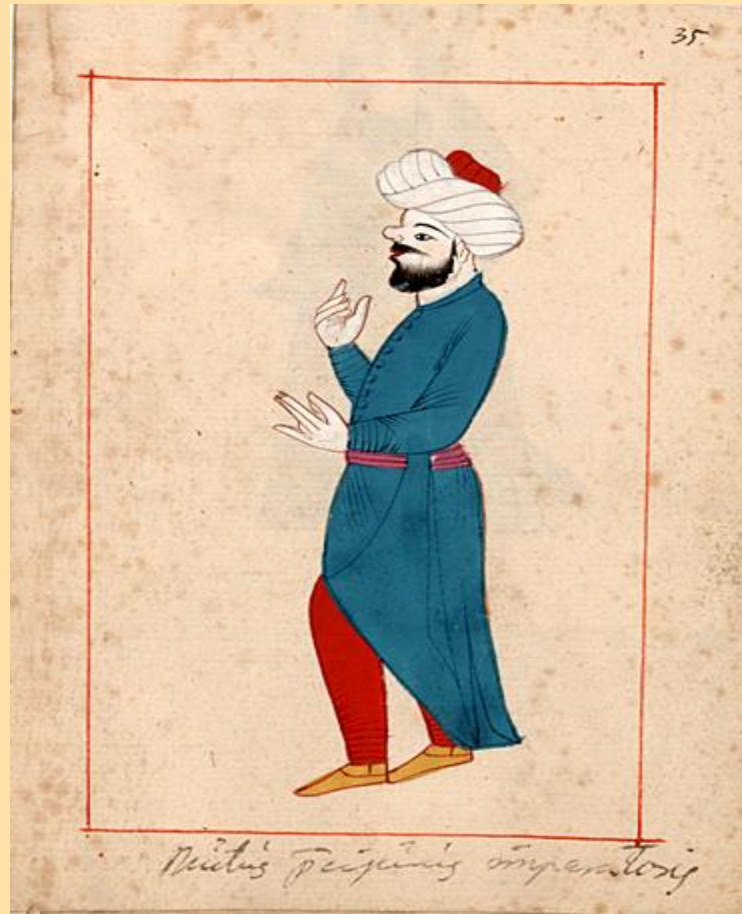
# 11. The Ottoman Empire (1)

- We owe a **huge** debt to M. Miles for this work.
- <http://www.independentliving.org/miles200907.html>
- “Deaf people....worked in the Turkish Ottoman court from the 15th to the 20th century in various roles....
- Their signing system became popular, was used regularly by hearing people including successive Sultans,
- and was reportedly capable of expressing ideas of whatever complexity.... at a time when Deaf education and employment was barely considered feasible in Western Europe.”
- Up to 200 Deaf employed – own uniforms etc !

# Deaf Uniform 1



# Deaf Uniform 2



# 14. The Ottoman Empire (2)

Ricaud (1668) :

‘This language of the Mutes is so much in fashion in the Ottoman Court, that none almost but can deliver his sense in it,

and is of much use to those who attend the Presence of the Grand Signoir, before whom it is **not reverent or seemly so much as to whisper**’. (Miles, 2000: 10)

Bobovius (1679) :

‘They visit and converse with the young and help them to perfect their sign language by telling fables and histories, sayings and *scriptures* in sign’.

The palace employed up to 11,000 people.

Deaf were among those closest to Sultan – accompanying him on hunting expeditions, and other situations when hearing people were not present.

# Selim III 1789



# 16. The Ottoman Empire (3)

- Ekinci (2017) In the 1830s some Deaf became members of political councils and even cabinets.
- In the last days of the Empire, in 1922, there were still 4 Deaf members.
- He describes some of the signs used for Cabinet ministers.
- Suggests these became part of Turkish Sign Language after Sultan Abdulhamid II founded the Deaf school in the 1890s. <https://www.dailysabah.com/feature/2017/08/18/seraglio-sign-language-the-ottoman-courts-second-language>
- Even today, as part of the Ottoman heritage, only mute attendants can work during the confidential meetings at the National Parliament of Turkey.” (Dikici 2006, p. 58)
- They are responsible for room cleanliness, drinking water and food provisions, and taking messages between the lawmakers, when they met in secret session.
- Yet most *Deaf Turks no longer know their history* – due mainly to Oralism.



# 17. The French Revolution and Deaf Achievements

- You can study the Deaf writings of :
  - Desloges (1779)
  - Massieu and Clerc (1815)
  - Berthier and colleagues (1830s >>)

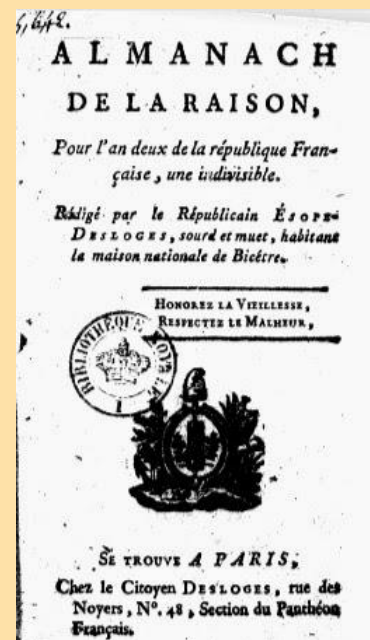
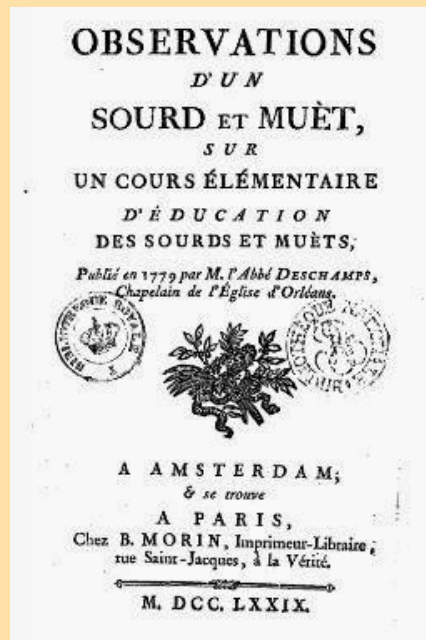
Many wonderful stories can be told about them – and many others from those times.

At that time, Paris was regarded as ‘the centre of the civilised world’.

The Enlightenment era – fascination with Deaf and search for a ‘Universal language’ etc. Many examples from the Revolution era : <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26190701>

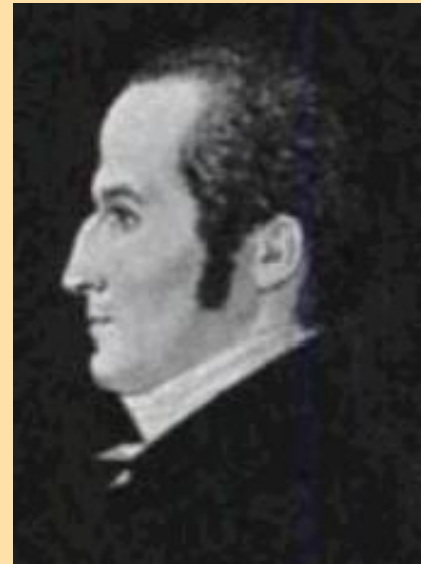
# 18. Pierre Desloges 1747 - 1799

- First book written by Deaf person (1779)
- Book describes sign language and Deaf culture, and defends sign language in education.
- Strongly involved in the French Revolution >>>>>



# 19. Jean Massieu 1772 - 1846

- First French Deaf teacher (Paris 1791)
- Helped win a new school via the Revolution
- Famous for his ‘bon mots’ at public demonstrations.



# St. Jacques



# 21. Laurent Clerc 1785 - 1869

- Pupil of Massieu.
- Moved to USA to found Deaf education in 1817.



## 22. Deaf Visual Arts

- Mirzoeff (1995) identifies over 100 Deaf artists who exhibited at Paris Salons prior to Oralism.
- The school's catalogue was 70 pages with over 600 works by Deaf artists. (See next slide)
- After 1945, Oralists gave away or destroyed most of these.
- *Note that after Oralism, Deaf arts almost disappeared until the 1975 Deaf Resurgence. What is the relationship between mental health, creativity and Oralism ?*



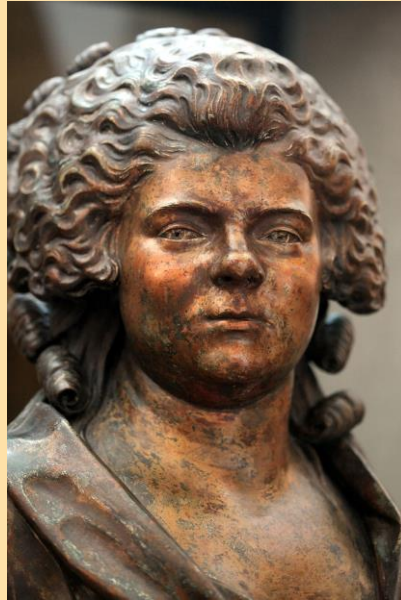
# 24. Revolutionary Sculptor – Claude-Andre Deseine 1740 - 1823

■ Mirabeau

Mme Danton

Robespierre

Turkish Ambassador





## 25. Massieu and Clerc in London 1815

- Head of school (Sicard, a Royalist) fled from Napoleon.
- 5 in the group.
- Gave many demonstrations to the nobility.
- Duke of Wellington's wife an organiser ?
- Also Louis Philippe (became King 1830)
- This book of their philosophies published in same year.

{ *'Man Of Nature' story* }



A  
COLLECTION  
OF THE MOST REMARKABLE  
**DEFINITIONS AND ANSWERS**

OF  
MASSIEU AND CLERC,  
*Deaf and Dumb,*

TO  
THE VARIOUS QUESTIONS PUT TO THEM,  
AT THE  
**PUBLIC LECTURES**

OF THE  
**ABBÉ SICARD,**  
IN LONDON.

TO WHICH ARE JOINED  
*The Manual Alphabet of the Deaf and Dumb, the  
Abbé's Introductory Discourse, and a Letter expla-  
natory of his System,*

BY  
**M. LAFFON DE LADEBAT.**  
WITH NOTES AND AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION,  
BY **J. H. SIEVRAC.**

LONDON:

Printed for MASSIEU and CLERC, by Cox and BAYLIS,  
Great Queen Street, Lincoln's-Inn-Fields.

1815.

Price 10s. 6d. boards.



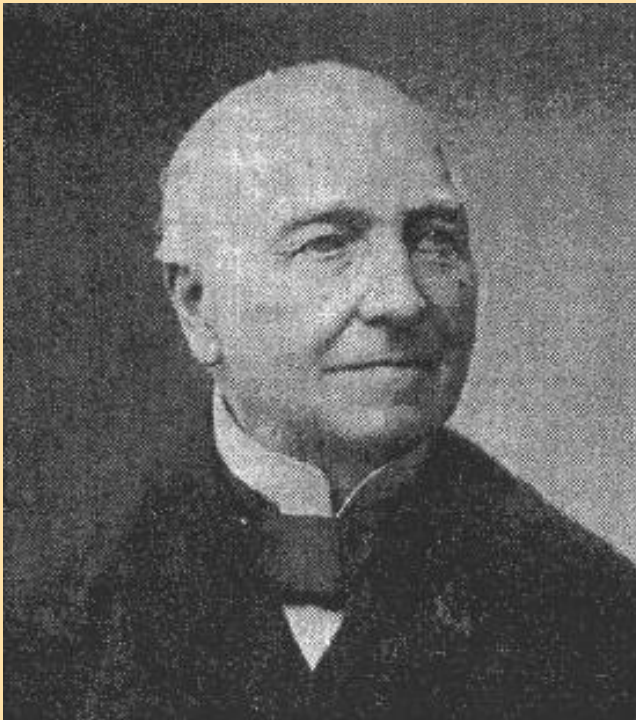
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Class

Date 29 APR 1964

# 27. The Paris Banquets

1830s >>



Ferdinand Berthier,  
1803 - 1886

- Developed to fight for bilingual education and against Oralism.
- Influential hearing invited.
- Deaf speeches presented the highest levels of Deaf philosophies.
- Also to demonstrate the beauty of signing.
- Included Sign Poetry, Sign Comedy.
- International Deaf attended.
- Most speeches translated to French and printed.



1 Claudius Forestier (?) – 2 Victor-Gomer Chambellan – 3 Ernest Dusuzeau – 4 Joseph Théobald – 5 Henri Génis

« Le banquet annuel des Sourds-Muets, le toast à l'abbé de l'Épée »  
dessin de M. Auguste Colas, Le Monde illustré, 24 décembre 1887  
Bibliothèque nationale de France

## 29. French 'Deafhood Principles' – (i)

1. Sign languages as special because sometimes they are more powerful than speech.
2. Special also because they can create International Sign - global communication.
3. Deaf people are the world's first truly global citizens, and thus a model for hearing society – Global Unity !
4. Deaf people were **intentionally** created on earth. Why?
  - To show these skills and qualities to the world.
  - Contribute to, help the world, not just be 'helped'.

## 30. French 'Deafhood Principles' (ii)

5. Sign languages offered as a gift to hearing people.
6. Those who cannot sign are unable to use all their senses - are incomplete as humans (!)
7. All Deaf people should work to help their communities grow and thrive.  
(*"Deaf-Must"*)

(but note no Deaf women at the Banquets till 1870s !)

**Most of these lost after Oralism.  
Which do you think still survive ?**

# 31. UK - Lord Seaforth 1754 - 1815

- Pupil of Braidwood school, Edinburgh
- Deaf at age 12
  
- Used fingerspelling, signing and writing.

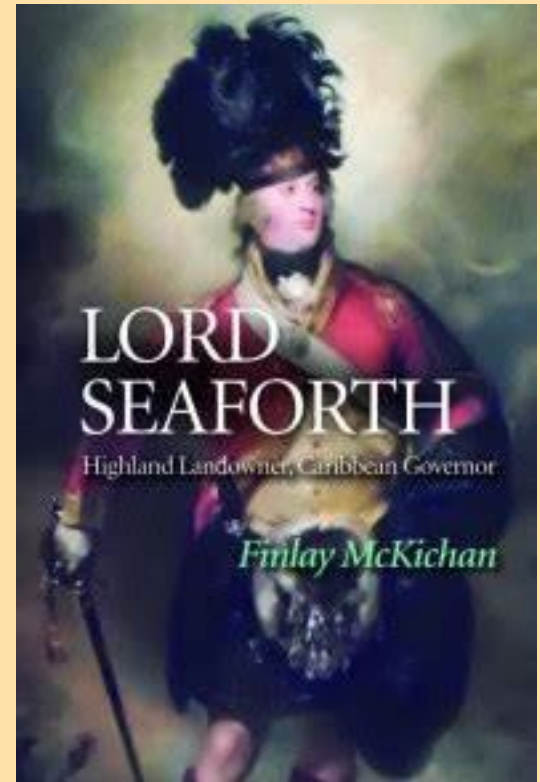
**AND**

Became an MP 1784 - 90, 94- 96

Became Governor of Barbados 1800 – 06

Made it illegal to kill slaves, mistreat

Black people etc.



*Note also – stories by Dickens, Defoe etc*

# 32. Spreading the Signs

- The 19<sup>th</sup> century saw huge developments – Deaf schools multiplied across Europe and USA.
- Some beautiful buildings too.
- California



Edinburgh





## 33. The 'Golden Age'

- Many schools founded by Deaf teachers - 24 in the USA - and many Deaf heads.
- Many Deaf teachers... in USA 40% by 1880.
- Very few hearing children were being educated at that time.
- Many Deaf professionals - lawyers, writers, artists, architects etc.

# 35. So what went wrong ?

- The 19<sup>th</sup> century saw the rise of industrialisation.
- Before that Nature was revered. Now the new buzzwords were ‘Science’ and ‘Progress’. Nature was seen as something to be ‘conquered’.
- Darwin proposed the ‘survival of the fittest’.
- The spread of colonialism and the labelling of indigenous peoples as ‘savages’ and ‘backward’.
- This was also applied (in the USA) to the ‘Slavic’ races and others from Southern Europe.
- New nations created (Germany, Italy) and suppression of minority languages (Welsh, Gaelic)
- Wealth, power and the growth of charities.
- Social Darwinism developed theories to remove those who were ‘unfit’ – by eugenics.

# 36. And it all started in Britain...



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Science & Nature  
**Eugenics: Science's Greatest Scandal**  
Journalist Angela Saini and disability rights activist Adam Pearson explore the shocking origins and legacy of eugenics in Britain and its continued influence today.  
1 Episode Available

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**Series 1: Episode 1**



**Series 1: Episode 1**  
Journalist Angela Saini and disability rights activist Adam...

Change location: **London** Change language: **English** Parental Controls Help & FAQ

# 37. And quickly adopted by the USA



# 38. Too Expensive to Keep Alive ?



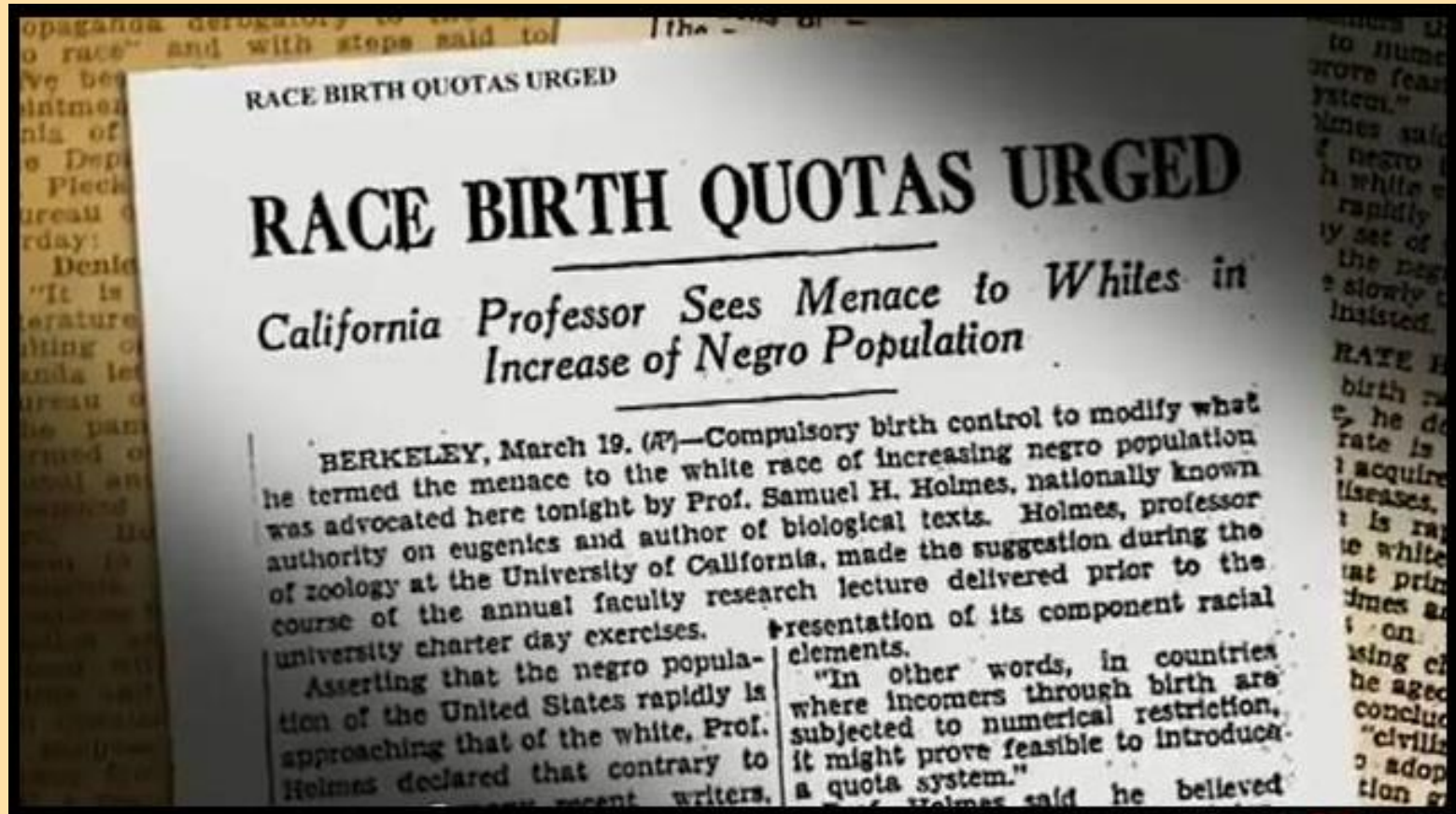
## Who was targeted as "unfit"?

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Charles Davenport, head of the Eugenics Record Office, the scientific branch of the US movement:

"It is a reproach to our intelligence that we as a people should have to support about half a million insane, feebleminded, epileptic, blind and deaf; 80,000 prisoners and 100,000 paupers at a cost of over 100 million dollars per year."

# 39. Eugenics and Racism



# Registering Human Pedigrees

How Kansas Develops Fitter Families;  
A Remarkable Experiment in Eugenics

By Arthur Capper, U. S. Senator from Kansas



Mrs. Mary T. Watts,  
Audubon, Iowa

**T**HE average American family of today is the result of haphazard mating. Men and women marry with little scientific thought as to their physical and mental fitness for bearing and rearing children. When the children come they too often are brought up in the same haphazard fashion in which their parents chose each other. Is it any wonder that the number of mentally and physically unfit increases?

For years, American farmers and breeders



The Eugenics Building at the Kansas Free Fair, where families are judged and registered. Seated in the center is a "fitter family" surrounded by examiners



Dr. Florence B. Sherbon,  
University of Kansas

member of a family. Another sheet of the record shows the results of the intelligence test, and an examination by a psychiatric specialist of the nerve reflexes, emotional and intellectual responses. A thorough structural examination is made, including strength tests and measurements. The medical record gives the results of a complete physical and organic examination, with blood pressure, hemoglobin blood test and the Wasserman blood test. Every member of the family is examined

You Must have  
a Eugenic Certificate



310-6.



# EUGENIC CERTIFICATE

THIS GUARANTEES that I have examined the sender of this card and find a perfect PHYSICAL and MENTAL BALANCE and unusually strong EUGENIC Love possibilities, well fitted to promote the happiness and future welfare of the race.



*John D. Fisher* M.D.



# 43. Breeding the Ideal Woman

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YOU AND HEREDITY

and bravery may sometimes mean callousness. The requirements for success in many fields may go with such undesirable social qualities as ruthlessness, insensitivity, unscrupulousness and selfishness. As human beings, many obscure little men who never get anywhere may be superior to some of those on top.

## DESIRABLE TRAITS IN WOMEN

### SOCIALLY:

Beauty first

Delicate features

No "deep" intellect

Vivaciousness

Slim figure

Tiny waist

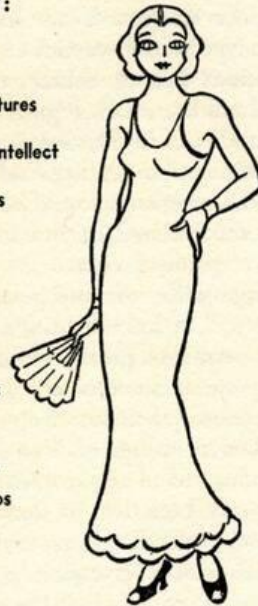
Small hips

Dainty wrists  
and hands

Slender, soft  
tapering limbs

Slim ankles

Tiny feet



### EUGENICALLY:

Beauty unimportant

Strong features

High intelligence

Seriousness

Sturdy figure

Ample waist

Broad hips

Sturdy wrists,  
strong hands

Solid, sturdy  
limbs and  
ankles; good-  
sized feet



# 44. 'Saving' the Children – Science meets Religion



THE GUARDIAN ANGEL.

Nature's Secrets Revealed  
SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE OF  
**THE LAWS OF SEX LIFE and HEREDITY**  
OR  
**EUGENICS**

Vital Information for the Married and Marriageable of All Ages;  
a Word at the Right Time to the Boy, Girl, Young Man,  
Young Woman, Husband, Wife, Father and Mother;  
Also, Timely Help, Counsel and Instruction  
for Every Member of Every Home

TOGETHER WITH IMPORTANT HINTS ON  
**SOCIAL PURITY, HEREDITY,  
PHYSICAL MANHOOD AND WOMANHOOD**  
BY NOTED SPECIALISTS

Embracing a Department on Ethics of the Unmarried  
by  
**PROFESSOR T. W. SHANNON, A. M.**

International Lecturer, Editor Eugenic Department, Uplift Magazine, President Single  
Standard Eugenic Movement, Author of Self-Knowledge, Perfect Manhood,  
Perfect Womanhood, Heredity Explained, Guide to Sex Instruction, etc.

INTRODUCED BY  
**BISHOP SAMUEL FALLOWS, D. D., LL. D.**

MEDICAL DEPARTMENT BY  
**W. J. TRUITT, M. D.**  
Formerly Associate Professor of Obstetrics, National Medical College, Chicago,  
Assisted by Collected Specialists

PROFUSELY ILLUSTRATED

PUBLISHED BY  
**THE S. A. MULLIKIN COMPANY**  
MULLIKIN BUILDING  
MARIETTA, OHIO

1914

## 45. Original Aim of Contraception



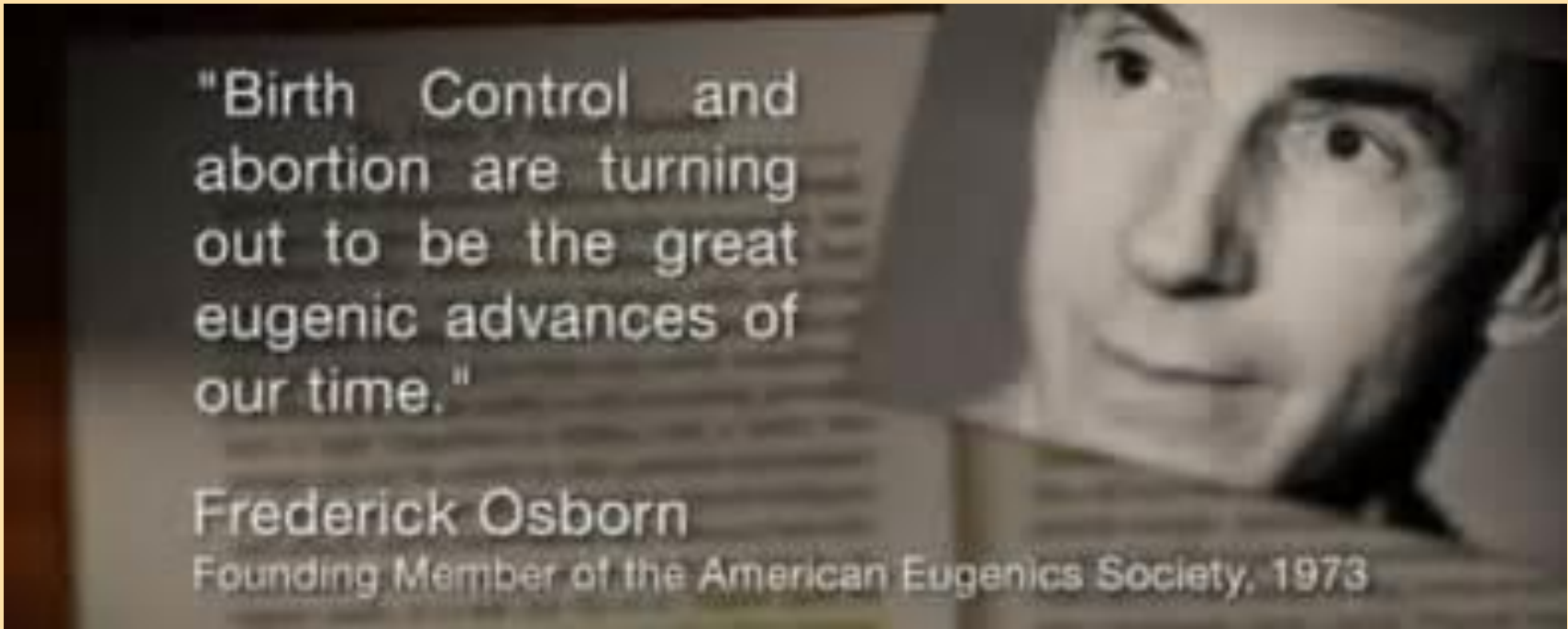


AC.360.com

**EUGENICS IN AMERICA**  
33 states had eugenics programs



# 47. Continued into Modern Era

A black and white photograph of Frederick Osborn, a man with dark hair and a serious expression, looking slightly to the right. He is holding a document or book in front of him, which is the source of the text overlay. The background is dark and out of focus.

"Birth Control and abortion are turning out to be the great eugenic advances of our time."

Frederick Osborn

Founding Member of the American Eugenics Society, 1973

# 48. The Logical Outcome ?

## DECISION HELD STEP TOWARD A SUPER-RACE

Health Official Praise  
Court in Upholding  
Sterilization Law

WASHINGTON, May 6.—(INS)—An improved race of Americans is on its way as a result of the Supreme Court's decision today by government health officials.

With twenty states having laws to sterilize idiots, epileptics, with many including criminals, the medical men will be gradual elimination of defectives from the race.

When these laws were rigorously enforced in the nations, they added, the people would become a "super-race" and generally more intelligent.

"The more intelligent the more rapid will be the development of a race of supermen," said Dr. Claude C. Brinkley, surgeon general of the United States.

"The supreme court's decision is but a feeble step."

The court itself was very cautious in holding the Virginia law unconstitutional.

# 49. Eugenics spread to Scandinavia, then to Germany...





# 50. The Rise of Oralism

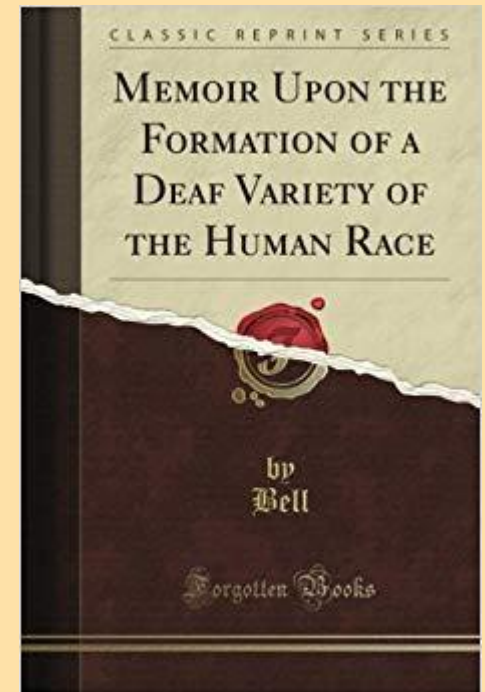
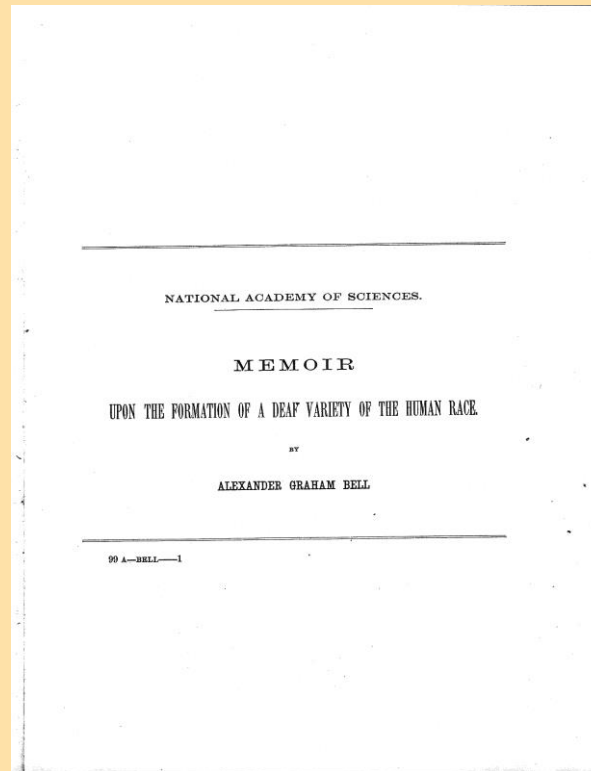
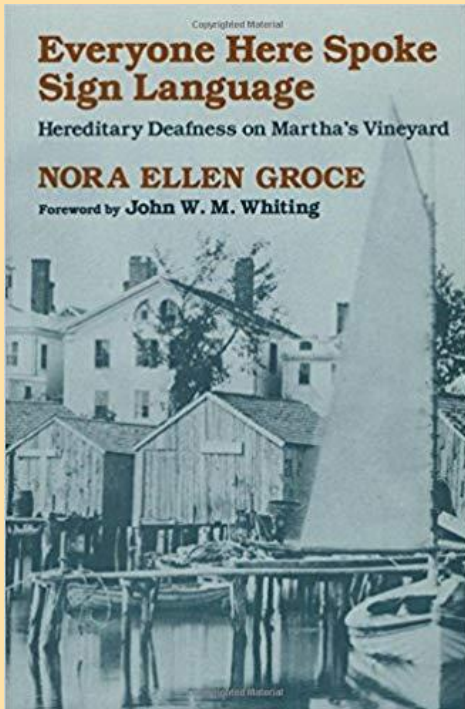
- In this new climate of scientific superiority, SLPs were now framed as inferior beings.
- Their ‘savage’ / ‘monkey’ languages had to be suppressed, and replaced by speech and lipreading **alone**.
- Ideally they should be prevented from mixing with each other, lest they breed and have Deaf children.
- This ideology was called ‘Oralism’.
- And unfortunately for SLPs, one of the leading Oralists was also a leader of the eugenics movement...

# 51. Alexander Graham Bell



**52. Martha's Vineyard –  
where from the 1680s,  
1 in 4 were Deaf, but everyone signed !**

- Bell twisted the evidence to spread fears about the growth of Deaf communities



# 59. Headline of a Bell article

## HOW TO IMPROVE THE RACE

Success Possible, but not by Processes Employed with Lower Animals—Little Gain from Preventing Marriage of Undesirables—Important Point Is Formation of a Prepotent, Desirable Stock by Marriages of Desirable People with Each Other—This Prepotent Stock Will Then Raise the Level of the Great Bulk of Normals.

ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL, *Washington, D. C.*

LIVING organisms have proven so plastic in the hands of scientific breeders that we have learned to improve our breeds of plants and animals by suitable selection controlled by man.

Human beings, also, are undoubtedly capable of modification by selection; but it is manifestly impossible to apply to them the processes employed with the lower animals.

The difficulties of the problem may perhaps be appreciated if we consider for a moment how far it would be possible to improve our breeds of domestic animals under the conditions which prevail among human beings.

Given, for example, a flock of sheep to be improved, but under human conditions.

First, we must not butcher any of the animals. Ovine life is to be considered as sacred as human life. We must not mutilate the animals; nor do anything to them that is inconsistent with the humanitarian spirit of the age.

The weaklings are to be preserved and given special care. In fact, all of the animals, including the poor little deformed lambs, are to be kept alive as long as possible. They are to be treated with kindness and consideration until they die of old age, or from other causes beyond our control.

To these conditions we may add the following: polygamous unions must not be permitted; nor unions between individuals related in various ways.

A man, for example, may not marry his grandmother; nor his mother; nor his sister; nor his daughter; and if we apply all the human restrictions to

sheep, we shall have our hands full indeed in merely examining the ancestry of the flock, and the relationships of the individuals to one another, so as to avoid the prohibited unions.

While we are forbidden to allow certain classes of unions, we are not permitted to select the individuals that should be mated together to improve the stock. Each individual of the flock, under the restrictions referred to, must be free to choose its own mate; and the pairing shall be for life.

We may confidently assert that under such conditions no scientific breeder would undertake to improve the flock.—it would not be possible.

### THE HUMAN PROBLEM.

But these are the conditions we must face in attempting to improve our own race; and we may as well recognize, first as last, that we have no power to compel improvement.

A gleam of hope, however, appears in this connection when we realize that there is one great and fundamental difference between a community of human beings, and a flock or herd of animals: The individuals of the human community possess intelligence.

The individuals have power to improve the race, but not the knowledge of what to do. We students of genetics possess the knowledge but not the power; and the great hope lies in the dissemination of our knowledge among the people at large.

Another important difference between human beings and the lower animals, arising from intelligence, is that human beings give some thought

*YOU DEAF PEOPLE SHALL  
NOT MARRY EACH OTHER!*



**53. The organisation is still very wealthy and powerful today**



# 56. Typical Oralist Views

1. **Meniere** – one of the founding fathers of French medicine, in the 1830s :

“The Deaf believe that they are our equals in all respects. We should be generous and not destroy that illusion. But whatever they believe, deafness is an infirmity, and we should repair it *whether the person who has it is disturbed by it or not*”. (in Lane, 1984: 134)

(Note the first sentence – clearly shows Deaf beliefs even then !)

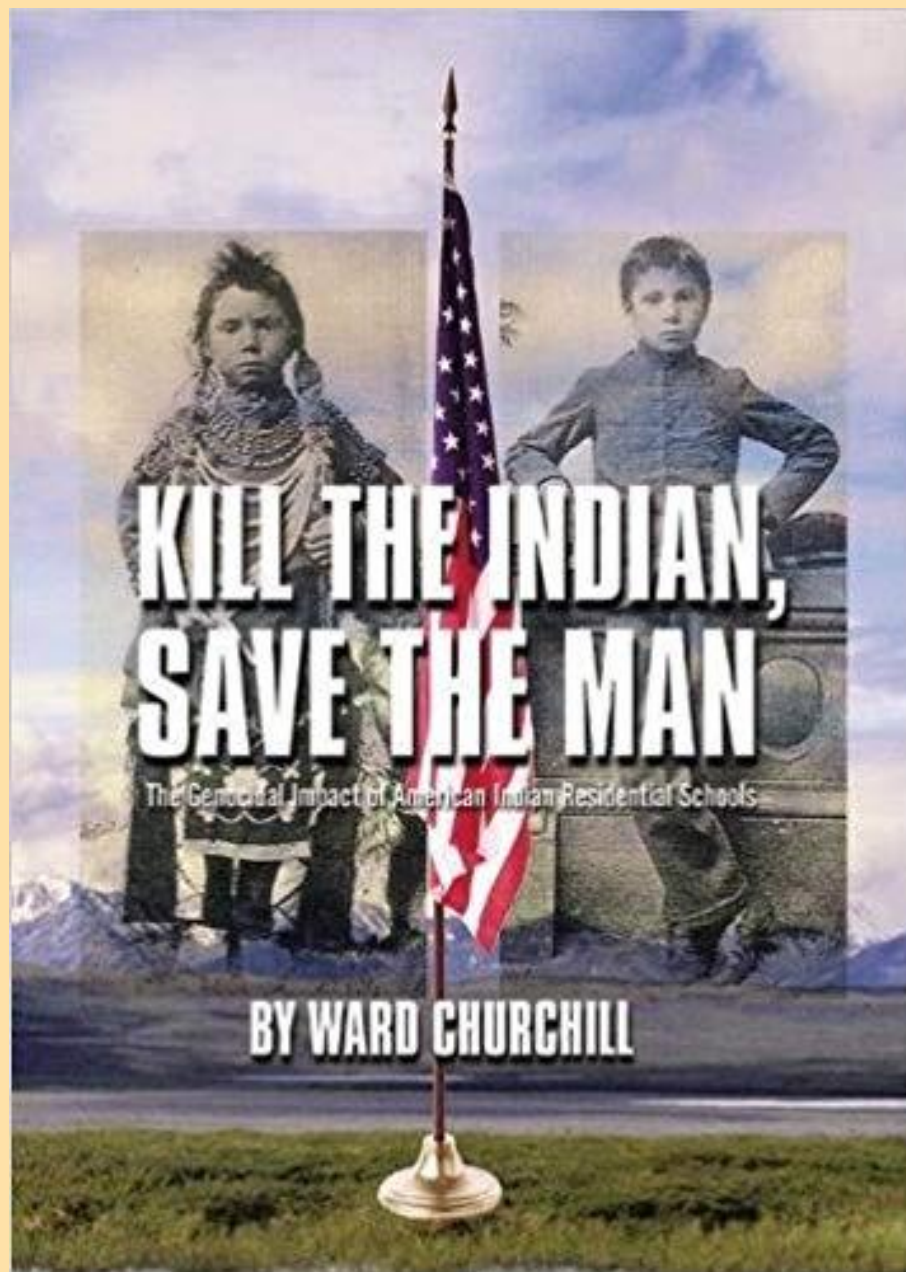
2. **A.G.Bell (1884)**

“We should try ourselves to forget that they are deaf.  
We should try to teach **them** to forget that they are deaf.”

Oralists present the issue as being about improving speech to assimilation.  
But is more accurately defined as

**‘seeking to remove anything Deaf from inside a Deaf child’ -**  
Deaf identity, community, culture, history, arts – and language.

What does that ideology remind us of ??



# **KILL THE INDIAN, SAVE THE MAN**

The Genocidal Impact of American Indian Residential Schools

**BY WARD CHURCHILL**



# 58.

## Milan Congress, September 11<sup>th</sup> 1880

- Oralism was steadily growing from the 1860s.
- But this congress rubber stamped the ideology.
- 164 attended from 7 countries
- Many were not even teachers (Italian clergy)
- Only 1 Deaf
- Media support – eg. Times newspaper reported  
*'Deafness Is Abolished'* (!)      *Another brick in the wall...*

And almost all the Deaf teachers were fired –  
and then banned.

Signing was physically and psychically punished

Oralist set themselves up as scientific 'Experts'

*So the public believed them*

# 59. Deaf Rebellions (1880 – 1900)

- Deaf communities rebelled for the next 20 years.
- Founded national associations - NAD, BDDA etc.
- Held **International** Conferences – Paris 1889, Chicago 1893



# 60. Typical Deaf Quotes (1)

## Deaf teachers led the battle.

- McGregor, Head of Ohio school, first Chair of NAD :

“The ascendancy of the pure oral method has been attained by methods that the deaf, as honest, law-abiding citizens abhor....

Must not that be false which required for its support so much....coercion; which belittles, or utterly ignores, the opinions of its own output ?....

The verdict of the educated deaf the whole world over is this: the oral method benefits the *few*; the combined system benefits *all* the deaf....Anyone who upholds the oral method, as an exclusive method, is **their enemy**.” (in Lane, 1984: 395)

- <http://videocatalog.gallaudet.edu/?embed=2515>

# 61. Typical Deaf Quotes (2)

- J.S.Long :

“The Chinese women bind their babies’ feet to make them small; the Flathead Indians bind their babies’ heads to make them flat.

And the people who prevent the sign language being used in the education of the deaf...are denying the deaf their free mental growth through natural expression of their ideas, and are in the same class of **criminals.**” (Lane, 1984: 371)

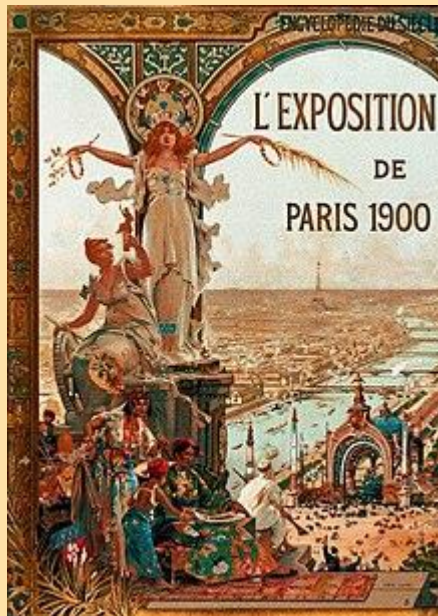
French Deaf magazines :

Oralism as ‘violence, oppression....charlatanism,which only makes idiots of the poor deaf-mute children’.

Congresses like Milan were used by the Oralist :

‘in order to retain his shameful post of murderer of the intelligence and **souls** of deaf children’  
(1886 in Lane, 1984: 404).

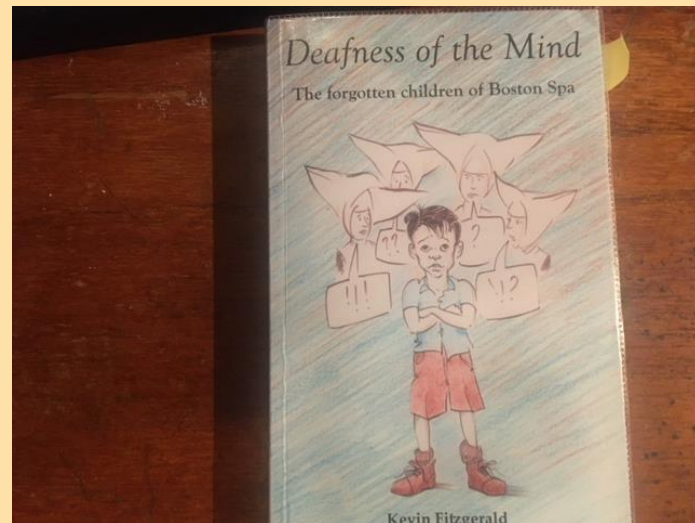
# 62. The Last Great Stand – Paris 1900



- Paris 1900 Congress, Deaf outnumbered Oralists, but were locked out, and had hold their own Congress.
- That exclusion was the beginning of the end of 120 years of SLP progress.

# After the Deluge

- Last two heads in UK, Leeds and Swansea in 1920s.
- A few schools had Deaf teachers who fought hard for their children. Eg. John Caproni, taught from 1891 – 1948. Kevin Fitzgerald's book gives a wonderful description.



## 62. The **Wall of Silence** (1900 – 1970)

- Oralism strengthened its grip during the 20<sup>th</sup> century :
  - controlled teacher training programmes.
  - set up day schools, peripatetic service,
  - used hearing aids to divide Deaf and HOH,
  - mainstreaming, and greater medicalism.

A key strategy used from the 1880s and still today – to present deafened or hard of hearing to the media as ‘Oral Successes’.

Public lap it up – unconsciously they are parroting the Western tropes of ‘Science’ and ‘Progress’.

Yet Deaf people had worse jobs than before Oralism...

# 65. 'Nature Returns' – The 1960s – Black Peoples, Hippies, Women, LGBTQ





# 66. Environment, Disabled, and Deaf



# 67. The Deaf Resurgence, 1975 >>

- Linguists confirmed sign languages were bona fide languages. A huge psychological boost.
- Conrad Report – first study of Oralism since 1880 – in 1979.
- **Deaf school-leavers literacy : 8 ¾ yrs old.**
- *Speech mostly unintelligible to public.*
- *Can lipread no better than hearing person with no practice.*
- Sign language classes for hearing people – millions have taken them worldwide.
- Interpreters trained, Deaf Studies in universities
- Sign and Deaf educators started to return to Deaf schools.
- Campaigns for governments, UN to formally recognise SLs

68.

**Growth of the  
World Federation of the Deaf, 1951>>  
( 133 countries)**



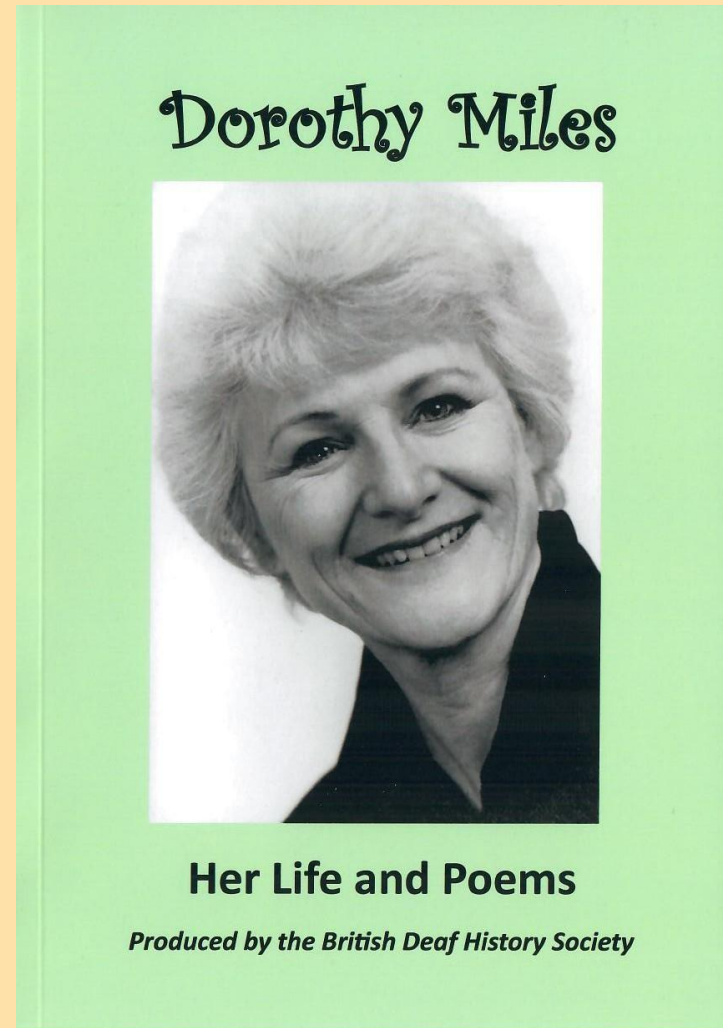
**SIGN LANGUAGE RIGHTS FOR ALL**

# 69. Artistic Resurgence

- Deaf people become aware of their histories once more.
- The concept of Deaf culture emerges.
- And remember what I said about Oralism and Deaf arts ?
- Once sign languages returned, explosion of :
  - Deaf TV and film
  - Return of Deaf arts (visual arts, theatre)
  - New Deaf arts (sign poetry, cabaret, sign song etc)

# 70. Dorothy Miles

- The first SignPoet.





University of Bristol


# 71. Deaf-composed SignSongs

- Signmark from Finland – runner up in country's Eurovision entry.



# 72. Rob Roy

- Australian performing artist



The poster features three bald men in black t-shirts performing sign language. The title 'ROB ROY SHOW DEAF MAN WALKING' is written in large, bold, red letters. A cartoon character of a bald man in a red shirt and blue shorts is shown in the top right corner. The event details, including the date, time, and ticket prices, are listed on the right side of the poster.

**ROB ROY SHOW**  
**DEAF MAN WALKING**

**15. Februar 2014**  
**Theatersaal, 1. Stock**

**Beginn, 19:00 Uhr**  
Einlass, 18:15 Uhr  
Klubraum geöffnet ab 17 Uhr

**Kartenpreise**  
Mitglieder u. Kinder bis 14 Jahre - 8€  
Vollpreis - 12€

Karten, solange der Vorrat reicht, im Vorstandsbüro  
(Mittwochs) und Abendkassa erhältlich.

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# 73. John Smith

- British Deaf standup comedian



# 74. Queen Forevrrr

- USA Deaf comedienne

IN CELEBRATION OF  
DEAF AWARENESS MONTH  
PFGA PRESENTS  
A DEAF COMEDY SHOW WITH

**QUEEN  
FOREVRRR**



FEATURING LOCAL TALENT  
**SONIBERT**

Friday, September 20 at 7pm  
\$15 / Ages 18+ / Mature content  
Barking Legs Theater  
1307 Dodds Ave, Chattanooga, TN 37404  
Tix and info at [www.partnershipdhh.com](http://www.partnershipdhh.com)

Note: Show will be performed by Deaf comedians in American Sign Language  
with no voice interpretation!

 Partnership  
OF CHATTANOOGA COUNTY



**I Feel Sorry 4 You**

# 75. Chinese Deaf Dance Troupe



# 76. Deaf Theatre, Film and TV

- Deaf theatre has not only revived but achieved new heights all around the world. New Deaf writers and performers emerge.



# 77. Rebuilding the **Wall of Silence** – New Oralism and Mainstreaming

- Unfortunately, once bilingualism in Deaf schools started to grow, Oralists devised a new strategy –
- To take advantage of the new idea of inclusion and twist it to fit their ideology. *{story}*
- Deaf children were placed in mainstream schools and **the BSL Deaf schools were starved of pupils.**
- Media frames these schools as Deaf people ‘wanting to impose segregation’.
- Now **95%** of Deaf children are ‘hidden away’ in mainstream schools.
- Research suggests that Deaf *acquired* mental ill health is **double** that of the hearing population – and affects 61% of mainstreamed Deaf.

# 78. Cochlear Implants (CI)

- A highly controversial issue, which we do not have time to explore deeply.
- First emerged in 1980s and was marketed to the media as ‘a miracle cure’.
- The publicity it gained [Remember the ‘*Oral Success*’ game ?] stopped the bilingual movement in its tracks.
- In a ‘neutral’ world, a CI can be ‘framed’ as a form of hearing aid – **IF** you don’t deny Deaf children access to sign language and culture.
- But CIs have been *specifically* used by Oralism to scare parents away from contact with Deaf communities.
- CIs can turn Deaf children into hard of hearing children. But do they happily fit into the hearing world ? Research into such topics is very minimally funded.
- And the media ensures that this **wall of silence** remains in place.



# 79. The Deafhood Concept

**So Deaf Cultural visions shrank during Oralism.**

Thus we needed a new concept to help us re-develop those visions - Deafhood.

Deafhood can be described as :

- The sum total of **all positive** meanings of ‘Deaf’, past, present and future – what Deaf people have been, are, and can become.
- Each person has their own definitions of what being Deaf means for them. All are on their own journeys.
- Trying to analyse the damage enacted on our selves, our cultures. And to find ways to repair ourselves and our peoples.
- Analysing how oppressive systems operate – and challenging them.

# 80.

# ‘Deaf-Gain’

- Focuses on one aspect of Deafhood – the positive contributions that we, our sign languages, and our cultures make to the world. Just a few examples.
- Artistic contributions.
- Enhanced language and cognitive development : ‘Baby Signing’.
- Helps educate Downs and other hearing disabled children.
- If everyone learned to sign, older deafened people would not be so isolated.
- Can help hearing people reconnect with their bodies, and become more whole.

# 81. Genetic Engineering and Eugenics

- But now, yet another new threat.
- Or rather, a old threat in a new form.



# 82. Look in your Mirror

- We don't have time to explore the complexities of this today.
- But this will become a key issue and moral dilemma of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- Billions of \$\$\$£££ are being poured into this.
- Almost zero society debate. **Another Wall of Silence.**
- Which genes to be 'removed' (for a 'healthy' life) ? Which left alone ?
- Is being gay, or bipolar, or female, etc, something to be removed ?
- The slippery slope – could you become one of those people we saw in the earlier slides ?

# 83. Oralism's 'Final Solution' ?

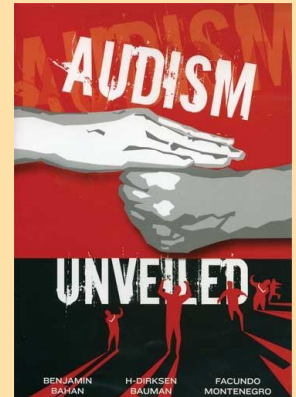
- Genetics has intensified the worship of Science and threatens the gains made by (Green) Nature .
- Once more Sign Language Peoples are framed primarily as medical problems. People to be fixed – **people who should not be allowed to exist.**
- The amount of media attention focused on 'fixing' means our own positive contributions again experience a **Wall of Silence.**
- **We are sleepwalking into eugenics.**
- But one important way SLPs can demonstrate the beauty and power of our cultures and languages - through the arts 😊
- But we are in a race against time, to change hearing people's minds, and win allies, just like all the other causes have done.

# 84. How do causes become fashionable ?

- Since 1960s, the oppression of many groups has been recognised.

- Women, ethnic minorities, LGBTQ people etc.

- Terms like ‘racism’, ‘sexism’ are widely known. ‘Audism’ ? Nope.



# 85. Deaf/disabled only exist to be 'helped'

- Left and liberals support causes all over the world.
- Yet Deaf and disabled are not seen as political, but as people to be helped 😞
- So none of them are interested in stopping the abuse of Deaf children.
- Contrast with the rapid acceptance of transgender issues in less than 5 years.
- When will hearing people care enough to help dismantle this **Wall Of Silence** ?
- Sign languages are Green, are of Nature, encourage a holistic mode of being.



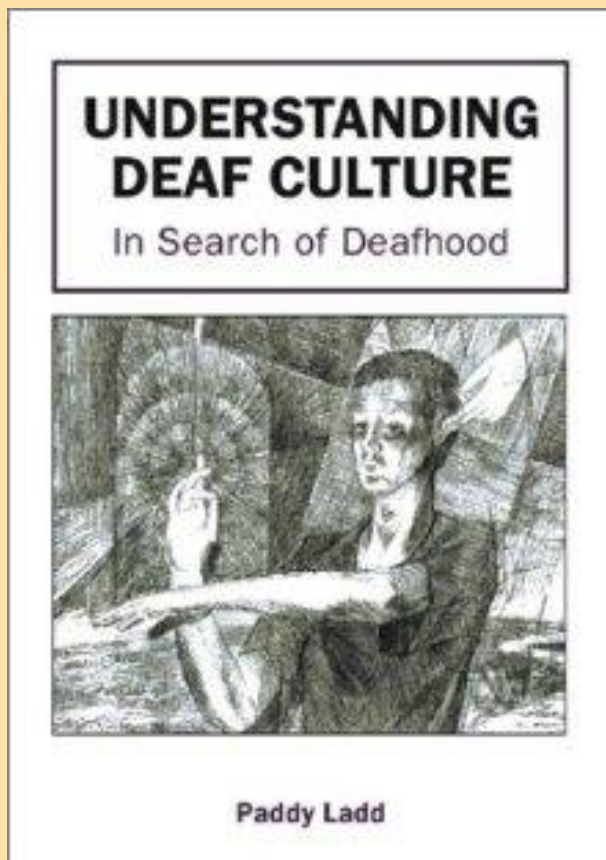


# DECOLONIZE AGBELL



- *{by Nancy Rourke}*

# Copies of these slides from [paddieu@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:paddieu@yahoo.co.uk)



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