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197



**Greenwald, B. H., & Murray, J. J. (Eds.) (2016). *In Our Own Hands: Essays in Deaf History, 1780-1970*. Washington, D.C.: Gallaudet University Press.
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Brian H. Greenwald and Joseph J. Murray's *In Our Own Hands: Essays in Deaf History, 1780-1970* builds upon Gallaudet University Press's tradition of presenting edited readers in the field of Deaf history (e.g., Van Cleve, 1993). In this collection Greenwald and Murray have, as they state in their Introduction, sought to take "a closer look at the local and regional landscapes as deaf people asserted their rights in local and national settings" (xi). This is a very timely and important goal. Much of the scholarship on Deaf histories has relied on arguments presented on a national scale, and this perspective has produced incisive and valuable works on how deaf people have affected and been affected by national conversations on citizenship, eugenics, and linguistic politics in the past. Many of the papers in this collection, however, are rooted in sites where these national currents were created, contested, and disseminated, like Gallaudet University, the Clarke School, Chicago public schools, and the *Silent Worker*. This is an important development that brings this primarily American scholarship closer to the prevailing tendencies of Canadian work in the field, which has often taken a regional focus through a necessity emerging from prevailing north-south historical ties in Canada.

Chapters in this volume offer new perspectives on how deaf Americans responded to and affected American debates on oralism, eugenics, religious life, state formation, and citizenship. Octavian Robinson's chapter reflects on tensions within the National Association of the Deaf (NAD) and the National Fraternal Society of the Deaf (NFSD) to first oppose the rights of deaf peddlers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth-centuries, then to oppose "peddling rings" that

exploited poor deaf Americans. Robinson's chapter is one of several here that sheds light on the defensive reaction of "double consciousness"¹ to stigma in order to establish claims to citizenship and equal employment opportunities, as he stresses that the NAD and NFSD's campaigns against peddling were fueled by concern that it would strengthen existing hearing prejudices against deaf people's abilities and citizenship status. In the postwar period, Robinson argues, these organizations turned their activities against peddling rings that endangered and exploited poor deaf peddlers because an emerging social state and the politics of the Civil Rights era empowered Deaf leaders to focus on existing rights, rather than the defense of precarious citizenship before the Second World War. In this, he uses the issue of Deaf leaders' arguments about peddling to reflect on the impact of larger political and social currents in American life.

Melissa Malzkuhn's chapter on the NAD's efforts to present "normal deaf citizens" makes a similar point about how stigma affected Deaf politics. In the wake of A. G. Bell's paper on deaf marriages in 1883, the NAD allocated much of its effort to protecting sign language, defending equal opportunity to work, and eventually establishing driving and insurance rights. Malzkuhn points out that this "normalization" campaign developed a more defensive side after the presidency of George Veditz (1904-1910). The issue of deaf marriage led to the creation of the NAD's Committee on Eugenics—a body that largely fought to have deaf people excluded from an American Breeder's Association (ABA) campaign to ban eugenically undesirable marriages. While the NAD publicly opposed bans on deaf intermarriage (and the ABA was reportedly not considering adding deaf people to their policy prescriptions for state governments), Malzkuhn's research shows that there were NAD members who themselves

¹ This term was first used by W. E. B. Du Bois concerning the need for African Americans to look at themselves through the eyes of others, but has been used more recently to reflect the experiences of other marginalized groups. See Du Bois, 1897.

opposed deaf marriages because of the rising tide of public support for eugenic legislation in the U.S. By the 1930s, many in the NAD took a similar position to that of *Silent Worker* columnist Alice Terry as outlined in Kati Morton Mitchell's chapter: that legislating against deaf marriages was unjust, but that those born deaf should themselves refrain from marriage in order to protect Deaf communities from larger public fears of the formation of a "deaf race." Further work needs to be undertaken in the United States and Canada to help scholars and readers develop more nuanced positions of how Deaf people and people with disabilities responded to the threat of eugenics to their lives and civil rights.

Citizenship is a formational concept that threads many of these chapters together. Carolyn McCaskill, Ceil Lucas, Robert Bayley, and Joseph Hill's chapter overview of the Black Deaf American experience from emancipation to the end of educational segregation in the South explores how Black Deaf Americans faced unique challenges to their assertions of citizenship. Segregation allowed for deteriorating conditions at deaf residential schools for Black Americans, and for Black youth to be barred from higher education available to elite white Deaf students, especially at Gallaudet University. As a result, Black Deaf Americans, especially in the South, developed unique dialects of "Black signing" that persist. The authors' interviews with Black Signers reveal that some Deaf Black Americans have internalized a double stigma—that "white signing is better" and that Black signers need to modify their sign use depending on their social surroundings (54-57). This is an area of research that needs to be pursued both in contemporary and historical scholarship.

The volume suggests potential areas of research to be followed by researchers in Deaf history and the history of disability policy in Canada. Interestingly, given Joseph Murray's past transnational work, no papers contribute to our understanding of the historical currents of Deaf

ideas and people across borders, a perspective that Canadian scholars ignore at their own peril given the importance of national exchanges to the histories of Canadian deaf communities, educational institutions, and workers. *In Our Own Hands* suggests that research into the Canadian Association of the Deaf's responses to the growth of eugenics policy (especially in Alberta and British Columbia) could enrich our understanding of how Deaf Canadians saw and shaped national dialogues on that movement. Canadian researchers may also focus on municipal, provincial, and national Deaf leaders in Canada like David Peikoff and Robert McBrien. Motoko Kimura's chapter on a shift of agency from Deaf individuals to hearing parents in Chicago's day schools suggests that more work needs to be done on Canadian day schools in Toronto, Winnipeg, and Montreal to highlight the importance of hearing parents to oralism's eventual success in Canadian jurisdictions. Canadian researchers should also undertake sustained research on Deaf labour history in Canada, especially into the 1905 federal decision to allow deaf Canadians to contest civil service exams. Murray's chapter on Gallaudet University's sustained political support from the Washington establishment invites Canadian researchers to shed light on Gallaudet beyond its American project and to study the experiences and contributions of Canadian students there.

In Our Own Hands shares some limitations with existing edited volumes on Deaf history. Despite the addition of McCaskill, Lucas, Bayley, and Hill's chapter, the volume focusses primarily on white elite Deaf Americans. This is understandable due to the elite nature of many of the primary sources available to historians, but Susan Burch and Hannah Joyner's work (2007) has shown that strong research can be done outside of the worlds of elite Deaf Americans. There is also little here on Deaf Americans in the workplace, which has long been a primary issue through which Deaf people asserted, and assert, their claims to citizenship and civil rights

(Buchanan, 1999). Still, this is a serious consideration of Deaf agency and politics through a wide swath of American history, and is essential reading for Canadian historians of Deaf communities and deafness.

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