ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: THE BATTLE OF IDEOLOGIES: A STRUGGLE FOR OWNERSHIP IN THE DEAF COMMUNITY

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This dissertation examines the rhetorical process of the Deaf social movement as it evolved from the beginnings of community conception in America to the early 1990s. Specifically, this study employs a Foucaultian approach to address how rhetoric shapes the empowerment of the cultural identity of the Deaf social movement. Such a study contributes not only to our understanding of social movements, but also how members of a movement empower themselves through language. Although rhetorical analyses traditionally place communication as the means, the study of the Deaf social movement further contributes to our understanding of the phenomenon of communication because for the Deaf community, communication is the central issue of their struggles with the dominant society.

The rhetorical strategies of the Deaf social movement suggest a theory for community building, especially within a multicultural vision of society, which require three necessary attributes: creating a sense of self-worth, strengthening the internal foundation of community building, and accessing the public sphere.

THE BATTLE OF IDEOLOGIES: A STRUGGLE FOR

OWNERSHIP IN THE DEAF COMMUNITY

by

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Electricity filled the air on March 6, 1988, as large crowds flocked to the Gallaudet University auditorium to await the inevitable announcement of Gallaudet's first Deaf[1] president. After all, that Gallaudet's next president would be Deaf was a foregone conclusion. The Deaf community had worked feverishly for this moment. Letters, calls, and telegrams had been sent to the Gallaudet board of trustees as well as to Senators and Representatives to urge the choice of a Deaf candidate. A pre-selection rally held on the campus built up the momentum.

Of the three finalists, two were Deaf Gallaudet alumni. Expectations were very high. Surely, after 124 years, the community would have its first Deaf president. But excitement quickly turned into shock and anger, when instead of a formal announcement, a press release was distributed announcing the selection, not of a Deaf president, but once again of a hearing president. Chosen over the two Deaf candidates was Elisabeth Ann Zinser, chancellor of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

The angry crowd immediately marched to the hotel in which board members were meeting, and for an entire week closed down the campus. During the protest, the students compiled a list of four demands, including the resignation

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[1]Recent custom has been to distinguish between audiologically and culturally deaf people by respectively using the lowercase "d" and the capital "D." This dissertation will adopt that convention as well.

of Dr. Zinser and her replacement with a Deaf president; the resignation of Jane Bassett Spilman, chair of the board of trustees; the restructuring of the board with a 51% deaf majority (at the time, only four of its 21 members were Deaf); and finally, an agreement that there be no reprisals against protest participants.

The conflict between the students who demanded a Deaf president, and Zinser and Spilman, who were not willing to give in to these demands, was played up extensively by the media. The protests made front pages all over the country, and national television as well.

This scenario describes a phenomenon known to many Americans as a "social movement." Similar accounts could describe many other movements, now a familiar part of contemporary life. Social movements, many believe, are a necessary ingredient to achieve the American dream of equality, and in struggles for democracy elsewhere. Indeed, without social movements, Americans would still be under English rule, African-Americans would not be recognized as full-fledged citizens with voting rights, Women's sphere would still be primarily the home, and very young children would still be working under horrendous conditions, as would older workers.

There is, however, much more to social movements than just a struggle for equality or democracy. Social movements generally represent the non-dominant group and their intention to change the existing social order. Thus, social movements are often a threat to the dominant group, and are essentially a struggle for the redistribution of power.

Power is often acquired by social movements as they transform their ideology into action that represents the cause of the group. The ideology of the social movement is performed through rhetoric. Language creates and sustains the ideology and counter ideology proposed by the dominant culture and the social movement. The Gallaudet protest for instance, is a portrayal of an ideological conflict. The board of trustees felt that administrative skills were far more important than linguistic and cultural considerations and this perspective was represented in their choice of a hearing candidate. The Deaf community had a considerably different view which prompted the protest. This struggle between the board of trustees and the Deaf community represented ideological differences and this conflict became a social reality through the rhetoric presented during the week long protest.

Language shapes, as well as reveals, social reality. A group's language transmits its ideology, consciously and unconsciously. A rhetorical inquiry, for example, shows differing meanings of "Deaf" serving the ideological force of the two sides confronting each other in the Gallaudet protest. Further, language creates and sustains power. A social movement that transforms ideology into rhetoric has the potential to acquire power. This process of acquiring power transforms previous feelings of powerlessness into empowerment. Of interest here is how empowerment is achieved through language. The question addressed in this dissertation is, specifically: How has rhetoric shaped the empowerment of the cultural identity of the Deaf social movement?

Ideology in Social Movements

Inherent in any dominant culture or organized entity is a set of beliefs, ideas, or a philosophy that serves as the dominant ideology. Through rhetoric, which brings the dominant ideology into everyday life, people construct their reality of the world, their sense of themselves, their identities, and their relationships to other people and to society (Fiske, 1987). Literally people talk their way through life, embodying their beliefs into action through such talk (Burke, 1941/1973). The rhetoric of the dominant group frames justification for day-to-day action, thus, enforcing norms which keep subordinates in line and maintain the status quo. The rhetorical process that produces a conformity to norms by subordinates is so pervasive because it is so often overlooked as a function of power for the dominant group (Foucault, 1980). Even when subordinates acknowledge that dominant discourses frame life into behaviors they loath, they may continue to conform to the norm for a number of reasons. Berger and Luckmann (1966) explain one reason, that of habitualization. People are creatures of habit and perform practices automatically without questioning the process. Another reason may be the fear of rejecting the status quo and having to face the heightened responsibility that comes with independence (Freire, 1970).

Dominant practices are by no means a simple process of domination and subordination. While the on-going discourse enables the dominant culture to continue to secure the consent of the marginalized group, this consent is not always easily granted. Through rhetoric, opposing ideologies continuously

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challenge the dominant discourse, transforming the dominant ideology in a complex, constantly changing process.

One channel for this rhetorical conflict is the social movement. Movements, and the social change they induce, are created through rhetorical processes of confrontation and challenge. Societies control behavior through rhetorical constructions of particular patterns of thinking and acting that sustain the accomplishment of normality. Movements challenge that normality. In the process, they provide their members an alternative rhetoric that brings a different ideology, different behaviors, and different identity into day–to–day life. The Women's movement is a case in point.[2] In early history of the Woman's movement, women adopted the rhetoric of "all men are created equal." This movement began with the women active in the abolition movement.[3] These women were living on the platform, attaining a status through which woman's voice was heard as clearly as men. Several women, most notably the Grimke sisters, began to expand on that rhetoric to include the emancipation of women

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[2]For more information on historical accounts of the Woman's movement, see: Banner (1980); Gurko (1976); Hymowitz and Weissman (1978); O'Neill (1971); and Smith (1970). A comprehensive rhetorical treatment of early women speakers can be found in Campbell (1989). Other rhetorical contributions include: Campbell (1983; 1986); Conrad (1981); Japp (1985); Smith–Rosenberg (1975); and Solomon (1988).

[3]Scholars have traditionally attributed the roots of the Woman's movement as beginning in the abolition movement. The premise has been that women in the abolition movement were treated so shabbily by their male counterparts thus creating the impetus for the Woman's movement. More recent research has pointed out, however, that rhetorical scholars reached such conclusions from the framework of the male–dominated sphere (Carlson, 1992). This has led to the focus on women who spoke to audiences composed of both men and women in their attempts to persuade men to work for change, while ignoring studies of women who refused to speak to such audiences, and who spoke only to female audiences. As recent research indicates, the study of women who spoke only to female audiences illuminates factors of oppression and consciousness that challenge traditional arguments. Consequently, the perception that the abolition movement paved the way for the Woman's movement may not be totally accurate.

(Japp, 1985). In the beginning, not all women working for the abolition of slavery endorsed this position. Eventually, however, the rhetoric of "equality for all" empowered increasing numbers of women and paved the way toward Women's suffrage. With the advent of Women's suffrage, the movement grew and new discourses emerged. Consequently, the Woman's movement encountered a variety of rhetorical conflicts. One such conflict was the struggle for the rhetoric of "personhood" versus that of "womanhood" (Campbell, 1983). Those taking the stance of personhood argued that men and women are equal, while those advocating womanhood stressed the differences between women and men.

The Woman's movement is actually much more complicated than made out here, but it will serve to illustrate the role of rhetoric in empowering marginalized groups. The rhetoric of the Women's movement also distinguishes it from the patriarchal society, and from other movements which are created from a different discourse. Even within today's Women's movement, distinctive groups embody differing ideologies through their rhetoric, e.g., marxist feminists, radical feminists, and lesbian feminists.[4]

Through rhetoric, social movements create internal and external social tensions. Some members of the movement may demand total preservation of its ideology, while others will want to modify positions in order to attract more borderline members or to affect change from the dominant structure. When the rhetoric of movement leaders focuses on the purification of group ideology,

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[4]For general discussions of distinctive feminist ideologies, see: Donovan (1985); Elshtain (1981); Hawkesworth (1990); and Jaggar and Rothenberg (1984).

greater cohesiveness within the group may take place, but this may risk widening the gap between the movement and the dominant culture (Conrad, 1981). On the other hand, adapting their rhetoric to please others or to increase potential for making changes risks creating internal strife. When rhetoric becomes "less visionary," the base for holding the group together crumbles (p. 285).

An important feature of social movement discourse is its consciousness raising potential. Raising the consciousness of formerly apathetic or ignorant members and/or outsiders can often create social unrest. "Raising the consciousness" is the process of removing the power of discourse to direct action habitually. Suddenly members frame formerly habitual actions in ways that give choice. Such rhetorical strategies have the potential to open up people's minds to new ideas and more radical solutions (Wilson, 1973). Consciousness raising is an important aspect of empowering individuals in social movements. The interaction of rhetorical strategies of the movement with the emerging sense of self-worth in consciousness raising marks the emergence of a discourse of empowerment. Now empowered with a rhetoric that brings a different ideology to day-to-day life, the oppressed have a new power to celebrate their heritage, to reject labels imposed on them by their oppressors, and to acquire new traits that enhance feelings of pride and power (Stewart, Smith, & Denton, 1989).

Thus far, this dissertation has addressed the role of rhetoric and ideology in social movements, leaving out the function of empowerment. Empowerment, however, has been accorded a wide variety of interpretations, consequently, I now address the role of empowerment in social movements.

Even though "empowerment" is currently a fashionable term, not much is known about the place of empowerment in social movements. This seems surprising in view of the nature of social movements. Social movements, after all, generally come into existence to alter power relationships between people or between people and the dominant structure. A social movement is built upon when members come together after realizing their desire to stop their oppressors from continuing to control them, to paternalize them, or to oppress them.

The notion of marginalized people becoming empowered by joining a social movement and in particular identifying with a specific ideology makes sense when considering the status of most marginalized groups. Marginalized people in general do not have much power over their destinies because they are often not represented in decision making or policy making, even when it directly affects members of their culture (Kramarae, 1981). They are often denied access to the dominant culture in such matters because their discourse is not valued. Many marginalized people find their experiences interpreted for them by those in the dominant culture who control the discourse in which the interpretation proceeds (Schulz, 1984). As a result, because their discourse and experiences have so long been devalued and denigrated, it is difficult to overcome the disbelief that their experiences are indeed valid and legitimate. In order to develop the "courage to be and to speak," it is often necessary to build up a strong sense of identity within the marginalized group (Daly, 1978, p. 264). This is empowerment.

The Deaf Social Movement

In examining the role of rhetoric as it shapes empowerment, we now turn to the specific cultural group under study--the Deaf social movement. This section illuminates the character of the Deaf social movement and how its struggles center around the issue of communication. The Gallaudet protest, for instance illustrates the surfacing of Deaf ideology in a rhetorical process of empowerment. After years of exclusion from decision making policies made primarily by hearing people, including the choice of a hearing president at Gallaudet, the Deaf movement asserted their identity to attain access to power.

Like other marginalized groups, Deaf people have often found that their opinions are neither valued nor encouraged in decisions affecting their welfare. As a result, the tendency of many Deaf people has been to stay out of the public sphere, even when their own fates are being debated. However, some Deaf people have not been willing to grant the dominant society permission to dominate them. These Deaf people find that their beliefs are at odds with the dominant culture, and they want to reject the dominant perception of them, and to create a new language with which to describe them. Thus emerges the birth of the Deaf social movement with a rhetoric that contrasted with that of the social order. Even though the rhetoric of the Deaf social movement has shifted over the years, the prevailing theme has centered around communication as subject matter as well as vehicle.

In the dominant culture where speech is the primary mode of communication, it is almost inconceivable to envision communicating without

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speech. It is even more difficult to imagine anyone rejecting speech as a mode of communication. Many members of the dominant society remain oblivious, until enlightened, to the fact that there is indeed a group of people in this world who use speech occasionally or not at all. Yet, the Deaf cultural community constitutes such a group. In this community, communication is not taken for granted. In fact, communication is so highly valued that it is at the core of the conflict within the Deaf social movement.

Historically, Deaf people have fought against hearing professionals who educate deaf children in the oral modality, resorting to sign language only as a last resort, if at all.[5] This teaching is based on a belief that speech is the most valuable educational attainment for deaf children. Inherent in this belief is that deaf people should become as hearing as possible. Deaf children should become adults who are able to "integrate" into mainstream society. What better way is there to do this than by enforcing the values of speech, the English language, along with the cultural norms of hearing society?

A byproduct of this "integration" mentality is evident in the increasing numbers of deaf children in mainstream programs and the diminishing numbers of deaf children in residential schools.[6] In fact, such strategies isolate an increasing number of deaf children from other deaf children and teach them that the best

[5]The oral modality refers to the phenomenon of "oralism" which encompasses the use of primarily spoken speech and lipreading to communicate. Oralism was created out of the belief that deaf people needed to master the spoken word to achieve communication, and the practice of that belief in the education of deaf people.

[6]An all-inclusive term for varieties of programs including small classrooms of deaf students in public schools; deaf students placed in public school classrooms, with or without interpreters; among others.

means of attaining success is by acquiring communication skills that are most acceptable to the dominant society. This argument appears convincing to many hearing and deaf people.

To culturally Deaf people, as well as other supporters, however, the goal of "integration" leaves much to be desired. Those sharing this ideology believe that "integration" works in theory more than in practice. They point to the frustrations of deaf people in attempting to achieve even minimal speaking ability; to the years of focusing primarily on acquiring speech skills at the expense of receiving an education; to struggling with the English language because they are not taught in a visual mode, nor in a language that most benefits their visual orientation; and to devalued self-esteem because they are not taught to take pride in their cultural heritage.[7]

Supporters of Deaf cultural preservation face much resistance to their ideology. Those who favor "integration" believe that American Sign Language (ASL) and Deaf cultural norms are detrimental to the acquisition of English language skills and ultimately serve as a barrier to successful employment and subsequent promotion.[8] They also believe that political decisions should reflect

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[7]Deaf people perceive the world differently than do hearing people because their orientation is based on the visual rather than the aural (e.g., Padden & Humphries, 1988; Sacks, 1989).

[8]For such perspectives on mainstreaming, see: Reich, Hambleton, and Houldin (1977) and Ross (1978; 1990). Ross (1990) for instance, argues that:

> when hard of hearing children are considered more like than unlike deaf children, the visual channel receives the primary stress in educational management, to the detriment of the auditory channel, which is overwhelmingly more powerful for English language development and educational accomplishments. (p. 5)

Even though Ross is referring to hard of hearing children, opponents would argue that hard of hearing children benefit from a stress on their visual orientation. More relevant to the point at hand, however, is the position taken by many mainstream advocates that factors stressing the visual orientation, such as ASL and Deaf culture are detrimental to educational achievement. Rather, as Ross points out, the auditory orientation that presumably accommodates the norm is superior.

integrative goals as well. Proponents of Deaf culture believe that the mainstream advocates are selling the Deaf community out and that the way to achieve power is to maintain that Deaf people are indeed a unique cultural identity which should be perceived as a diverse addition to an already diverse American society.[9] Political decisions should also reflect the unique needs of the Deaf community and not attempt to categorize Deaf people with other groups who do not face similar issues.

This struggle within the Deaf social movement is not unique and is analogous to other movement struggles. A similar comparison is reported by Scott and Brockriede (1969) in their rhetorical analysis of the Black Power movement. They relate the dilemma of African-Americans in a situation where they may be viewed as tokens or as radicals. Those who become tokens are demeaned as hypocritical. If tokenism is only the first step toward eventual negotiation, the token is viewed by society as ungrateful. However, if one rejects tokenism, that person is perceived as a troublemaker. Many Black Power proponents argue that it is only when they unite as a separate group from the dominant culture that they can begin to make their power felt, and that this power will work for improved conditions.

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[9]Rodda (1982), while believing mainstreaming to be a "desirable" endeavor, also suggests that mainstreaming can adversely affect the positive valuation of the Deaf culture and language. Another study by Harris (1982) compares the American Jewish community whose assimilation into society was made with relative ease, to the African-American and Deaf communities which appear to resist assimilation. For the Jewish community, assimilation came with their choice to accommodate, in contrast to African-Americans and Deaf people for whom "busing" and "mainstreaming" were mandated. Harris suggests that rather than trying to squelch "selective segregation," social scientists should study this phenomenon to determine how it fosters the ultimate goal of assimilation. That mainstreaming remains a controversial issue in the Deaf community is also evident in a recent article of Deaf USA, see: Wenokur (1990).

Although this rhetorical dilemma is not unique to the Deaf social movement, what makes the Deaf movement unique is that their struggle centers on the fundamental right to communicate. Unlike other marginalized group members who declare loudly their demand to be "heard" by the dominant society, even this metaphor marginalizes Deaf Americans. They demand more: a realization that the dominant mode of <u>speech</u> must be set aside before their right to communicate is assured. This right, central to the ideology of the Deaf social movement, will be the focus of this dissertation.

Review of the Literature

Social movements have long held an important place in contributing to social changes in America and elsewhere. Most Americans are familiar with the activism of diverse groups including Native Americans, African-Americans, Lesbians and Gays, and Women, among others. Case studies of these groups have led to a better understanding of the dynamics of social movements and their impact on the wider society.[10]

Social movement research is a rich and complex area of study and has attracted a plethora of scholars from numerous disciplines, including history, sociology, social psychology, and communication. Although an overview of every

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[10]For examples of rhetorical studies on the Native-American movement, see: Morris and Wander (1990); and Lake (1983). For rhetorical treatment of the African-American movement, see: Brockriede and Scott (1968); Campbell (1971); Condit (1987); Condit and Lucaites (1991); Francesconi (1986); Haskins (1981); Heath (1973); Scott (1968); and Scott and Brockriede (1979). Rhetorical studies of Lesbian and Gay movements include: Brummett (1979); Chesebro, Cragan, and McCullough (1973); Darsey (1981, 1991); Nelson (1981); and Nogle (1984). For rhetorical studies of the feminist movement, see: Campbell (1983, 1986, 1989); Carlson (1992); S. Foss (1979); Gold (1981); Hancock (1972); Kroll (1983); and Solomon (1979, 1983, 1988).

viewpoint is impossible, the review of literature in this dissertation will incorporate some of these views, with primary attention given to those that most influence communication study and that will have the most relevance to this study of the Deaf social movement. In addition to social movements, this review will also summarize studies of ideology, empowerment, and the Deaf social movement.

Approaches to the Study of Social Movements

For the past fifty years, the field of communication has seen a growing body of research focused on social movements. Needless to say, without specific theories and approaches to conducting such research, undertaking this type of study would be difficult. But the fact that the field of communication has traditionally adopted diverse approaches to the study of social movements can be an advantage when undertaking a rhetorical study.[11] The communication discipline's flexibility in incorporating theories from other fields adds to the richness of social movement study. Here, an overview of social movement approaches is provided.

Social scientists such as Blumer, Killian, and Smelser, have studied social movements as a collective enterprise.[12] They compare and contrast social movements to bureaucracies with their own leaders, members, values, traditions, and suborganizations. A social movement is characterized as being large, acting

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[11]For explanations of various approaches to studying social movements, see: the 1980 special issue on social movements in Central States Speech Journal; the 1991 special issue of social movements in Communication Studies; and Stewart, Smith, and Denton (1989). Where the earlier special issue deals with the meaning and definition of social movements, the more recent issue demonstrates a maturity in approaches to the study of movements.

[12]For more detailed discussions of collective behavior, see: Smelser (1963) and Turner and Killian (1957).

spontaneously, attempting to promote change, developing unpredictably, and being relatively unorganized (Blumer, 1969). The mechanisms of social movements—including agitation, esprit de corps, development of morale, ideology, and operating tactics—are also studied. Other scholars study the stages that movements go through, such as initial stage of unrest, popular stage of excitement, formalization, and institutionalization (Dawson & Gettys, 1929).

While social scientific treatment of social movements yielded useful data on the structural workings of the movements, such studies were often lacking in their inattention to the function of language. After all, the language of movement members and their antagonists in the social order brings a movement into existence, maintains it, and terminates it. Rhetoric focuses attention on the dynamic, changing nature of social movements, while the structural approach can make social movements appear constant.

As a result, communication scholars began to approach social movements from a communicative perspective. Early efforts focused on the leaders of movements and their rhetorical strategies. Most of these efforts tried to incorporate rhetorical functions into social scientific approaches. Simons (1970), for instance, developed rhetorical strategies that leaders needed:

> 1. They must attract, maintain, and mold workers (i.e., followers) into an efficiently organized unit. 2. They must secure adoption of their product by the larger structure (i.e., the external system, the established order). 3. They must react to resistance generated by the larger structure. (pp. 3-4)

Hahn and Gonchar (1971) proposed the incorporation of the four traditional rhetorical categories: ethos, pathos, logos, and style into the collective mold. Although these earlier approaches adopted by communication scholars were

pioneering, dissatisfaction remained about the methods employed. These methods were still not giving enough attention to the communicative aspect. Communication scholars wanted methods that would enable them to explore the languaging strategies which are instrumental in analyzing symbolic acts of movements.

Methods of study steered toward that goal when rhetorical critics discovered that Kenneth Burke's work had much merit. Burke's theory of dramatism is based on the premise that "life is a drama and the world is its theatre"[13] (S. Foss, K. Foss, & Trapp, 1985, p. 165). Dramatism treats each social movement as a unique entity through its focus on languaging strategies. Language is defined as a powerful force built on the "symbol-making," "symbol-using," and "symbol-misusing" capacities of human beings (Burke, 1966, p. 1). Language is neither neutral nor passive, but always active. As an active force, language enables people to organize and make sense of their world (Burke, 1935/1965, pp. 176-177).

A Burkean analysis then, is a study of language and how people symbolize their view of the world with language. Burkean scholars study the active force of language by using a variety of approaches.[14] Thus, the study of social movements by communication scholars has often come to mean a study of language, for language illustrates people's perceptions and attitudes and, in

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[13]For more detailed discussions on dramatism, see: Burke (1941/1973, 1945/1969, 1966, 1968, 1989); Combs and Mansfield (1976); and Gronbeck (1980).

[14]Burkean approaches are too numerous to list here, but some of his key concepts include, identification, the pentad, basic human motives (hierarchy, guilt, victimage, and redemption), and the cluster. For samples of these approaches, see: Brockriede and Scott (1968); Brummett (1979); Crowell (1977); Sonja Foss (1984); Klumpp and Hollihan (1979); Peterson (1986); and Procter (1987).

essence, their ideologies. Although a study of ideology ideally is a study of the language used by a group, ideological criticism does not have its roots in the communication discipline.

The Ideological Approach

Ideological criticism is originally a Marxist theory which contends that a society is organized around its economic base (Marx & Engels, 1932/1947). This economic base divides owners of production from their workers. Since owners have economic control, they also rule the dominant culture which represents their material interests. Original Marxist theory views ideology as an illusion presented by the dominant class to represent their interests which is in turn accepted by dominated classes as their own beliefs. Marxist thought further posits that non-dominant classes therefore participate in their own subordination by the dominant class. The notion of ideology as illusion was criticized by later critics because, as Stuart Hall (1985) points out, there is no such thing as authentic truth "outside of its ideological and cultural categories" (p. 105). When seeking the real thing to compare with a given ideology, one does not find anything because the given ideology is the real thing. An ideology is based on the meanings people make of the world; and how people perceive the world is not an illusion, it is authentic.

Consequently, ideological criticism evolved into a theory that treated ideology as an authentic force. Later Marxists such as Louis Althusser (1970/1971) rejected the notion that economics is at the core of an ideological identity and presented it as a dynamic force with complex economic, political and ideological interrelationships. Althusser further explains ideology as a process

that constantly changes over time as the dominant culture struggles to maintain the ideology which best represents its interests. An ideology cannot remain static because subordinates who realize their oppressed status will seek to modify the dominant ideology into one that most closely affiliates with their own interests.

Social movements are, then, a rich source of study because of their role in effecting change in the dominant ideology. Social movements are primarily a reaction to the existing social order and strive to make changes in the controlling ideology by presenting a counter ideology. The role of this counter ideology in social movements has often been acknowledged as an instrumental feature by theorists studying the social movement phenomenon.

Defining Ideology

Traditional social science has treated ideology as a force grounded in the human mind. This perspective has placed rhetoric as a secondary, even insignificant force. Wilson (1973), for instance, defines ideology as primarily a mental force--an ideology: 1) clarifies what must be done: endorsing a certain philosophy is tantamount to committing to a way of life; 2) is total belief: members will adopt varying degrees of belief, but regardless of amount, the ideology will be incorporated into members' belief systems; 3) means consistency: the stronger the belief, the more members will seek "to impose a unified, internally consistent scheme of interpretation upon a world of heterogeneous meanings" (Bittner, 1963, p. 939); and 4) is associated with collectivity. Wilson's treatment of ideology ignores the linguistic aspect.

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In a similar vein, Toch (1965) writes that a group's ideology may be officially declared in a formal platform or may be inferred from a collection of speeches and written literature by the group. Although Toch, in contrast to Wilson, does not ignore the rhetorical value of ideologies, he accords a secondary value to language as evidenced in his belief that ideology must be "inferred" from communication.

Communication scholars on the other hand, treat ideology as a social reality created by rhetoric. As Edwards (1976) explains, "language both reflects and regulates social relationships; it shapes the environment and is itself shaped by it" (p. 34). As the ideology of a group develops, a language which embodies their beliefs is generated. "In this process," according to Halliday (1978), "which is also a social process, the construal of reality is inseparable from construal of the semantic system in which the reality is encoded" (p. 3).

Unlike the traditional social science perception, communication scholars view ideology and rhetoric as inseparable. Accordingly, ideology in social movements follow this direction. As Warnick (1977) posits, an ideology in social movements "sets forth beliefs of its members and affirms the principles and objectives of the movement" (p. 259). Blumer (1969) also describes ideology as a force of rhetoric: 1) a statement of purpose; 2) a body of criticism aimed at the status quo or institution the group is seeking to change; 3) arguments that justify the movement and its purpose; 4) a way to deal with the operation of the movement; and 5) the myths of the movement.

Defining Empowerment

The term "empowerment" is so widely used that it is often given a variety of interpretations, thus, it merits explanation. Definitions for empowerment have included upward mobility, self-assertion, and political activity. Bookman and Morgen (1988) explain that empowerment "begins when they [marginalized members] change their ideas about the causes of their powerlessness, when they recognize the systematic forces that oppress them, and when they act to change the condition of their lives" (p. 4). Bookman and Morgen conclude that "fundamentally, then, empowerment is a process [original emphasis] aimed at consolidating, maintaining, or changing the nature and distribution of power in a particular cultural context" (p. 4). This process, however, includes much resistance and consent along the way as the sources of power come into conflict. This dissertation, accordingly will treat empowerment as a process through which a marginalized group alters the distribution of power between itself and the dominant culture.

Studies on Empowerment in Social Movements

Even though there are only a few documented studies of the role of empowerment in social movements, these preliminary studies suggest that this is an area that merits further attention. Andrew King (1987) reports on two such studies. Burdick and Johns found in their study of a group of Mexican peasants that those who join a movement are more likely than others to break traditional patterns and adopt more risk taking behaviors. They also note that joining a movement gives rise to a new language in which members can express previously

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inaccessible ideas and produces a sense of personal power and control. A study by Budenholzer of a large number of Viet Congs illustrated that joining a movement stimulates powers that have been repressed for a long time. He further finds that movement leaders who ask much from their members will get more daring and innovative responses than those who ask for little and that this process empowers rather than represses the membership.

A more recent study by Zagacki (in press) of obese and extremely short people demonstrates that although changing cultural perceptions of these groups would be extremely difficult in the face of a prevailing era of health consciousness, thinness and dieting; empowerment of obese and short people still could occur. Zagacki determines that the possibly most empowering function of their rhetoric is the provision of "sites in which to practice their lifestyles and not feel odd or liminal (like conversion to a religion), a place to cultivate new qualities, new personal goals and social arrangements—and a systematic public defense of their individual dignity" (p. 39).

Previous research indicates the existence of "empowerment," however, the process of its emergence in language has not been studied extensively. This dissertation will address this rhetorical process.

An Overview of the Deaf Social Movement

The Deaf social movement is ripe for analysis because there has been very little research conducted on any aspect of the Deaf social movement, much less a rhetorical analysis. Most publications focus on the history of deaf events, but do not present them as movement behavior. The few documents that do discuss the

phenomenon of the Gallaudet protest do not give any attention to earlier

organizing efforts for change. An overview of the literature is presented here.

One of the earliest published works documenting the history of deaf people

is The Conquest of Deafness by Ruth Bender. Bender (1970) provides us with a

chronological history of deaf people, focusing primarily on the philosophies and

methods used in the education of deaf students, beginning in the eighteenth

century. Her study yields useful information on the trends and changes that

occurred in the education of deaf people, but much of the perspective comes from

hearing educators. There is no mention made of the struggles of Deaf people to

make changes in the educational system that would benefit deaf students. Rather,

Bender gives attention to what hearing educators have sought to do. This

perspective is useful in presenting the point of view of hearing educators, some of

whom advocated methods strongly opposed by Deaf people during these periods.

These struggles by Deaf people have continued over the years and will be the

focus of analysis in this study.

A rather comprehensive record of historical events, although, not

movements per se, is brought to us by a Deaf author, Jack R. Gannon (1981).

The information from his book, presented in narrative form is helpful in finding

what occurred when, and who did what. Another book written by Harlan Lane

(1984), not only provides historical facts, but also a moving account of the history

of Deaf people, told from the vantage point of Laurent Clerc, a Deaf educator

who was brought to America from France to implement an educational system for

deaf people. As a scholastic endeavor, this book is an excellent source for this

study of the Deaf social movement, as it provides specific, detailed accounts of events as they transpired in the history of Deaf people, including their struggles with the dominant society. Lane's book is especially invaluable in the access to events which are not a part of histories generated in other scholarly studies of deaf people.

Other sources, although not as comprehensive as the Lane book, still provide a perspective on the Deaf community in America. One such book by Van Cleve and Crouch (1989), describes the development of the American Deaf community in the nineteenth century, and provides insights into the lives of prominent Deaf Americans as well as others involved with the Deaf community. The other book, by Groce (1985), is unique and intriguing in its narration of the history of a specific group of deaf people. She portrays life on Martha's Vineyard where for two hundred years, there was a large community of deaf people, integrated into the social and political life of the island. Her work provides a new perspective on deaf people, one in which they were not viewed as different, as is usually the case in contemporary America. This insight is useful in understanding how perceptions are shaped by the culture one lives in.

Aside from the historical portrayals of events in deaf history, there are very few documents presenting specific information on the Deaf movement. A narrative account of the Gallaudet protest, for instance, can be found in Gannon's (1989) book, but it is primarily a chronological presentation of events as they occurred during the week, without any in-depth analysis of the dynamics of the movement. A beginning analysis of the implications of the Gallaudet protest is

given by Oliver Sacks (1989), who also provides his own personal account of the protest. To obtain inside information on the struggles between the chief rivals within the Gallaudet protest, as well as some of their musings in the aftermath of the Gallaudet protest, one may look to Dozier's (1988) article, "Hear No Evil."

A more theoretical analysis of the protest is provided by four professors at Gallaudet. Christiansen, Meisegeier, Barnartt, and White (1989), analyzed the Gallaudet protest by applying Smelser's theory of collective behavior, specifically his value–added theory. The study incorporates the six stages of development which Smelser deemed necessary. According to Smelser, certain events must occur in each stage before the movement can proceed to the next stage. The study provides valuable insight into the workings of the Gallaudet protest and its authors are to be commended for undertaking this project. However, Smelser's theory (as many other social scientific theories) can be restrictive, in not including the rhetorical aspects of a movement. Thus, features such as the language, rhetorical strategies, and ideology of the group may not be fully treated. The Christiansen, et al. study does not answer questions such as: What rhetorical strategies were used? Which persuasive techniques were effective or ineffective? What previous visions held by society were altered, if any? These and many other questions remain.

A more rhetorical analysis is provided of the Gallaudet protest by DeLoach (1990) in his dissertation. The focus is on why the protestors at Gallaudet identified so strongly with one another. The thesis of the dissertation is that an examination of the identification process of the Gallaudet movement will

substantiate the theory that when the identity of a particular group is challenged, that group responds by identifying with each other more rapidly, thus, resulting in the development of a strengthened social movement.

The study is incomplete, however, in its analysis of the cultural Deaf community or its generalizability to other movements, without a rhetorical examination of the beginnings of the Deaf movement. This is indicated in one of his conclusions that the Gallaudet protest symbolized the creation of a "separate deaf world," which would not be "a positive change" (p. 187). A rhetorical analysis of how the Deaf community came to be and emerged would contribute significantly to an understanding of the symbolic implications of a "separate deaf world." Further, the contention that a "separate deaf world" is not positive ignores the ideological struggles between the dominant society and non-dominant communities to conform to the norm.

Aside from the Gallaudet protest, only two other movement studies were found. One study by N. C. Jones (1983), of the beginning of co-education at Gallaudet, included some analysis of the movement by Deaf women to pressure Gallaudet into admitting women to the college. While the study contains invaluable information on the activities of the Deaf women in persuading Gallaudet to enroll women, a rhetorical critique would afford a deeper understanding of the events as they occurred. The other study by Dye (1991) illuminates the re-definition of Deaf people via the move from "deaf" to "Deaf" to denote cultural identity. Although brief, this is an excellent rhetorical analysis

of the transformation and more studies of this nature would certainly contribute to the field.

In view of the minimal amount of research on both empowerment and the Deaf social movement, and virtually no research on how rhetoric shapes empowerment, this study will make a contribution to the field of communication by addressing the issue of how rhetoric shapes empowerment for the cultural identity of the Deaf social movement.

Method

In examining how rhetoric shapes empowerment for the Deaf social movement, such a study needs to incorporate the theoretical precepts of ideological analysis and empowerment delineated earlier, with a specific focus on the cultural Deaf community. In this study, this means giving specific attention to the rhetorical strategies which empower the Deaf social movement as its members counter the contrasting dominant ideology. To answer the specific question this dissertation is addressing, the following questions guide the study: How does the Deaf social movement define the dominant rhetoric which marginalizes it? How does the Deaf social movement strategically posture the conflict involved in this difference in rhetoric? How does the rhetoric through which the Deaf cultural community counters the dominant discourse of society empower the Deaf cultural community?

This type of examination suggests a need for the use of methodologies that can examine rhetoric from the perspective of dominance and resistance. For this reason, a rhetorical analysis which borrows from a combination of several

methodologies guides this study. This combination incorporates the principles of historical analysis, the ethnography of communication, and Foucaultian analysis.

For this rhetorical analysis, three stages comprise the procedure for this study. First, the rhetoric to be examined in this dissertation is defined. The next procedure is to analyze and interpret the rhetorical acts operating within the ideological struggle between the dominant and the dominated, with particular focus on the rhetorical strategies of the dominated as they strive to empower their community. Finally, theory and action are merged to illuminate the contribution of these findings to the discipline of communication. These procedures and the steps to achieve them will now be explained further.

Defining the Rhetoric

The first procedure for the rhetorical study of the Deaf movement was to define the rhetoric to be examined. Primarily, I was interested in the movement's counter rhetoric created in response to the dominant culture's enforcement of "normality." The following questions guided this analysis: What rhetorical strategies are presented by the Deaf social movement to exemplify the cultural ideals of Deaf people? What is the relationship between these strategies and the dominant culture's rhetorical depiction of a "normal" person? How do the rhetorical strategies of the Deaf social movement explain these conflicts in ideologies? How are these rhetorical powers maintained or legitimized?

Since the time period of this dissertation covered nearly a century, the methods for collecting relevant rhetoric depended on two types of research: a historical examination and an ethnography of communication.

As several chapters cover primarily the historical movement, the rhetorical events covering these time periods were not directly observable. Thus, I relied on surviving historical artifacts. The first step in a historical examination was, then, to conduct a study of available documents.

Although the Deaf culture is predominantly maintained through a visual channel, published documents comprise much of the data for this study. For the historical analysis, the following books and journals chronicle events occurring in the earlier years of the Deaf social movement: Harlan Lane's When the Mind Hears was particularly useful for extensive coverage of events that transpired at the Milan Congress and the early years of deaf education in America. Other books that also offered historical accounts of deaf activities include: A Place of their Own by Van Cleve and Crouch; The Deaf Heritage by Gannon; and Never the Twain Shall Meet by Winefield. These books served primarily as the guiding force for relevant sources in American Annals of the Deaf, the Volta Review, correspondence and other memoirs such as those written by Alexander Graham Bell, a strong advocate of oralism and mainstreaming. Additionally, the videotape, Preservation of the Sign Language was a useful rhetorical text for this study as it was created by the National Association of the Deaf in response to the Milan Congress movement toward oralism. These publications and documents are available from the Gallaudet University library and archives.

In this historical examination, rhetorical acts that illuminated the tensions of the Deaf social movement's resistance to the dominant ideology were noted and

documented. To limit the scope of this examination, only rhetorical acts that pertained to the theme of Deaf cultural preservation were the focus.

Historians place much value on the precision of evidence (Barzun & Graff, 1985; Gottschalk, 1969; Ward, 1985). Accordingly, the second step was to verify documented statements for accuracy. This involved examining comparable accounts of the situations and events, including those from opposing viewpoints to determine the probability of the accuracy of documented rhetorical acts (Ward, 1985). With primary sources, such as correspondence, published works of specific author(s), and videotapes, the rhetorical act(s) under study were taken from the text and interpreted accordingly. With secondary sources, such as books documenting historical events, the quest for accuracy included comparisons with available primary sources, as well as other books covering similar time periods. However, it should be noted here that the goal was a rhetorical examination rather than a historical one, therefore, the investigation for accuracy does not follow all the procedures historians undertake in their work. For the purpose of this study, a cross-examination of primary and secondary sources to verify rhetorical texts were sufficient. In some cases, secondary sources were adopted rather than primary sources either because the author did not document the origin or sources were from manuscripts currently out of print or not available for various reasons.

For more recent rhetorical events, especially those regarding American Sign Language and Deaf culture, the following publications were used: the Silent News, the Deaf American, Gallaudet Today, the National Association of the Deaf Broadcaster, Sign Language Studies, and TBC News. These publications were

selected on the basis of their nationwide readership by members of the Deaf community. For the Gallaudet protest, publications included: Gannon's The Week the World Heard Gallaudet, the Buff and Blue student newspaper, and articles and editorials from the Washington Post. These publications provided the bulk of accounts of the Gallaudet protest since their writers had the most access to the protest either by token of being members of the deaf community or in the case of the Post, being located in the vicinity of the protest.

For more contemporary and directly observable phenomena, historical examination were not needed. Rather, because the phenomena is current, it was possible to visit the site of events to get a first-hand account. An approach such as the ethnography of communication, was especially appealing for the study of the Deaf social movement because it takes into consideration the visual nature of communication for the Deaf community.[15]

The first step for most ethnographers or participant-observers is to clarify their role in the community under study (Trenholm, 1991). Researchers may chose not to reveal their research intent, in order to become a full-fledged participant. Others may prefer to make clear their intent which, then, gives them permission to query participants in the community. As a Deaf person, I have ready access to the Deaf community, and my presence at various events is not questioned. Collection of data was, then, made with relative ease. In addition,

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[15]For more detailed discussions of the ethnography of communication, see: Hymes (1962); Saville-Troike (1989); and Spradley (1979a, 1979b).

when I needed to clarify my role in order to videotape events, or ask further questions, my being an "insider" proved to be advantageous in that my peers were most willing to comply.

The second step of ethnography is to make and record observations (Trenholm, 1991). As there is no written form of ASL, it has been necessary to either document ideas and themes of rhetorical acts in written English or to videotape events. These methods are far from perfect, but they come closer to capturing the communicative intent of the rhetorical act. Even with videotaped phenomena which most closely resembled the original event, translations had to be made for the purpose of this study. Translations proved difficult because of the need to translate from one language to another. At most, this resulted in translations which did not capture the full essence of rhetorical acts, rather, it presented a moderately equivalent depiction.

The final step of ethnography is to analyze and interpret the collected data according to the questions guiding the analysis of the rhetoric of the Deaf social movement.

As a case in point, the Gallaudet protest, in addition to perusals of publications, required the use of ethnographic strategies. From television, I taped approximately twenty five hours worth of the nightly news and documentaries, all covering the week long protest. Other sources included posters, art work, and slogans available from the Gallaudet archives and the Smithsonian, as well as my personal observations. In other cases, data was collected through participant observation at a number of events. I attended and videotaped public addresses at

various rallies and public gatherings, as well as other symbolic expressions decrying the status quo. These symbolic expressions included ASL poetry, art works and theatrical productions that illuminated the Deaf experience.

Examination of Rhetorical Acts

The second procedure of the rhetorical analysis was to examine the rhetorical forces operating within the ideological struggle between the dominant and dominated, with particular attention to the strategies used by the dominated to empower their community. Foucault was particularly helpful to this procedure, especially in his conception of culture.

According to Foucault (1966/1970), "normality" is a rhetorical construct. The normal person is only a vision created by what Foucault calls "the human sciences." Foucault's position here is instrumental to the study at hand, as it is the dominant culture's notion of the "normal" person that contrasts with the ideology of the Deaf social movement. The resistance movement of the Deaf community is also most often directed at Foucault's characterization of the human sciences. The human sciences encompasses authorities representing social institutions, such as educators, administrators, medical personnel, and those from the helping professions.

Through rhetoric, these authorities legitimize the "normal person," leaving out countless groups of people, including deaf people, who deviate from the norm. These authorities, thus, pave the way for a society that "legitimately regulates its population and seeks out signs of disease, disturbance and deviation so that they

can be treated and returned to normal functioning under the watchful eyes of one or other policing system" (Philp, 1985, pp. 75-76).

The inherent nature of social movements is that they typically resist the cultural ideals of the "normal person," and such is the case for the Deaf social movement. In this dissertation, the focus is on the resistance of the Deaf social movement to the human sciences and their interest in "normalizing" the Deaf person. Foucault's genealogical method corresponds to the study of such resistance, as it is an examination of the rhetoric of empowerment performed by those "who resist the subjugating effects of power: those who, like some feminists [and culturally Deaf people], refuse to surrender their bodies to the established practices of medicine [including the pathological sciences so prevalent in the Deaf community] . . . and those who resist the identities imposed upon them by others" (Philp, 1985, pp. 76).

The methodology used by Foucaultian analysts to examine how resistance rhetoric shapes empowerment has not, for the most part, been fully explained. Zagacki (in press) is one who employs Foucaultian analysis in his study of the empowerment of obese and little people, but does not outline the specific procedures for conducting this type of study. However, his actual analysis can serve to illustrate how Foucault's method can be utilized. Although Zagacki studies the rhetoric of both obese people and little people, I will only illustrate his examination of obese people, as his examination of both groups utilize similar procedures.

Zagacki first begins by explaining the dominant ideology of health and the fixation of our society on diet, nutrition, and exercise. Within this context, obese people are seen as deviants from the norm and are, thus, treated as the butt of jokes, and often are victims of social, economic and political discrimination. For this strategy, Zagacki touches on general themes of health held by the dominant culture. For example, using the concept of Foucault's human sciences, Zagacki illustrates that doctors frequently espouse through the media assorted health and psychological problems that obese people encounter.

Zagacki goes on to explore how obese people often turn to the psychological or medical sciences, which can even include surgical treatment in their desperation to conform to the ideology of health. This approach explains the predominant reaction of the marginalized.

Next, Zagacki examines the various rhetorical strategies of empowerment of the marginalized. He describes how a national organization serving obese people uses rhetorical strategies such as declaring in no uncertain terms that "fat is beautiful" to reject societal perceptions of fat as ugly or unhealthy and replacing it with a new image of "fat as good." Finally, he discusses the implications of these rhetorical strategies of resistance.

I have undertaken a similar procedure for this dissertation. The first step was to study the recurrent themes as they pertained to the ideological struggle between the Deaf community and the dominant society. I have found that these themes center around issues of communication with the educational institution as the primary battleground throughout the history of the Deaf movement. Like with

Zagacki's study, the dominant ideology will not be the focus of this rhetorical analysis, rather it serves to present the context within which resistance rhetoric was developed in response. In addition, this step illustrates the perception of Deaf people from the dominant viewpoint to provide depictions of the oppressive forces Deaf people were dealing with prior to and during the emergence of the Deaf social movement.

Due to the scope of this study, I did not go into the measures taken by deaf people to conform to the dominant ideology of "normality" with a few exceptions. Rather, my second step was to examine the various rhetorical strategies for their empowering functions. Unlike Zagacki who studied rhetorical strategies from the perspective of one organization, this study includes rhetorical acts from a number of individuals and groups spanning the past one hundred or so years that illuminated the tensions centering around communication and cultural preservation. The specific focus being how the rhetorical strategies of the Deaf social movement were used to empower its community.

The following questions also served as a guide for this Foucaultian analysis: How does the dominant culture portray their image of the "normal" deaf person? What rhetorical strategies have been developed by the Deaf social movement to reject these images? How are resulting redefinitions created and subsequently presented to the society at large? What constitutes rhetorical empowerment and what does it say for rhetorical theory? How are rhetorical strategies of empowerment unique to a predominately visual culture?

The Findings

The final procedure of this rhetorical study is to merge theory and action with a conscious effort to make social changes (Littlejohn, 1989). In rhetorical theory, this means an extension beyond an interpretation of the rhetoric under study to make a contribution to the field of communication. This is conducted by evaluating whether the rhetoric studied appears to correspond to existing knowledge of rhetorical functions or if it proposes a new explanation (S. Foss, 1989).

Two caveats help locate this study. First, it is necessary to note that although this study used methods created primarily for oral and written modalities, the treatment of these methods in this study incorporated the language, culture and experiences of Deaf people. Historically, rhetorical criticism has been formulated largely in the context of hearing people. This has led to the assumption that all communication is primarily oral or written. Deaf people, however, perceive the world differently than do hearing people (Padden & Humphries, 1988; Sacks, 1989). The world view of Deaf people is fundamentally based on a visual orientation, rather than that of hearing. This visual orientation is so pervasive that it not only represents how Deaf people see the world, but is a factor in how Deaf people acquire language, how they process thought, and how they communicate. These factors have evolved into a Deaf culture in which a different mode of communication has created a language and a lifestyle.

In addition, the perceptions, values, and experiences of Deaf people are not incorporated into the dominant language. The field of communication is a case in

point. Numerous communication departments, textbooks, and even the national organization (the Speech Communication Association) define communication as "speech," and when communication departs from the norm, it is labelled a "communication disorder."

Due to this perceived "deviation from the norm," the communication and language of Deaf people are devalued and denigrated. Educators of deaf students often equate "language" with English, overlooking the fact that American Sign Language is a language as well. These educators depict "communication" similarly in their statements that "deaf kids can't communicate" (Snyder, 1988, p. 8). Such statements are overly dramatic and grossly misleading. A more appropriate statement would illustrate the fact that many Deaf people do not rely on speech as a primary mode of communication.

The second caveat is in regard to translations made from American Sign Language to English. Most rhetorical texts critiqued in the communication discipline are more easily decoded into a written language than is ASL. Although the rhetoric of the Deaf social movement includes printed documents in English, much of the rhetoric is generated in American Sign Language, and thus, required translation. A fuller treatment of this situation is available in the ethnography portion of this chapter.

Organization of the Study

This dissertation begins with orientation to the study. This chapter has introduced the nature of the study, its theoretical foundations, and delineated the method that guides the study. The second chapter presents a historical overview

of the Deaf cultural community. Such a review presents the background of the Deaf social movement and helps the reader understand the rhetorical process that guides the movement.

The heart of the study begins with chapter three which examines the rhetorical conflict as the dominant society attempts to "normalize" the deaf person. The historical efforts by the dominant culture to enforce the mode of speaking and lipreading on Deaf people and their resistance to these efforts is highlighted. Chapter four moves on to the 1960s and 1970s during which the liberating movements came into force and presented a new context for the Deaf social movement. Specifically, this chapter addresses strategies to establish sign language as a respected modality and language, and to condemn social engineering practices of the dominant culture. Chapter five brings us to the most effective protest conducted by the Deaf social movement--the Gallaudet University uprising.

Chapter six moves on to the aftermath of the Gallaudet protest and the ensuing strategies of the newer movement. This more recent movement illuminates a similar trend to diversity movements in its vision of a multicultural society. The multicultural framework that guides these movements suggest three necessary attributes for community building: creating a sense of self-worth, building an internal foundation for community building, and accessing the public sphere. Chapter seven, the concluding chapter, addresses the contribution of this dissertation to the body of research on social movements, discusses the strategies of the Deaf movement and evaluates whether these strategies can lead to a

multicultural society. Further, a fourth attribute for community building is suggested: a discourse of "humanitarianism."

CHAPTER 2

A History of the Deaf Community in America

This is a study of the Deaf social movement. Such a study presumes the existence of a community of Deaf people. A number of questions then arise: How did such a community come to be? What factors played a part in its evolvement? What is the pattern of life for such a community? What are the ingredients that foster the continued existence of this community? An overview of the historical events that chronicled the years of the Deaf community responds to these questions and provides the context for the rhetorical situations faced by the Deaf social movement.

Since educational institutions have played a central role in the lives of deaf people, much attention will be given to events related to education. After all, where schools are primarily places to secure an education for most people, for Deaf people, schools mean much more. For many Deaf people, the school is where they meet other Deaf people, often for the first time; develop socialization patterns and friendships that frequently last throughout their lifetime; marry spouses; acquire a language that accommodates their visual orientation; as well as become a part of a culture that extends beyond the school years.

The educational system, thus, created a space for Deaf people to build community and eventually became the mechanism through which the Deaf social movement would thrive. While the beginnings of the education of deaf people provided a foundation for community building, outside forces to stimulate educational changes in ensuing years compelled resistance efforts from the Deaf

community. As these forces sought to defuse the Deaf community, the Deaf social movement came into being. Even as educational reforms were sought or even implemented, the resistance from the Deaf movement has served to create a bonding and a strengthening of community.

Consequently, educational institutions have been instrumental in the inception of the Deaf community, as well as the sustenance of the community in the face of adversarial practices to divide the community. A review of educational practices from the beginning of schooling in the United States to the present will provide the context of the Deaf social movement. This narrative will be comprised of four sections: the beginnings of the Deaf community; a review of the battles that marked the shift to oral domination that remains to some extent today; the efforts to preserve community; an examination of social engineering practices; and the struggle to turn control of educational institutions over to Deaf people.

The Inception of Community

The Deaf community evolved in the United States in the nineteenth century when educational institutions for deaf people were formally established. Prior to the nineteenth century, educational practices for deaf people in the United States were limited. Some families who could afford the expense sent their deaf children abroad to countries that provided instruction specifically for deaf students. Moreover, the only known "congregation" of deaf people in America existed on Martha's Vineyard. There, however, deaf people mingled freely with hearing people who for the most part also communicated in sign language, so life

for deaf people on the island was an integrated community, rather than a separate community of Deaf people (Groce, 1985).

It can be surmised that deaf people lived in relative isolation prior to the establishment of educational facilities. After all, unlike on Martha's Vineyard, most hearing people did not sign. Laws that ruled these years (early 1800s) also indicate the perception that people who did not speak were not as competent as their hearing counterparts (Higgins, 1988). In New York, deaf people could not vote. Many states ruled that deaf people could not be held responsible for criminal acts. Ship owners arriving in the United States were required to report any deaf people on board, and to pay a bond to prevent them from becoming public charges. Several states enacted similar laws to prevent carnivals from bringing deaf people with them into towns only to abandon them (Best, 1943).

Consequently, the United States did not consider educational practices as an worthy endeavor for deaf people until the nineteenth century. The first permanent school for the "deaf and dumb" was established in 1817 in Hartford, Connecticut, largely through the efforts of three men. Mason Fitch Cogswell had a deaf daughter, Alice, who attracted the attention of neighbor Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet. Gallaudet was a minister and apparently took interest in Alice as a result of his missionary ventures. Cogswell persuaded Gallaudet to go abroad to study the available educational practices for deaf students, with the aspiration of establishing a similar endeavor in the United States.

In England, Gallaudet encountered frustration in his dealings with the famous Braidwoods, who dominated the educational enterprise of deaf people in

the area. The Braidwoods who practiced oralism (the use of speech and speechreading) in their teachings, viewed their work as a profit–making venture and preferred to keep their craft a family secret. They were willing however, to apprentice Gallaudet for a number of years, if he would also adopt their tradition of a profit–making institution and not reveal their secrets. This proposal did not appeal to Gallaudet's charitable nature, so when Gallaudet learned that the Abbe Sicard, head of the Royal Institution in Paris, would present an exhibition in London, he made plans to attend.

Gallaudet was impressed with the exhibition at which successful former Deaf students from the Paris school demonstrated their abilities. One of these former students, Laurent Clerc, was at the time a teacher at the Royal Institution. As a result, Gallaudet moved on to Paris and eventually succeeded in persuading Clerc to return to America with him. Upon their return, Gallaudet, Clerc, and Cogswell founded the school in Hartford as the first permanent American school for the deaf.

The school represented the beginning of the emergence of the American Deaf community. Shortly afterwards, other schools were established for deaf pupils in other states, often by people themselves Deaf. American Sign Language (ASL) was also a phenomenon that developed naturally among these Deaf pioneers. While travelling from France to America on a lengthy ship journey, Clerc had taught Gallaudet a form of signed French (the intent of which was to sign in spoken French word order), and Gallaudet taught Clerc English, and both of them "reformed certain signs which we thought would not well suit American

customs and manners" (cited in Lane, 1980, p. 125). Thus, the earliest form of instruction for deaf students was conducted in a form of methodical signing.

However, by 1835, educational institutions in America had discarded methodical signing in favor of the sign language that emerged naturally from the Deaf students themselves (Lou, 1988). The reason for this change was that Deaf children consistently communicated among themselves in a form of natural signing (later to be called American Sign Language) and educators realized the importance of teaching them by using what came naturally to them. After all, a line from Racine, "To the smallest of the birds, He gives their crumbs" requires forty-eight signs when using methodical French signing (Lane, 1984, p. 62).

So instrumental was this natural form of sign language in binding Deaf people together, that proposals to extend a demographic region of Deaf people outside of their school years were not uncommon. After all, Deaf people cherished the community that became very much a part of their lives at residential schools. One way to remain within this community was for Deaf people to secure jobs at residential schools upon graduation. Accordingly, by 1851, 36% of the teachers were Deaf and increased to a peak of 42.5% in 1870 (J. Jones, 1918, p. 12). Deaf people also began to take the initiative in their own education. Between 1817 and 1911, twenty-four schools for the deaf were founded by people who were themselves Deaf (Gannon, 1981, p. 19).

However, many Deaf people who could not, or didn't want to, obtain jobs at residential schools still wanted to remain within their community. Consequently, some Deaf people proposed that the Deaf community could and

should become a demographic reality. The idea of a Deaf "commonwealth" was first entertained in secrecy by a small group of Deaf people as early as 1831 (Booth, 1858). Laurent Clerc also contemplated reserving a portion of land donated by Congress to use as a place for Deaf people to migrate after graduation (Chamberlain, 1858).[1] In 1855, the idea was formally proposed by John Flournoy, whose outlined ideas included purchasing land out in the "West" where Deaf people could assume governing rights (Flournoy, 1856). Although Flournoy's proposal became a hotly contested issue, a Deaf commonwealth never materialized. Even so, these proposals for a separate Deaf sphere demonstrate a desire for an extension of a community outside of the school. Further, such proposals were entertained primarily as a result of the integrality of the educational institution in fostering community.

This flourishing Deaf community, however appealing to many Deaf people, was perceived as an antithesis to American society. To many members of the dominant society, the integration of deaf people into society--rather than their separation from society--was necessary for their success and well-being.

The Educational System Becomes a Battleground

As a result of the perception that deaf people could be deemed successful only if they entered the mainstream of society, many outside the Deaf community saw the flourishing, yet increasingly separate community of Deaf people as undesirable. Since the best avenue to curtail the increasing separation of the Deaf

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[1]Although Clerc had considered such a plan, as he later explained, "a mature deliberation on the whole matter, had made it appear an impracticable plan" (cited in Chamberlain, 1858, p. 212).

community was through the educational system, reformers chose this route. The reformers also sought to eradicate sign language, since it was the binding force of the Deaf community and, they believed, isolated the community from the speaking world. Consequently, the reformists set about to eliminate sign language from the instruction of Deaf people and replace it with speech and speechreading.

Two crucial events marked this shift from sign language to oralism: the second International Congress of the Deaf in Milan in 1880, and the vigorous crusade of Alexander Graham Bell. The Milan Congress, comprised of 163 hearing educators and one Deaf educator from several countries, almost unanimously passed (158 to 6) a resolution that only the oral approach should be used as a medium of instruction for deaf students. The media, particularly the London Times, gave positive coverage to the event, pointing to two indicators of the shift to oralism (Gallaudet, 1881). One was the appearance that a vast majority of educators from different countries had given their support to the oral approach. Second, an exhibition at the convention had presumably demonstrated the success of oral teaching. Deaf Italian students were able to speak and appeared to be able to lipread and respond accordingly without effort.

However, some of the Milan participants described how the deaf Italian students had begun answering the questions even before the questioners had finished which led to speculation that the demonstrations had been rehearsed beforehand (Gallaudet, 1881). Further, there was no indication of how much residual hearing the students possessed. Basically, there was no evidence that these students spoke or lipread as a result of receiving oral instruction. However,

the oralists used demonstrations such as that with the deaf Italian students successfully with the public and the media, who for the most part had little or no expertise with the issues of educating Deaf people.

Bell took advantage of this national mood to make his case for deaf people to use speech. He argued, "it is important for the preservation of our national existence that the people of this country should speak one tongue" (National Education Association, 1885, p. 21). Bell undertook many activities to espouse his views. He wrote numerous articles, put on exhibitions demonstrating the speaking and lipreading abilities of deaf people, testified on behalf of the oral approach, began publication of the Volta Review (a staunchly oralist journal still in existence), and formed the American Association to Promote the Teaching of Speech to the Deaf (the present day Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf).

The exhibitions Bell put on were reminiscent of the one at the Milan Congress. Bell, a master showman, presented elaborate demonstrations of deaf people who could speak. In what was probably the case with the Milan exhibition, at one such demonstration, two of his students could hear well and had already acquired the ability to speak prior to becoming his students. Another one of his students on display was actually deaf, so he had her recite the Lord's prayer, which he shrewdly calculated would enable the audience to follow her recitation, even if her enunciation was not clear, because they already knew the words (Van Cleve & Crouch, 1989).

The results of the Milan Congress, as well as the quest by Alexander Graham Bell played on the mood of the United States at the time of the increasing immigrant entry. According to Leibowitz (1976), a review of the history of education in the United States illustrates that during the mid–1800s, official policy remained impartial in reference to the language of instruction in schools where predominantly non–English speakers were in attendance. Beginning with the 1880s, however, a noticeable shift in official policy was evident in the heavy emphasis on English as the language of instruction in schools. Leibowitz contends this move was due in large part to the crusade to bar new immigrants from educational privileges as well as other citizenship rights.[2] The growing resentment toward immigrants, thus, became a resentment of difference. Immigrants were "different," as were Deaf people.

Even though these efforts were centered on educational practices for deaf people, they threatened the demise of the adult Deaf community. Sign language was, after all, the necessary glue that bound them together. As dominant practices used the educational system as a tool to eradicate sign language and, thus, the Deaf community, the Deaf social movement responded by likewise using the education of Deaf people to preserve their cultural identity.

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[2]Leibowitz (1976) illustrates this practice on Native Americans. This period marked the establishment of boarding schools for Native American students located at a distance from reservations. As Leibowitz points out, this practice was designed to "separate the Indian [sic] child from his reservation and family, strip him [sic] of his tribal lore and mores . . . and prepare him in such a way that he would never return to his people" (p. 452). This practice was made possible due to the emphasis on English as a language of instruction: "English–language instruction and abandonment of the native language became complementary means to the end" (p. 452).

Preserving the Community

So important was sign language to the Deaf community that they were willing to compromise, rather than watch educational institutions convert to pure oralism. Compromise was perceived as a necessary step, since oral proponents were swiftly gaining momentum in the United States. Thus, some sign language advocates began pushing for the "combined system" to possibly reduce the polarization between the two camps. The proposed combined system referred to the provision of speech training for those who could benefit from it, in addition to instruction in sign language.[3]

This combined system was proposed by Edward Miner Gallaudet, the son of Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet. Edward Miner Gallaudet was well-respected by the Deaf community and, thus, an influential arbitrator. Gallaudet was able to sell the notion of the combined system to the Deaf community. The Deaf community then prepared a coalition to reverse the results of the Milan Congress of twenty years earlier. They were ready to offer the compromise of the combined system at the fourth International Congress on the Education and Welfare of the Deaf in Paris in 1900.

At the Milan Congress twenty years earlier, there had been only one Deaf representative. This time around, Deaf people were ready to comprise a large voting bloc. A large Deaf congregation was indeed in attendance at the fourth congress--there were over 200 Deaf people in contrast to over 100 hearing people

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[3]The combined system differs from today's widely used "simultaneous communication" which simultaneously combines the modalities of speech and sign language (Lou, 1988).

(Fay, 1900). However, their efforts to build a coalition were thwarted when a decision was reached a year before the conference to hold separate meetings for Deaf and hearing people. At the conference, a proposal was made to combine the two groups. This proposal was ruled out of order by the president, Dr. Ladreit de Lacharriere, a hearing man. His rationale was that the translations between speech and sign would be too confusing and time consuming (Lane, 1984).

However, because the Deaf-to-hearing delegate ratio was large, the possibility to reverse the Milan resolutions remained. Consequently, de Lacharriere ruled that Deaf people would not be allowed to even vote. The Congress rejected the resolutions from the Deaf section. In fact, the Congress rebuffed all recommendations to include the Deaf section in any way. As a result, the Congress succeeded in preserving the original Milan resolutions by rejecting the combined system. A further irony at the fourth Congress was that the membership attempted to pass resolutions to create sheltered workshops and organizations to "protect" deaf people because for instance, deaf women could not marry or enter the job market (p. 412). As Lane points out, these resolutions to "protect" deaf people directly contradicted the tenets of oralism that purportedly "restored" deaf people to society.

Despite the best efforts of the Deaf community, the oralists prevailed for the next sixty or so years. Although the oralists succeeded in banishing sign language, for the most part, from the classroom, the Deaf community persevered. During this time the movement continued its efforts to reinstate sign language in the classroom, but, for the most part the wellsprings of a Deaf community within

the educational system were blocked. The movement turned its attention to other matters. During this time period, the movement sought to preserve the right of deaf people to drive, battled discriminatory hiring practices, repudiated hearing aid dealers for fraudulent operations, and condemned deaf "peddlers" for giving the rest of the community a bad name (Gannon, 1981). Meanwhile, the increasing lack of access to the educational venue took its toll. The ban on sign language in the classroom paved the way toward decreasing numbers of deaf people in teaching and decision making positions. Deaf teachers declined from a peak of 42.5% in 1870 (J. Jones, 1918, p. 12) to 11.7% in 1961 (Doctor, 1962, p. 158). Of the meager number of Deaf teachers in the 1960s, most were teachers in manual trades (Lane, 1984, p. 371).

Oralism continued to dominate the education of deaf people until the late 1960s. By then, a number of factors made it possible for sign language to once again become a viable option in the instruction of deaf students. Educators were becoming disenchanted with oralism and its inadequate results (Lou, 1988). William C. Stokoe (1960) had also published ground-breaking research results that validated American Sign Language as an authentic language. Researchers were also presenting evidence indicating the superior academic achievements of Deaf children of Deaf parents as compared to Deaf children of hearing parents (Brasel & Quigley, 1977; Meadow, 1967; Stuckless & Birch, 1966; Vernon & Koh, 1970). Since most Deaf parents used sign language, it could be theorized that this factor was significant in their demonstrated superior academic competence.

However, it was not American Sign Language itself that was used as a language in classrooms. Rather, most educators adopted "total communication" policies, a descendant of the "combined system." Since total communication is a philosophy that espouses any and all modalities that best fit each individual child's needs, it became a practice to leave the determination of what constituted the best means of communication to each educator. Further, American Sign Language was perceived by many educators as an impoverished language in comparison to the English language. Thus, educators made it a practice to create an abundance of communication methodologies and invented sign systems that adopted the tenets of speech or the English language.

Accordingly, a number of invented sign systems were developed by educators who wanted to present a visual model of English for deaf children. The rationale being that since ASL did not follow the English grammatical structure, these sign systems were necessary to facilitate the learning of English by deaf children. Thus, all kinds of sign systems-- including Signing Essential English (SEE),[4] Linguistics of Visual English (LOVE), Signing Exact English II, Signed English, just to name a few--were deemed appropriate by educators.

These sign systems were yet another tool to defuse the Deaf community. For Deaf people, these sign systems often created confusion and frustration. The success of retaining these signs depended on memorization of a language that deaf children often did not even know yet. Further, these inventions were based on

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[4]Signing Exact English was later changed to Seeing Essential English because it avoided the reference to signing and was thus, presumably more attractive to hearing parents (Lou, 1988).

phonetic systems. For instance, "butterfly" became "butter" and "fly" which if evaluated for conceptual accuracy in ASL, would mean a piece of butter flying through the air.

These sign systems were also artificial and stilted, as one word could become several signs, for instance, "lovingly" became "love–ing–ly." Even though these systems were unnatural as well as difficult, proponents prevailed in the argument that this was the only way for deaf people to learn the English language. An additional problem was that because each school adopted whatever system they preferred, the system failed to encourage consistency in sign production or semantics. Sue Mather (1990), a Deaf researcher, warns that such inconsistency can create a "Tower of Deaf Babel." To illustrate her point, she pointed to the word "diet" which is normally fingerspelled by Deaf people. She noticed, however, that some teachers used the sign incorrectly, one signed it as "I am on a depression," and another signed it as "I am on a thin round pole" (p. 89).

After years of oral domination, bringing sign language back into the classroom via total communication--rather than resolving the age–old controversy--has continued to plaque the Deaf community. Thus, the Deaf social movement has continued to address issues that center around communication. However, educational institutions have been the mechanism that sustains these controversies, and consequently, keeps the Deaf social movement alive.

The Era of Social Engineering

Even when communication is not explicitly at issue, educational practices and social engineering efforts continue to stimulate the Deaf social movement. A

case in point is legislation, such as Public Law 94–142 to promote mainstreaming

for disabled and deaf children in public schools. Since mainstreaming is another

practice that is perceived by the Deaf social movement as antagonistic to the

interests of deaf students, Deaf people have rallied to preserve residential schools

for the deaf, as well as to condemn mainstreaming as a feasible option for all deaf

children.

Even though educational practices have been at the forefront of battles

waged by the dominant society and the Deaf social movement, the Deaf

community has also struggled to gain access to the public sphere. The Deaf

community strived to achieve civil rights in employment and accommodations to

public institutions. Deaf people, in a political move, allied with disabled groups,

to push through amendments: Sections 501, 502, 503, and 504 of the

Rehabilitation Act of 1973. These laws prohibited discrimination in institutions

receiving a certain amount of federal funding against deaf and disabled people, as

well as made provisions for "reasonable accommodation" in these establishments.[5]

This was an era in which deaf people also fought for their right to sit on

juries.[6] For years, and to some extent even today, courts have upheld decisions

to exclude deaf people from juries on the premise that an interpreter would violate

the restriction of a twelve–person jury, by constituting the thirteenth person.

Other arguments for refusing Deaf people jury duty were the use of a different

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[5]See Section 504 (1981) for further information.
[6]See Mentkowski (1985) for further information.

language. Similar acts were undertaken by deaf people to challenge other civil liberties that barred their access to the public sphere.

During this period also, deaf people sought access to the media. Captions on television came upon the scene only as recently as the 1970s and provided deaf people with access to a medium previously largely denied to them. With the advent of captions, deaf people also became more aware of what they had missed. As a result, many Deaf people protested at local stations of a television network that had resisted captioning their programs. Deaf people also became more cognizant of the inaccurate portrayals of Deaf characters in film and television. Consequently, actions were taken to boycott Voices, a film that had a hearing actress play the major role of a Deaf person. This and other endeavors to decry similar practices, although not always taken seriously by Hollywood, have increased the number of Deaf people playing Deaf roles: between 1970-1979, 33% of these roles were played by Deaf people; while, between 1980-1986, 75% of these roles were played by Deaf people (Schuchman, 1988, p. 96).

These endeavors to access the public sphere also corresponded to the desire to achieve influence over the educational practices of deaf students. Educational institutions were after all, the vehicle through which the Deaf community had gained prominence. Operations throughout history to control the communication practices of deaf people were achieved through the educational avenue. Accordingly, it should come as no surprise to see the Deaf community carry out its most successful movement--the Gallaudet protest--at the premier educational institution for deaf people throughout the world.

The Movement toward Deaf Ownership

The Gallaudet movement was significant in its symbolism of the years of struggle between the dominant society and the Deaf community. As an educational institution, Gallaudet served as the archetype for the Deaf community's search for a broader significance--the dispelling of the paternalistic control over Deaf people--by using the educational system as the medium. The previous battles over oralism versus sign language, and the various communication systems commenced primarily because the Deaf community did not have influence over decisions that affected them. The Gallaudet protest is illustrative of the struggle to install a Deaf president as a means to gain access to decision-making practices.

Although the Gallaudet movement symbolized Deaf ownership for Deaf people, Gallaudet represented much more to Deaf people than merely a center of higher education. Gallaudet's status as the world's only liberal arts college for deaf students, and its location in the capital of the United States, placed it as a model for other institutions. Further, that a Deaf person could take the helm of a large educational center sent the message that Deaf people across the country could also take over the decision making process at other schools for the deaf.

For the Deaf social movement, it was crucial that Deaf people play significant roles in the educational process for another reason. Deaf people, because they have considerable expertise in the Deaf experience, have a better understanding of the communication needs of the Deaf community. Consequently, Deaf people in positions of leadership at schools or programs for deaf students,

will be better able to push for the implementation of sign language instruction at the very least, and bilingual and bicultural instruction at the very most.

Accordingly, along with a steady increase in deaf superintendents and deaf board members in schools across the United States after the Gallaudet success, a gradual emergence in bilingual and bicultural education has become evident.[7] In the education of deaf people, a bilingual and bicultural program refers to the use of American Sign Language as a medium of instruction. Further, ASL and English are taught as two separate languages--ASL in everyday communication and English as a written modality. Deaf students are also taught to respect the differing cultures of Deaf and hearing people.

To date, bilingual and bicultural programs have been established at the Learning Center in Massachusetts, and the Indiana School for the Deaf. The Kendall Demonstration School for the Deaf, and the Model Secondary School for the Deaf retain their total communication policies, but at the beginning of the 1991–1992 school year, the faculty were "strongly encouraged to sign without voice and to use ASL in the classroom" ("Pre-college Teachers," 1991, p. 1).[8] Other schools are currently exploring similar changes in their communication

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[7]According to Jack R. Gannon (personal communication, December 5, 1991), who compiled the information as follows, the previous five to six years to the Gallaudet protest showed only four deaf and hard-of-hearing superintendents. In contrast, as of December 1991, there were twelve deaf and hard-of-hearing superintendents. Additionally, there were two deaf (or hard-of-hearing) directors of statewide programs (those having jurisdiction of more than one school for the deaf).

[8]So controversial is this approach, however, that even before the year was over, the dominant viewpoint holding that bilingualism is detrimental to the learning process of deaf children prevailed. As a result, these schools (KDES and MSSD) were directed to adhere to their total communication policy.

policies as well. These recent trends in the instruction of deaf students espouse a position closer to the heart of the Deaf movement.

Outside the educational system, the implications of the Gallaudet movement has created a more vocal demand for access to the public sphere as well. Local efforts in a number of states to protest inadequate 911 responses to deaf callers that resulted in deaths (e.g., Munoz, 1991), rallies to implement relay systems to enable deaf and hearing callers to communicate over the telephone, as well as coalition efforts with disabled groups to pass the Americans with Disabilities Act which bans discrimination on a wider scale than the previous legislative efforts, comprise much of the action after the protest.[9]

Even so, the Deaf social movement continues to flourish because Deaf people still do not have full access to public life. A poll of the Deaf community demonstrates that a overwhelming majority--98%--do not believe that Deaf people have yet achieved equal rights in the United States ("Readers' Viewpoint," 1988, p. 31). One respondent acknowledged that Gallaudet was a "huge jump in the right direction," but that hearing people needed "desperately to be educated about the Deaf community by the Deaf community, so that barriers of prejudice & [sic] discrimination can be knocked down & the doors of opportunity can be opened" to the Deaf community (p. 31).

The American Deaf community, thus, continues to move toward the goal of equal access. However, because the pervasiveness of the struggle between members of the dominant society and the Deaf community over the most

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[9]See McCrone (1991) for more information.

appropriate educational practices for deaf people has so placed the Deaf social movement within the center of the educational system, the movement has for the most part focused on this struggle. Although the Deaf social movement has attended to other issues relating to Deaf civil rights, no other struggle has been so instrumental in fostering a community of Deaf people and of sustaining their movement over the years. It is, thus, appropriate that this dissertation examines the ideological war created within the educational system and its broader societal implications, that has permeated the Deaf community for more than a century.

CHAPTER 3

The Struggle Begins

The contemporary social movement of Deaf people in America has its

roots in the historical struggles between the dominant society and Deaf people.

The early years of the Deaf social movement contain ideological contrasts

between the dominant society's characterization of deaf people and Deaf people's

redefining of themselves.[1] The tensions in these historical moments illustrate the

ideological struggle between a society attempting to dominate and a particular

group resisting these attempts. So pervasive are the ideological struggles of their

time that they remain the basis of today's Deaf social movement. Therefore, an

examination of the historical moments is an appropriate beginning to understand

the ongoing ideological conflict between society and the Deaf community.

A focus on beginnings will reveal the construction of a stigma of

difference that often denotes an ideological struggle between oppressors and the

oppressed. For Deaf people, this difference is not immediately evident as Deaf

people do not appear visibly different from non-Deaf people. It is even likely

that Deaf people could assimilate into society without much notice. However, to

be Deaf in most instances, demands a different mode of communication--a rather

obvious behavioral difference. It is to this difference that society reacts. After

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[1]Social movements are not monolithic and all face internal tensions in addition to struggling with the dominant society. Such tensions are natural and inevitable. Thus, social movements often expend much energy on unifying the membership amidst internal divisions. The Deaf social movement also has its share of internal divisions among members. The focus in this dissertation on the struggle with the dominant society is not intended to minimize these internal tensions. Some of these internal struggles will be illuminated in another chapter.

all, most people use speech to communicate. As such, the dominant society has created an ideology of normality that posits speaking and hearing as normal. To maintain the norm, society has resorted to dividing practices to alternately switch between placing Deaf people out of sight or within the mainstream of society. By isolating Deaf people from society, the signifying feature of Deaf people—their sign language—is not so noticeable. Even when mainstreaming presupposes the acceptance of Deaf people, sign language is frequently discouraged.

Although dividing practices are intended to reduce the signifying features of Deaf people in order to maintain the norm, they have the opposite effect. Deaf people react by resisting efforts to alter or even eradicate their sign language. In fact, the more dividing practices attempt to eliminate sign language, the more strongly Deaf people resist. Thus, sign language binds Deaf people together and ultimately serves to sustain a community of, by, and for Deaf people.

The Roots of Community: Responding to the Ideology of Normality

The central role of sign language in the Deaf community came about in response to the dominant society's strategic isolation of Deaf people from the mainstream. This early stage of the Deaf social movement can be referred to as the "period of inception" (Griffin, 1952, p. 186). The period of inception is usually the stage that sets the movement in motion. Rather than being an organized collectivity striving to make social changes that characterize a social movement, this early stage of the Deaf social movement represented a building of community as a symbolic response to the dividing practices of the dominant society.

This building of community by Deaf people not only turned their rejection by society into a positive force that empowered Deaf people, but also enabled them to set up the foundation for a social movement. This need for community and for what would become a social movement was inadvertently encouraged by the dominant enactment of the ideology of normality.

To illustrate the tensions between dominant and dominated, I will discuss the rhetorical processes that the dominant society has developed to define normality and to sustain the definition. I will then examine the strategies used by Deaf people in response to the ideology of normality and how these strategies enabled the establishment of community.

The Dominant Ideology of Normality

Social movements that respond to dominant strategies of oppression usually originate from the society which oppresses. Leland Griffin (1966) explains: "Movements begin when some pivotal individual or group—suffering attitudes of alienation in a given social system, and drawn (consciously or unconsciously) by the impious dream of a mythic Order—enacts, gives voice to, a No" (p. 462). An examination of the Deaf social movement and the emergence of their rhetorical "No," necessitates a study of the origins of the movement in the late nineteenth century.

The central rhetorical practice through which the dominant society contextualizes Deaf people is the strategy of normality.[2] Normality is a set of practices that surround a material characteristic with the common attributes of the dominant society. The concept of normality carries comfort for many people because it authorizes the familiar. The unfamiliar generates fear because it stresses the unknown. People thus, revere normality because it does not require them to change their daily habits. Normality then becomes an important feature to be maintained. Accordingly, the dominant society develops rhetorical mechanisms to sustain the familiar by controlling the power to define normality.

Dominant groups who sustain normality, also maintain their social position. In examining the ideology of normality as it imposes its power over Deaf people, I will study several facets. First, by using Foucault's explanation of the rhetorical construct of normality, I will demonstrate how this process creates "abnormality" and consequently, sustains the power of the dominant. Second, I will illustrate how the strategy of normality is carried further to become a rhetorical basis for the social practice of treatment. The rhetoric of normality gives rise to languages of condemnation and correction. Finally, I will discuss how sign language—the material sign of the "abnormality" of Deaf people—becomes a symbol through which the degradation of Deaf people and the rejection of Deaf people from full participation in society is legitimized.

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[2] The term "strategy" in this dissertation does not indicate the "conscious" intentionality of either the dominant society or the Deaf social movement to conspire against the other group. Rather, strategy is used to refer to the natural phenomenon that emerges as the dominant society and the Deaf social movement struggle constantly to control and to resist.

The rhetorical constructs of "normality" and "abnormality" are strategies to establish a hierarchy that places the "normal" in the superior position. The ideology of "normality" is actually an abstraction created by the dominant society. Foucault (1966/1970) explains that "normality" is a rhetorical construct created to legitimize its definition and to further maintain control over a group by rhetorical enforcement. As such, society elevates common characteristics shared by large numbers of people and, thus, constitutes and legitimizes the establishment of a norm. The norm is, then, used to define the "normal." What was previously arbitrary becomes a defining characteristic. A categorization of normality likewise defines those who do not fit into the category--those who do not conform--as "abnormal."

The ideology of normality is so pervasive that enforcing it in a society is no more difficult than labelling any deviance from the norm a "defect." Commonalities are, thus, sanctioned and differences condemned. As such, normality is a strategy to maintain the status quo and in turn generates a language of domination.

A society's strategy of normality easily moves from domination to languages of condemnation and correction. Foucault (1975/1977) notes, in tracing the discourse of deviance that historically dominant societies have to "punish" the "deviant," and agents of the human sciences in these societies have committed themselves to "correct" the "defect."

As the nineteenth century came to terms with difference, the strategy of normality spread through rhetorical practices into the domination, condemnation,

and correction of Deaf people. One such practice was to label Deaf people "mentally deficient." This perception of Deaf people as "mentally deficient," or more commonly "dumb," stems from as far back as 355 B. C. when Aristotle (1910) said of Deaf people: "Men [sic] that are deaf are in all cases also dumb; that is, they can make vocal sounds, but they cannot speak" (p. 7). In the earlier days, the Greek word for "dumb" also meant "speechless," and did not necessarily indicate one's mental ability (Bender, 1970). Modern English adopted Aristotle's statement to literally mean that Deaf people were "dumb." This is illustrated in the statement that: "those who are born deaf all become senseless and incapable of reason" (Hodgson, 1954, p. 62). By the eighteenth century, the enlightenment's elevation of mental reasoning transformed "dumb" into "sub-human." In the words of a Swiss doctor, "What stupidity we find in most of these unfortunate deaf! How little they differ from animals!" (cited in Amman, 1700/1873, p. 2).

By labelling Deaf people as a lesser species, the dominant society constituted Deaf people as beings that could not adequately care for themselves, thus, authorizing society to undertake that responsibility. It then became society's task to devise ways of improving the status of Deaf people as human beings. Rhetorically, this became efforts to correct the "defect."

The strategy of definition and dehumanization thus paved the way for the practice of correction. At the very extreme, this rhetoric authorized the actual experimentation on Deaf people to correct their sense of hearing. For example, Meneire reported that Itard, a French doctor, thought nothing of performing numerous experiments on Deaf students, including applying electricity into their

ears, placing leeches on their necks, and other such monstrosities, which often resulted in serious infections, not to mention several accidents and deaths. Although Meneire himself did not condone such torturous practices, he justified the need for correction:

> 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. (cited in Lane, 1984, p. 134)

In the logic of correction, the best way to "correct" the "defect" was for Deaf people to gain the sense of hearing. If Deaf people could hear, then they would be "normal" like the dominant culture.

Accompanying strategies to correct the sense of hearing, were methods to teach Deaf people to speak. The ability to use the dominant mode of communication would normalize Deaf people. As Pereire, one of the foremost advocates of teaching speech to Deaf people, promised: "There will be no more deaf-mutes. There will be deaf speaking ones" (cited in Bender, 1970, p. 77). Consider Pearse's (1912) narrative of the teaching method:

> The teacher utters a sound or a word; the child is led to try to imitate, and use his [sic] own organs of speech. He has difficulty; the teacher illustrates again, and again he tries. . . . He is shown in utmost detail and with infinite repetition how every organ of speech must act to produce the sounds which make up spoken language. . . . His voice, at first unnatural and artificial as though squeaked out by a machine, becomes more and more nearly natural, and by the time he passes the grades of the elementary school he shows very little, by his voice, that he cannot hear. (pp. 1-2)

The tacit background of Pearse's description is the child's natural desire to speak. The method is built on the imitation of the superior teachers normal speech. Pearse describes an exacting effort to "correct" the "defect." Rhetorically, the

goal is established: Not until Deaf people transform their "unnatural and artificial" speech into the "nearly natural" can a Deaf person almost pass for normal.

The elevation of speech as the normal mode of communication--"the only way of restoring the deaf-mute to society" was to "give him [sic] the power of conversing like hearing persons"--denigrated sign language as abnormal (cited in Hartmann, 1881, p. 125). The attack on sign language was overt, it was demeaned as "violent and spasmodic miming, [in] which [Deaf people] can at best simply establish their kinship with the famous primates" (cited in Lane, 1984, p. 409). Pearse (1912), who had described his teaching of speech so carefully, labelled Deaf people who used sign language as "freaks" and "dummies," comparable to dogs who were trained to perform only for their masters (p. 2).

Sign language became a central symbol to maintain the dominance of the hearing society. The aural and visual separation of Deaf people from hearing people was an obvious material characteristic. The performance of sign language performed the separation and, thus, sign language became the symbol for the difference between Deaf people and the dominant society. Since sign language represented the difference, the dominant society assumed the right to rhetorically construct the abnormality.

By constructing abnormality, the dominant society was able to transform rhetoric into the institutional and structural oppression of Deaf people. In the words of a Deaf man who proposed the establishment of a separate Deaf state, Deaf people were "contemned [sic], spurned, degraded and abhorred" by hearing

people (Flournoy, 1856, p. 124). This rhetorical condemnation of Deaf people in early America made it possible to shun Deaf people from the mainstream of society.

Consequently, Deaf people were placed together, out of sight, into residential schools. Foucault (1975/1977) calls this technique "dividing practices," a reference to the division of people from others, or a division within oneself. These dividing practices segregated Deaf people together in residential schools, or what at the time was called "asylums." By keeping "abnormal" people out of sight and in turn out of mind, society could live in a world of "normal" people.

Creating Community: Reversing the Hierarchy of Dominance

By segregating Deaf people from society, the dominant culture inadvertently gave rise to a form of separatism that Deaf people turned to their advantage. Since Deaf people were not welcome in the dominant public sphere, they created the concept of a Deaf community, or what they at the time called "a class" or "common community" of Deaf people (e.g., Flournoy, 1856; Rider, 1877). The evolvement of a separate sphere for Deaf people enabled them to build community on their own terms.

The response of the Deaf community to the charge of "abnormality" demonstrates how social movements can turn the symbol of their oppression into a symbol of unity. Sign language became the distinction that gave dignity to the Deaf community and transformed the "abnormal" into the "distinguished" by creating a reversal of the hierarchy. The reversal of hierarchy in turn, established the stature of their distinction and enabled the community to create its own

institutions. This structural development provided the community with space in which to create their own discourse and to define normality on their own terms.

The linguistic power provided by sign language reversed the hierarchy by destroying the primary stereotype of Deaf people. Society had determined that Deaf people were not capable of thought or using language to convey thought, thus, defining them as sub-human. Sign language made it possible for Deaf people to communicate in order to think and to express their thoughts. Thus, sign language made Deaf people intellectually "normal."

This demonstration in turn, transformed the reversal into a source of unity. The strategy was to turn their mastery of sign language into an integral part of their community. In this way, sign language served to bind Deaf people together as a "class." Flournoy (1858) aptly expresses this sentiment:

> We are not beasts, for all our deafness! We are MEN! [sic] The Era of De l'Epee has been the epocha [sic] of our birth of mind. After a long night of wandering, our planet has at length attained an orbit around a central luminary. (pp. 149–150)

The significance of sign language was that it permitted Deaf people to be both the same and different from the dominant society. By declaring themselves to be people—to be more than beasts—Deaf people could place themselves on an equal plane to the rest of society. However, sign language would continue to be the feature that distinguished Deaf people from hearing people. The "central luminary" represented sign language. And since sign language was central only in the Deaf community, Flournoy could only arrive "home" in this community. As such, Flournoy's "central luminary" symbolized sign language as the salvation of

Deaf people, as well as the centrality of sign language as the bonding factor of the Deaf community.

The elevation of sign language as a binding factor of the Deaf community was especially significant for Deaf people born to hearing families.[3] Such Deaf children did not share the communication mode used by their families. And if Deaf children were not provided with opportunities to develop and express their thoughts, it would be extremely likely that they shared with Flournoy the sense of feeling lost. As Flournoy declared, sign language provided such an opportunity.

Since Deaf people were segregated together in residential schools and even encouraged to use sign language, it very quickly became a cherished part of their daily lives. Further, because sign language was shared primarily with other Deaf people, and not the dominant society, this difference drew Deaf people closer together. And this difference fostered the growth of a self–governed Deaf community.

Reversal implied more than simple appreciation of sign language within the Deaf community. Since society did not value sign language as a communication commodity the way Deaf people did, it would also be necessary for Deaf people to create a hierarchy that would publicly declare the highest order to sign language. Accordingly, social organizations founded by Deaf people, such as the New England Gallaudet Association of Deaf–Mutes, celebrated this

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[3]Approximately 90–95% of Deaf children are born to hearing parents (Rainer & Deming, 1963, p. 16; Schein & Delk, 1974, pp. 35–36). That figure may even be higher, according to I. K. Jordan and Karchmer (1986): "only about 4 percent . . . have two deaf parents; an even smaller percentage have one hearing impaired and one normally hearing parent" (p. 137).

hierarchy. The language of their constitution employed the term "mute" throughout, including a reference to "our mute community," an allusion to Deaf people who did not speak (Chamberlain, 1857, p. 79). Under the terms of requirements for membership, the first section determined that "mute" people could join. The second section added that "only deaf" people or those who "have never been in any institution for deaf–mutes," in reference to speaking deaf people, could also become members (p. 81). It was not until later that hearing people were mentioned. They were however, not invited to join, rather their status was relegated to the invitation to subscribe to their periodicals.

That there was a need to distinguish between "mutes," "only deaf" people, and hearing people is significant. These differences centered primarily around the use of sign language. Deaf people who used sign language illuminated a stronger Deaf identity than those who did not. Although "only deaf" people were allowed to join the social organizations, Deaf people still felt the need to establish separate categories of "mute" and "only deaf" people. This illustrates the perception of the difference between the two groups of Deaf people. Further, the order in which the categorizations appeared is enlightening. The position of "mutes" in the constitution gave rise to the establishment of a hierarchy that gave the highest order to signing Deaf people. As such, deaf people who spoke were placed in the middle, and hearing people at the bottom of the hierarchy. This hierarchy exalted in the Deaf community was in direct contrast to the dominant social order.

At the fourth International Congress of the Deaf in 1900, the hierarchy created by Deaf people was further strengthened in the rhetoric of a Deaf leader.

James L. Smith, the sixth president of the National Association of the Deaf (NAD), addressed the Deaf section which had been excluded from participation in all decisions that would affect them:

> There are in our days cases where the consent of the governed is ignored. . . . The deaf–mutes [sic] protest in vain. Our petitions addressed to governments signed by deaf–mutes receive no response, our resolutions at national and international congresses in favor of the method [sign language] are ignored. . . . The deaf–mutes are in a better position to be judges of these matters than are the hearing. They can feel what it is to be deaf–mute, what it is to have only a single method available to them, to be constantly blocked in their legitimate demands. (cited in Gaillard & Jeanvoine, 1900, pp. 333–334)

The statement that the dominant society did not listen to Deaf people was an assertion that Deaf people lacked power within the dominant hierarchy. Smith further pointed out that hearing people could not adequately represent the concerns of the Deaf community because they had never experienced being Deaf. Smith went on to say that only Deaf people could determine what their best interests were. Smith's declaration that Deaf people had more experience in being Deaf than did hearing people placed Deaf people in the superior position. In so doing, he reversed the structural hierarchy, thus, granting power to Deaf people. However, a reversal of the hierarchy could not function in the dominant society. It was, then, necessary to create their own world, a separate one from that of the dominant society. In this new world, Deaf people would be in control of their destinies. Smith enticed his audience with this possibility, by calling for: "all present to join together to affirm a new declaration of human rights, the right of the deaf to life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness, and the assurance that a good system of education must have the consent of those for whom it has been

developed" (cited in Gaillard & Jeanvoine, 1900, p. 336). The call for the creation of a new social order came with the despair that Deaf people would ever achieve the democratic ideals espoused in the Declaration of Independence. Only by creating their own declaration, on their terms could they achieve true equality. The dominant society's exclusion of Deaf people from determining their own best interests helped sustain and foster the concept of a Deaf community. The marginalization of Deaf people by the dominant, thus, constituted a form of "separatism."

Creating Community: Linguistic Ties into Social Institutions

The symbolic reversal of a hierarchy through sign language led, in turn to legitimizing of new social structures including Deaf marriage and "family," organizations established for Deaf people, and publications that furthered the growing network of Deaf people. Prior to the advent of residential schools, Deaf people had little opportunity to marry other Deaf people; however, the congregation of Deaf people in schools fostered an environment in which sign language became so integral to the Deaf community that it was further sustained by the institution of intra-marriages. Marriages between Deaf people maintained the hierarchy by affirming the importance of marital unions as places of discourse.

A study of marriage patterns among Deaf people gives support to the bonding role of sign language in keeping Deaf marriages intact. Edward Allen Fay (1896) found that out of a total of 4,471 couples, an astounding 95% of Deaf people married each other. Further, mixed couple marriages (Deaf and hearing) were three times as likely to end in divorce than were Deaf marriages. Since

marriages between Deaf people were likely sites for the maintenance of sign language, it is highly likely that Deaf marriages received greater support within the Deaf community than did mixed marriages. In turn, Deaf marriages strengthened the Deaf community by giving credence to sign language and to the community itself.

Further, Deaf people sought to expand on the institution of marriage and the central role of the family in American society at the time. Deaf people, however, constituted their own concept of "family." The "family" of Deaf people was metaphorically and literally constructed to symbolize the ownership of all deaf children, even those not related by blood ties. Smith, exemplified this symbolic ownership when he declared the right of Deaf people to determine the educational goals of deaf children in his address to the Deaf congregation at the fourth international congress.

Since Deaf people were superior to hearing parents within the Deaf hierarchy and in terms of their experiences as "Deaf children now grown up," Deaf adults often waged a battle for the ownership of deaf children. This struggle, that continues today, was also a strategy for community building.[4] Since most deaf children eventually joined the Deaf community, it was to the advantage of the Deaf community to recruit deaf children at the earliest opportunity in order to

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[4]That Deaf adults contribute to the welfare of all Deaf children is illustrated in a recent rally held by Deaf people and advocates outside a court building in New Jersey. A judge ordered placement for the two year old Deaf child whose Deaf parents had been murdered, with her hearing relatives in Poland. The Deaf community contended that through their unique Deaf network, Deaf Polish people had told them that educational standards were lacking in Poland. In addition, the family the little girl was placed with, although her "blood" family," were all hearing and thus, not the best placement for her (Bartelli, 1991).

accustom the child to the Deaf identity. The preparation of deaf children for entrance into the Deaf community would thereby preserve sign language and strengthen the hierarchy within the Deaf community.

Deaf people also continued to build community in their establishment of social organizations, which began with the New England Gallaudet Association of Deaf-Mutes in 1854. This initiated a trend toward the formation of social organizations and clubs at primarily local levels, organized and run by Deaf people. Henry Rider (1877), a president of a local organization, noted the importance of these institutions as places for discourse: "to us, [social organizations are] what the oases of the Great Desert are to famishing travelers" (p. 251). Indeed, sign language had so deeply drawn Deaf people together that they were constantly seeking ways to create more opportunities to bond together.

Deaf people so cherished their community that they wanted to establish a formal network in which they could not only maintain contact with each other, but also expand their circle of Deaf acquaintances. Accordingly, the notion of publications operated and disseminated by Deaf people became a significant instrument for the maintenance of Deaf discourse.[5] Such publications were either

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[5]The publications of Deaf people were based on written English. However, as Derrida (1974/1976) argues, the written text is a separate code from speech. Although the written document may be based on the same linguistic structure as speech, writing requires from the author different skills than does speech from the speaker. This phenomenon is illuminated in many speech communities which do not have an equivalent written form, such as the Navajo who speak in Navajo and write in English (Saville-Troike, 1989). Thus, the assumption that written English is a form of "recorded" speech is merely a normalizing strategy to perpetuate the superiority of speech.

Further, Derrida argues for the superiority of written text as "enduring," versus that of speech as "ephemeral." Even so, as Hitler has pointed out, people are moved more by the spoken word, rather than the written word and most movements are stimulated by great speakers, rather than writers (Duncan, 1962). In this vein, the Deaf community revered sign language in face to face communication. However, in order to maintain opportunities for discourse and to record events conducted in sign language, written documents in English were needed.

run by independent Deaf owners or organizations, or were sponsored by residential schools. The residential school periodicals became so popular that they were fondly dubbed "The Little Paper Family."

Publications were an important strategy for strengthening the community. Since Deaf people were scattered demographically, the publications ensured that Deaf people were kept informed of events and news in the Deaf community. By keeping Deaf people informed of social events, the Deaf community could increase the chances of larger attendance. Spreading the news of happenings to other Deaf people also ensured that they kept in touch. The announcement of Deaf people in certain occupations increased the possibilities of support from other Deaf people. As such, the publications were a way for Deaf people to take pride in their community, to expand their social and networking horizons, and most importantly, to maintain their ties to each other.

Strengthening Community by Responding to Attack

The first stage of the Deaf social movement belonged primarily to the "period of inception" which is the stage that usually serves as a prelude to a movement (Griffin, 1952, p. 186). Deaf people responded to their condemnation and rejection by heralding sign language and turning their difference into a symbol of their unity. Their strategic building of community as places of discourse was allowed to nurture in relative isolation until their endeavors began to interfere with normalization.

The dominant society reacted to the unity of the Deaf community by shifting rhetorical strategies in order to maintain control over Deaf people. In

turn, the Deaf community was compelled to create new strategies to accommodate the change in dominance.

To illustrate the rhetorical processes that set the Deaf social movement in place, I will first discuss the dominant society's attempt to integrate Deaf people into society by prohibiting sign language and establishing communication as a method; then, I will discuss the response from the Deaf community which includes two primary approaches to strengthen unity: to respond directly to the attack, and to symbolically reinforce the community.

The Attack on the Deaf Community

The placement of deaf people in residential schools as a means to isolate them from society backfired when this approach paved the way to the self-determination of Deaf people. The segregation of Deaf people had not simply kept them out of sight, but had actually enabled them to create their own community in which sign language and institutional foundations were turned into positive achievements.

Dominant discourses then switched gears to strategies of integrating Deaf people under the guise of normalization. Integration is invariably perceived as a symbol of American democracy by many members of the dominant society. Inherent in the argument for integration is the masking of differences. The argument that the dominant society is "color blind" or does not attend to any other differences, lends credibility to the tenets of the American motto, "one nation under God." As such, the convictions of the "democratic" prototype are presented

as strictly honorable goals. Under these auspices, the rhetoric of integration is introduced as a respectable endeavor that befits American democratic ideals.

To study the process by which society presents integration as a symbol of American democracy for Deaf people, I will focus on integration as a strategy of normality. The definition of normality carries over to integration. By declaring integration as a normal endeavor of American society, the dominant culture constitutes integration as a legitimate goal for everyone. And if integration is normal, then segregation is abnormal. The definition of integration is, then, a normalizing strategy that transforms into maintained oppression.

In examining the normalizing power of integration, I will study several facets. First, I will discuss how speech is legitimized as a symbol of normality and presented as a goal for integration. Since sign language does not represent normality, it becomes a symbol of abnormality and segregation. Second, I will illustrate that rhetoric furthers the prohibition of sign language by presenting communication as an educational "method" for Deaf people. Third, I will discuss how Alexander Graham Bell helped to transform the rhetoric of normality into institutional goals of oralism and integration.

Inherent in the strategy of normalization is the desire to control Deaf people. One predominant approach has been to control the communication of Deaf people under the pretext of integrating Deaf people into society. The second International Congress of the Deaf that convened in 1880 serves as a case in point. The congress in Milan determined that speech alone would be the mode of communication Deaf people would use. The following resolutions were passed:

1. The Convention, considering the incontestable superiority of speech over signs, (1) for restoring deaf–mutes to social life, (2) for giving them greater facility of language, declares that the method of articulation should have preference over that of signs in the instruction and education of the deaf and dumb.

2. Considering that the simultaneous use of signs and speech has the disadvantage of injuring speech and lipreading and precision of ideas, the Convention declares that the pure oral method ought to be preferred. (reprinted in Gallaudet, 1881, pp. 5–6)

By creating resolutions such as these at the Milan Congress and other discourse practices that maintain the superiority of speech over sign language, the dominant culture also reaffirms their supremacy. In fact, the prevailing theme of the Milan Congress was that Deaf people could not be considered normal unless they adopted the language and culture of the dominant society. As a participant at the Congress declared, speech was the "Queen" who "tolerates no rivals . . . she renounces all . . ." (cited in Lane, 1984, p. 393). The closing shout from the podium at the congress was "Vive la parole!" which translates into "Long live speech!" (p. 394). These statements marginalize sign language and herald speech, which thereby enables the dominant society to maintain the power structure and preserve their interests.

By positing speech as the necessary attribute with which to enter the public sphere, the dominant culture assures the inferior status of Deaf people. To ensure that Deaf people do not disrupt the status quo, it is necessary for the dominant society to govern the lives of Deaf people. Thus, participants at the Milan Congress, were able to grant themselves permission to control Deaf people by declaring themselves the caretakers of the education of Deaf students. The rhetorical strategies that enable the dominant society to constitute their power

while marginalizing Deaf people, also give license to the dominant culture to define terms of access to "their" society.

The Milan resolutions also illuminated "dividing practices" by employing the rhetoric of method. The Congress stipulated that "the **method** [emphasis added] of articulation should have preference over that of signs in the instruction and education of the deaf and dumb." By using the language of "method," rather than "communication," the dominant society establishes the notion that communication is a tool that can be used for instructional purposes. Because educational attainment is a viable and laudable goal of American democracy, a method takes precedence over communication. If a method can help normalize a group of people, then it is more important than communication, especially if it is perceived as a primarily social entity.

The language of method also gives rise to competition by presenting communication as a series of choices. In doing so, the dominant society imposes "dividing practices" by pitting speech against sign language. Since speech has been defined as a normal trait in contrast to sign language, the superiority of speech as a method is validated. Further, by positioning speech as the "method," educators are given the authority to enforce it in the classroom. Speech as method then becomes a tool for education, and therefore, integration. The establishment of "communication as method" became so widespread that it

evolved into the "war of methods" that remains today and has served to divide not only Deaf people from hearing people, but Deaf people from Deaf people.[6]

The Milan Congress also gave authority to dominant discourses by documenting resolutions to abolish sign language. By doing so, the Milan Congress paved the way for oralism in America. The passed resolutions gave legitimacy to oralist advocates such as Alexander Graham Bell, and to the oral schools already established in the United States as "experiments." By giving rise to dominant discourses that conferred status on speech and other characteristics representing the dominant culture, sign language and other non-dominant features were effectively pathologized.

Although the resolutions of the Milan Congress stipulated the goal of oralism as that of integrating Deaf people into society, the wider American society remained for the most part ignorant of the existence of a community of Deaf people.

Alexander Graham Bell (1883) made it his mission to alert the American people of what he perceived to be a growing trend toward separatism. Shortly after the Milan Congress, Bell posed the Deaf community as a situation of "great calamity to the world" (p. 41). He claimed that society was condoning the spread of "a defective race of human beings" by allowing Deaf people to: socialize primarily with each other, establish their own organizations, publish their own newspapers, and marry each other which leads to the birth of more Deaf children

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[6]So pervasive is this phenomenon that a deeper focus will commence in another chapter of this dissertation.

(p. 41). In doing so, he introduced a "threat" that must be treated as a "crisis" by the social order.

This "predicament," was however, "treatable." Bell proposed "preventive measures" which included: the establishment of smaller schools and day schools, ideally, with one Deaf child in each school; co-education with hearing children, which he acknowledged might be impracticable, suggesting, instead, partial co-education; instruction given through the ear; and instruction in articulation and speechreading (Bell, 1883). The utmost goal should be "integration" of Deaf people to enable the "retention of the normal environment during the period of education" (p. 46). To achieve these ends, it would also be necessary to eliminate Deaf teachers who produce "an environment that is unfavorable to the cultivation of articulation and speech-reading" (p. 48).

Bell presented the problem of Deaf separatism as inimical to the interests of society. Through the rhetoric of integration, Bell quite overtly spoke for the destruction of the power structure growing within the Deaf community and a return of the power to the patriarchal society. In this vein, Alexander Graham Bell's arguments corresponded to the "one nation under God" theme of the United States. Not only did schools for the Deaf begin to adopt the oral approach in lieu of sign language, but by the 1920s, more and more day schools and classes had been established, paving the way toward an "integration" of Deaf people into society. In 1882, only 7.5% of schools were oral only (Fay, 1882, p. 53), by 1919, 80% were (Van Cleve & Crouch, 1989, p. 122). The number of Deaf

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teachers also plummeted from a peak of 42.5% in 1870 to 14.5% in 1917 (J. Jones, 1918, p. 12).

Strengthening Community: Creating Political Space for Discourse

Deaf people were becoming increasingly concerned about the efforts of Alexander Graham Bell and his associates to fuel the growth of oralism. Deaf people had come to cherish their way of life and were not about to stand by while the movement to eradicate sign language spread. Sign language represented their very being and most importantly, it was their salvation on the road toward self–determination. Accordingly, Deaf people strategized to preserve their sign language and thwart the efforts of oralist advocates.

In examining the rhetorical processes of the Deaf community in their response to the attack, I will discuss the movement toward political activism. Deaf people sought to strengthen their community by adopting rhetorical strategies to symbolize self–governance, and based on these strategies, to establish a political organization as a site for discourse and networking.

One of the first responses to the attack by the dominant society was to build up a site specifically for political discourse. At the first National Convention of Deaf–Mutes at which the National Association of Deaf–Mutes (NAD) was formed in 1880, delegates convened to collaborate on "interests peculiar to ourselves which can be taken care of by ourselves" (cited in Gannon, 1981, p. 62). The NAD provided the space for political discourse to ward off the threat to their community. In addition, the NAD gave legitimacy to the movement because of its institutional status. The capability of Deaf people to create a

political institution symbolized their competence in self-governance, as well as a force the dominant society would have to contend with.

To demonstrate their power as a political entity, the NAD adopted several rhetorical strategies. One such strategy was to foster their distinction by celebrating their "muteness." Even though the spread of oralism had prompted many educators to pursue the removal of the term, "mute" from institutions because it served as a contradiction to the goal of oralism, the NAD did not drop the term until their third convention in 1889 (Gannon, 1981).

In view of the imposition of speech on their community, it was likely that Deaf people cherished the term because it symbolized the unique status of sign language in their community. Perusals of earlier films show that most Deaf people while signing, kept their lips closed, not moving them at all. Thus, the significance of retaining the term, "mute" in their organizational name was a political strategy to exemplify the defiance of oralism.

The NAD also adopted the tradition of the rhetorical strategy evident in the emphasis on the "of, by, and for" or simply "of," that was begun by the New England Gallaudet Association. To use "for" in the organizational name denotes the "helping" mind-set. The emphasis on the use of "of, by, and for" was also a political statement that signified their competency in self-governance. The rhetorical intent was carried over into practice. So pervasive was the statement as a symbol of Deaf empowerment that hearing people were excluded from membership in the organization until 1964.

Strengthening Community: Symbols of Confinement

Not only did Deaf people respond to the attack on their community by creating rhetorical strategies in a political context, they also endeavored to strengthen their community by enacting symbols that represented their oppression as well as sign language as their salvation.

By examining the response of the Deaf community to the attack by the integrationists, I will first illustrate how the rhetoric of crucifixion came to represent confinement as a symbol of oppression for Deaf people. Second, I will discuss the significance of sign language as the salvation of Deaf people as they took action to preserve it in case the advent of oralism either eradicated sign language, or drastically altered it into an unrecognizable form.

The theme of "crucifixion" was a direct response to the desire of the dominant structure to dominate the Deaf "body" by "fixing" it. As Foucault (1975/1977) points out, the body is the object of a "political field" (p. 25). Foucault explains that "power relations have an immediate hold upon it [the body]; they invest it, mark it, train it, torture it, force it to carry out tasks, to perform ceremonies, to emit signs" (p. 25). And the ultimate goal is not the transformation of the body, rather it is "increased domination" (p. 138). Accordingly, the rhetoric of crucifixion was a strategy by Deaf people to create a powerful symbol of their oppression.

During an era in which religion played one of the most significant, if not the most pivotal, roles in American lifestyles, the Christian symbol exuded a

powerful appeal.[7] Consequently, the metaphor of crucifixion was adopted in response to events at the fourth Congress, where Deaf and hearing people were separated into two sections and no space was given for Deaf input on their own fate. Smith addressed the Deaf section: "Let us declare to the entire world that the deaf will not be crucified on the cross of a single method" (cited in Gaillard & Jeanvoine, 1900, p. 336). This statement captures several important sentiments held by Deaf people. Smith's assertion suggests themes of persecution, confinement, and salvation.

The persecution theme is illustrated in the biblical references which subliminally create a visual image of Deaf people hung up on a cross. This feeling of persecution is overtly described by Albert Ballin (1930):

> I resented having my lessons hurled at me. It seemed as if all the words, for which I never cared a tinker's damn, were invented for the sole purpose of harassing and tormenting me. . . . How I hated my teacher, my school, the whole creation. (p. 2)

Implicitly or explicitly, the theme of persecution symbolized Deaf people suffering for the sins of hearing people who tortured Deaf people by imposing on them the oral modality and taking away their salvation—sign language.

The crucifixion motif captures the confinement theme by representing the powerlessness of the hands. Deaf people cherished their hands which provided them their primary means of communication. The binding of hands for Deaf people was therefore the equivalent of taping the mouths of hearing people.

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[7]William Jennings Bryan, a masterful rhetor and four–time presidential candidate also made excellent use of this strategy. One of his most famous speeches, the "Cross of Gold" was delivered at the 1896 Democratic convention. During that speech, Bryan argued that America's economic system was in trouble, unless they endeavored to substitute silver for the "cross of gold."

Indeed, Deaf people considered the confinement of their hands a criminal act and J. Schuyler Long went on to compare the act to that of the binding of babies' feet by Chinese women, and babies' heads by the Flathead Indians (Gallaudet & Hall, 1909).

The theme of confinement portrayed the Deaf person as the victim. Powerful images such as these were strategies to portray as an illusion the self-created role of the dominant society as the "caretakers" of Deaf people. By professing to take care of Deaf people, the dominant society held them up to the standards of normality. In doing so, the dominant society affirmed the right to take away their sign language. The strategy of the crucifixion declared that rather than "taking care" of Deaf people, the dominant structure oppressed and confined them. The rhetoric of confinement was also a strategy to jar Deaf people into the realization that they did not have to accept such oppressive impositions on them.[8]

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[8]The theme of confinement is so pervasive a sentiment in the Deaf community that it persists even today. Years later, Betty G. Miller would express this perspective in her artwork. One of her creations, Ameslan Prohibited, portrays a powerful rhetorical statement in the form of a pair of broken hands constrained by handcuffs. Ella Mae Lentz, an ASL poet, eloquently expresses the deeply felt resentment of the Deaf community in her poem:

We were simply talking in our language of signs,
When stormed by anthem-driven soldiers pitched a fever by the score of their regime.
They cuffed our hands, strangled us with iron reins. "Follow me! Line up! Now sit!"
The captain, whip in hand, inflicts his sentence with this command:
Speak!
"Sh..?"
Speak!
"..i..?"
Speak!
"..t?"
Damn your chains!
We'll pronounce our own deliverance and articulate our message loud and clear.

This excerpt from "Untitled" was translated in American Culture: The Deaf Perspective videotape series.

Indeed, Deaf people illuminated sign language as their salvation by featuring sign language as an ideograph to represent the heart of their oppression.[9] One strategy was to document sign language in a form that would enable it to retain as permanent a status as possible. Some of these artifacts remain as lasting mementos in today's society.

One example is an icon in the form of the landmark statue of Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet and Alice Cogswell located at Gallaudet University. Deaf people raised funds to create the statue, and upon its completion, presented it in 1889 to Edward Miner Gallaudet, then president of the university, in honor of his father. Today the statue is listed as one of our national treasures.

The statue signifies a permanent statement of the salvation that sign language brought to Deaf people. So important is sign language as a symbol of salvation that its enigma carried over to the person who was perceived as responsible for bringing sign language to Deaf people. That person was Thomas Gallaudet, who is featured on the statue as teaching the alphabet to Alice, his first Deaf student. Alice's stance, which shows her sitting on Gallaudet's lap, gazing up adoringly at him, embodies the view of Gallaudet as the savior of Deaf people.

Strengthening Community: The Visual Medium

Another strategy to preserve sign language took into account the visual nature of Deaf people. George Veditz, seventh president of the NAD, was the

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[9]An ideograph is a symbol of what an object represents, rather than what it actually is. McGee (1980) goes on to explain that an ideograph is culture-bound in which symbols "define a collectivity, i.e., the outer parameters of a society, because such terms either do not exist in other societies or do not have precisely similar meanings" (p. 8). In this vein, sign language is an ideograph that has a shared meaning within the Deaf community and does not have the same meaning in the dominant culture.

brainchild behind a series of films, which included Veditz's own fiery delivery in the <u>Preservation of Sign Language</u>. The film was created in 1913, as a strategy to reach Deaf constituents. In an era of increasing oralism, it was becoming more and more necessary to warn Deaf people of their fate. As such, the films were a consciousness–raising technique.[10]

Veditz's own film went one step further and employed rhetoric that posited sign language as a gift from a supreme being. Veditz declared that sign language was "the noblest gift God has given to Deaf people" (Veditz, 1913). The reference to God's "noblest gift" is consequential because of the implication that God had created sign language, rather than the people themselves. And if God had created sign language, then Deaf people were simply putting God's "gift" to excellent use. Further, if God had created sign language, then sign language opponents thus cast into the role of the enemy, must be the Devil's cronies. The implication here was that as God–fearing people, Deaf people should indeed seek salvation in their sign language.

This film project sponsored by the NAD from 1910 to 1920 took advantage of the unique network created by Deaf people. Consequently, Veditz and the NAD were able to circulate the films throughout the Deaf community,

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[10]Consciousness–raising is usually explained as a process in which face–to–face interaction provides opportunities for members of minority groups to analyze the nature and causes of their "oppression" which then becomes the basis for "revolutionary acts to eliminate oppression" (Sarachild, 1970, p. 80). This often results in a sense of kinship in which members perceive other members as part of a "cultural family" or "community" (Chesebro, Cragan, & McCullough, 1973, p. 136). Although the Deaf community did not use consciousness–raising groups in the way more contemporary groups such as the Women's movement has, the film in this case served as the next best thing. During the era, travel was not as convenient or as accessible as it is today, therefore, a film that could be transported from place to place, was the most feasible option.

which included 29 cities, 27 conventions, and 56 schools for the Deaf, (Schuchman, 1988, p. 21). Veditz's strategy was, then, ideal in which to stimulate Deaf audiences. Most importantly, he succeeded in his plan to preserve sign language, for his film as well as several others continue to be a rich source of study today.

In 1918, J. Schuyler Long contributed to the strategy of preserving sign language by authoring one of the earliest sign language books, The Sign Language: A Manual of Signs. With this book, Long was also able to offer to the Deaf social movement two other rhetorical strategies. One strategy was to call sign language a "language." Even though Deaf people did not have the necessary linguistic analyses at their disposal, and sign language was constantly demeaned as a substandard form of communication, Long proceeded to ascribe some dignity to sign language. He explained that sign language illustrated some of the same features as other languages, such as arbitrariness and local dialect. By presenting sign language as a "beautiful and expressive language" and a "live" one, Long dignified sign language (p. 19).

The other strategy Long used was to explain that "mouthing" was a "habit [that] is to be strongly condemned" (p. 19). Rather than saying "oralism," he chose to use "mouthing." This approach moved sign language away from the throes of oralism, signifying its difference in modality and language. By isolating sign language from oralism, this strategy was a rebuff to attempts to control sign language. In addition, by condemning any form of mouth movement, Long hoped

to preserve sign language in its natural form without any undue influence from other languages.

By taking steps to preserve sign language, Deaf people in these times made sure to document as fully as possible the importance of sign language in their lives. All the artifacts discussed in this section remain today and in doing so, present a strong sense of the meaning of sign language as a force holding the Deaf community together. That these artifacts have endured over the years symbolizes the longevity of sign language and the Deaf community, despite all outside intrusions.

Conclusion

The significance of this historical movement is in the emergence of the rhetorical "NO." The rhetorical "NO" marks the beginnings of a social movement. For the Deaf community, the historical movement signified a call for the end to the domination, condemnation, and correction of Deaf people. It was a rebellion against the dominant construct of "normality." The early Deaf social movement ferociously battled against the attempts to convert their community. Also, however, the early empowering strategies often centered around turning the dominant society's rhetorical practices to their advantage.

The "dividing practices" of the dominant structure which at first, isolated Deaf people from society, for instance, proved to be a saving grace for Deaf people. The establishment of a "class" of Deaf people enabled them to create a social structure in which organizations, newspapers, and inter-marriages primarily involving Deaf people became a way of life. Not only was it simply a way of

life, it became something Deaf people dearly cherished. At the heart of this "separate" community was sign language. The significance of this "class" of Deaf people was the empowering force of establishing a community of Deaf people with a distinctive means of communication, that has prevailed despite all odds, even today.

During the era when the dominant society reversed itself and enforced oralism and integration, this strategy, however, threatened to destroy the way of life that Deaf people revered. Deaf people were not willing to sit passively by to watch this destruction of their community and their sign language. It was, then, necessary for them to develop strategies to counter the take over of their community.

Since sign language was often the glue that bound Deaf people together, especially since it represented their chief means of communication and was not one shared with society, many of their strategies were developed to preserve sign language. Deaf people wanted to ensure that their sign language would not fade away. By preserving their sign language, Deaf people could also sustain their community. Since the dominant culture thought it their mission to take care of Deaf people, empowerment would not be an achievable goal for Deaf people within the dominant hierarchy. Consequently, if Deaf people wanted to empower themselves and guarantee their self-governance, it would be necessary to protect their community.

The activities to preserve sign language was one way to protect their turf. The creation of a new hierarchy that posited hearing people at the bottom would

also make it difficult for hearing people to dominate Deaf people within the Deaf community. The establishment of formal organizations such as the NAD, also created a space for Deaf people to institute a network and to provide a safe haven in which to collaborate on injustices against them.

These strategies were effective in that many of these artifacts and organizations are still in existence today. Most significantly, sign language, even if not in its original form, continues to remain at the heart of the Deaf community. Even as the dominant society succeeded in passing resolutions to take away sign language from educational institutions and attempted to strip all dignity from it, they could not completely eradicate sign language, nor could they dismantle the Deaf community. Aside from the basic human need to communicate and maintain social community, the strategies of the early Deaf movement garnered power for the community by successfully turning the symbol of their oppression--sign language--into a symbol of their unity.

CHAPTER 4

The Political Forces of the 1960s and 1970s

The early years of the Deaf social movement illuminated ideological tensions: the dominant society first sought to segregate Deaf people from society, then to integrate Deaf people into the mainstream. The impact of dominant discourses was evident in the reign of oral domination in the education of Deaf people for the next sixty years. Not until the 1960s did the Deaf community begin once again to take on an active role in strengthening cultural identity in the face of adversarial discourse.

The era of the 1960s and 1970s presented a shift in context for the Deaf social movement. Two factors marked that shift. One was that the movement responded to the significant role played by the other liberating movements of the era. The second factor was the political impact of the other liberating movements: the dominant society enacted legislation to reduce discrimination against non–dominant groups. For the Deaf social movement, this trend required a response to legislation to promote the integration of Deaf people into society. Where the context of the early Deaf social movement was the struggle between the Deaf community and the dominant society, the later phase of the movement presented a more complicated context. Not only did the Deaf social movement have to struggle against dominant discourses, it also had to do so within the context of the rhetoric of other movements. Although benefitting from the attention given to the other movements, the Deaf movement also had to work with contrasting rhetorical positions that marked their difference from the other liberating movements.

This chapter, then, is a study of how the Deaf social movement simultaneously struggled against dominant discourses that marginalized it, and sought both to retain the benefits of the other movement rhetoric while extricating itself from the traps of that rhetoric. The Deaf social movement reacted by presenting the Deaf community as a unique cultural and linguistic group deserving of a distinctive status.

Two Ideological Foes: To Integrate or to Preserve Cultural Identity?

Most social movements share the characteristic of oscillating between "integrationist" and "nationalist" (or the preservation of cultural identity) positions (Adam, 1987, p. 92). The social movement history of African-Americans, Native Americans, Hispanic-Americans, Women, and Lesbians and Gays, for instance, indicate such struggles. As a case in point, for African-Americans, this struggle marked the division between the Civil Rights and Black Power movements.

Proponents of the Civil Rights movement, the integrationists, based their rhetoric on the democratic ideal that "all men [sic] are created equal" and, thus, as Americans, they should also have an equal stake in achieving the American dream. As Martin Luther King, probably the best-known advocate of the "integrationist" ideology, declared in his I Have a Dream speech in 1963, "all men [sic] would be guaranteed the unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" (cited in Oates, 1982, p. 259). And the way to attain equal access for everyone was to remove societal barriers such as forced segregation and racial discrimination.

Further, the goals for desegregation were possible only by working within the dominant society. Martin Luther King (1967) argued, for example: "To succeed in a pluralistic society, . . . the Negro obviously needs organized strength, but that strength will only be effective when it is consolidated through constructive alliances with the majority group" (p. 50). The dilemma of integrationist rhetoric is that it creates a position which validates the dominant social order, by indicting it only in terms of the denial of access.

Since access to the dominant society is sought through direct appeal to dominant values, the social order determines the terms of its access, and those who conform most to dominant interests are also the most likely to be granted access (Bourdieu, 1977/1990). In this vein, minimizing differences between the non–dominant and dominant become a strategy to gain access to the dominant structure. Since maintaining the "normal" is made possible by minimizing differences, the results of the Civil Rights movement inadvertently stabilized the status quo.

The ideology of the Black Power movement took the opposite stance. As King (1967) pointed out: "Black Power is an implicit and often explicit belief in black separatism" (p. 48). Stokely Carmichael (1966), a proponent of separatism explained the concept:

> We must organize black community power to end these abuses, and to give the Negro community a chance to have its needs expressed. A leadership which is truly "responsible"—not to the white press and power structure, but to the community—must be developed. Such leadership will recognize that its power lies in the unified and collective strength of that community. This will make it difficult for the white leadership group to conduct its dialogue with individuals in terms of patronage and prestige, and will force

them to talk to the community's representatives in terms of real power. (p. 650)

Indeed, the Black Power movement not only took the position that separatism paved the way toward "a sense of identity and pride in black people," but that integration led to the denial of "one's heritage, one's own culture" (Hamilton, 1968, pp. 22, 79). Where the integrationists sought to minimize differences with the dominant culture, the separatists aspired to maximize the differences.

So too, has the Women's movement encountered internal tensions between integrationist and separatist ideological factions. The integrationist wing of the Women's movement is evident in the rhetoric of liberal feminists, integrationists, who decry discrimination based on gender and seek equality under the constitution. The proposal of the Equal Rights Amendment characterizes this position that recognizing women as equals will reduce disparities between women and men in all respects.

Separatist ideology within the Women's movement on the other hand, is represented by "cultural feminists" who stress differences between women and men and posit the qualities of women as sources of personal strength and pride (Donovan, 1985, p. 31). Another form of separatism also evident within both the Women's and Lesbians' social movements is the symbolic grouping of "political lesbians" which includes both Lesbians and non-lesbians (Adam, 1987, p. 93). The term is a political statement to declare a bonding against "male tyranny" and to "rescue women's culture from male domination" (p. 94).

As the energy of the Deaf movement reappeared in the late 1960s, these other liberation movements formed a background against which the rhetorical

battles of the Deaf movement would be fought. The tensions of the other movements--integrationist versus separatist--would also mark divisions in efforts to address the suppression of Deaf people. One issue that followed this pattern centered around the role of language in the education and social community of Deaf people. Another dealt with the choice of turning energies toward political change rather than cultural identity and unity.

Strengthening Deaf Identity: De-marginalizing the Language of the Deaf Community

As a bonding force, the language of a group often becomes the symbol of its unity.[1] As such, languages, especially "spoken" (or signed) languages also distinguish one group from another.[2] Human beings are born with the innate need to reach out to and interact with other people. Through the mechanism of language, people sustain relationships with each other. Language also creates and reinforces boundaries uniting people within a specific community and excluding outsiders (Saville-Troike, 1989). "Spoken" languages represent a medium of expression in everyday discourse. For the Deaf community, the equivalent of the

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[1]It should be noted that the term "language" is used here in its most generic sense. A language is a rule-governed system with a complex phonology, morphology, syntax, and discourse structure. There are also variants of languages, such as "dialects." A dialect is a regional variation of the dominant language and is distinguished by its "unique features of pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar (Dodd, 1987, p. 140).

[2]Arensberg and Niehoff (1964) explain the need to distinguish spoken (or signed) languages from written languages when differentiating one culture from another. They argue that the distinction of a dominant language comes from its spoken (or signed) language, rather than its written language. For instance, England, the United States, and Ireland all use a similar form of written English, but they respectively speak British, American, and "brogue" or Gaelic.

"spoken" is the "signed" and the language of use by the American Deaf community is American Sign Language (ASL).

To illustrate the tensions between the integrationist and culturalist factions in regard to language issues, I will first discuss the response of the separatists, particularly of the African–American movement, to the subjugation of their dialect.[3] I will then discuss the similarity of the tensions between these ideologies as they apply to the Deaf social movement. I will also address the dilemma of the Deaf social movement in escaping the trap of their similar, yet different rhetorical situation from these other liberating movements.

Non–dominant Discourses: Friend or Foe?

Separatists argued for the place of a common and distinct language in identity to justify their efforts to maintain the diverse discourses of marginalized groups. Such groups––African–Americans, Hispanic–Americans, Women, and Deaf people, among others––maintain distinctive discourses, they argued, even while living within a society that shares a dominant language. Their position was that the retention of their cultural identities added to, rather than subtracted from, the well–being of marginalized members. They argued that discourses other than the dominant language were not inferior or substandard. Rather, they were separate languages that enabled marginalized groups "to identify themselves and

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[3]Although Smitherman (1989) refers to Black English as a "dialect," which is a "subsystem of the English language," (p. 296–297), she considers it an **"Africanized** [emphasis added] form of English," not merely a dialect of English (Smitherman, 1977, p. 3).

their place in the universe, as well as to permit them to communicate with one another about their unique social realities" (Samovar & Porter, 1991, p. 159).

Many proponents of the culturalist stance presented language as a tool of oppression against marginalized groups (Smitherman, 1977). Lakoff (1990) attests to the power of language: "language is a change-creating force and therefore to be feared and used, . . . not unlike fire" (p. 13). Consequently, African-American separatists, for instance, rebuffed rhetoric that espoused the conformity to dominant standards as the road to self-sufficiency--rather, it paved the way to tokenism and co-optation.

African-American separatists, such as Geneva Smitherman (1977), have pointed out that the high rate of unemployment among college graduates--both African-American and white--indicates that speaking standard English does not necessarily guarantee economic empowerment. More significantly, they argued, Black English is not detrimental to communicative competence, as speaking correctly does not equate to speaking well. Additionally, the preservation of Black English is desirable because it conveys different thoughts and feelings than standard English (J. Jordan, 1981). As such, requiring the conformity to standard English not only represses the voice of African-Americans, but devalues the substance of their speech. The strategy of ignoring and/or denigrating the dialect of African-Americans as well as other marginalized groups has served to cultivate an intolerance for differences, because they represent the "abnormal." As such, this is a strategy of power in that the norm which heralds standard English continues to prevail and to limit access to a select few.

Smitherman (1977) tied this position to the importance of cultural diversity: teaching Black English in school not only to African-American children, but to their white peers can defuse the pervasive linguistic and cultural snobbery of Americans. Further, multi-cultural education in schools can generate a tolerance not only of African-Americans, but also of differences in general. The reasoning of African-Americans that multi-cultural education not only assisted in the preservation of their cultural identities, but led to a more accepting stance toward cultures persuaded at least one state to recognize Black English. In 1979, Michigan courts acknowledged that Black English is a separate dialect from standard English and further required that schools take this into consideration when teaching African-American students (J. Jordan, 1981).

Integrationists, however, adopted the stance that the retention of marginalized languages in a dominant culture where the language of access is English presents a dilemma for marginalized groups wishing access to the public sphere. Retaining one's non-dominant language is detrimental to marginalized peoples because it "excludes them from full participation in the world we live in" (R. L. Jones, 1989, p. 308). As Richard Rodriguez (1989) explains, holding on to the non-dominant culture and language excludes one from being an American and from full participation in that society: "only when I was able to think of myself as an American, no longer an alien in gringo society, could I seek the rights and opportunities necessary for full public individuality" (p. 251). The preservation of distinct languages "impairs" the acquisition of the dominant language and, thus, the access of marginalized people to the dominant public sphere. Although

integrationists posited non–dominant discourses as a barrier to achieving the American dream, the existence of various distinct languages that continue to bond their respective groups also threaten the stability of the status quo. These distinctive cultural identities that share languages other than that of the dominant language are, then, deemed as inimical to the "norm," in that they do not retain the values and ideals of the social order.

This rhetoric––arguing that the use of non–dominant languages created barriers to the dominant structure for marginalized members––established a hierarchy ranking the standard language superior to non–dominant discourses. The dominant language then became a norm and language differences, deviations from that norm. Consequently, integrationist rhetoric turned non–dominant discourse into a rhetoric of deficiency. This practice is illustrated in the following characterizations of people using speech patterns such as, "I is, you is," and "I ain't, you ain't": these "mark the user as belonging definitely outside the pale of cultivated, educated society" and its users are "illiterate or uncultivated" (Pooley, 1989, p. 280). Thus, embracing a diversity of discourses is perceived as jeopardizing the American identity. By presenting standard English as the language and the standard, dominant discourses could legitimize the necessity of conforming to the norm.

The Women's movement has faced a similar struggle to legitimize women's ways of speaking. The integrationist stance perceived men's speech as the language of power. Such discourse is authoritative and is, thus, granted permission to dictate public, economic, and social decisions. Women's ways of

speaking in comparison are powerless and ineffective if women want to succeed in the public sphere. Women needed to become more assertive and abandon powerless forms of talk in order to achieve access to the dominant society. In short, the integrationist position maintained that the emulation of male forms of talk would grant women success in a male-dominated society.

The tendency in more recent times has been however, to portray women's and men's ways of talking as different, rather than as inferior and superior. As Barrie Thorne puts it, the language patterns of women and men represent "two alien cultures, oddly intertwined" (Pfeiffer, 1989, p. 205). By rejecting the subjugated status placed on women's language pattern in integrationist rhetoric, the difference position values the unique discourse of women. The unique discourse of women is imbedded in the central role of sex differences and its impact on individual identity. In forgoing that part of themselves by imitating men's language patterns, women invalidate themselves. Most recently, Deborah Tannen (1990) of the best-selling You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation, has explained the assymmetrical relationships of women and men as speaking from different frameworks. She suggests that men speak from the framework of "status" and "independence" and women speak a language of "connection" and "intimacy."

Consequently, the growing awareness of the subjugated placement of marginalized discourses has warranted a battle for the legitimization of these forms of language. As African-Americans and women have fought for the

recognition of their unique language patterns, so too has the Deaf movement joined the bandwagon.

The Deaf Social Movement Rekindles the Ashes

Although the struggles over communication issues were not new for Deaf people, the battles begun by the liberating movements created a new rhetorical context for the Deaf social movement. The most obvious difference between the liberating movements and the Deaf movement in the struggle to liberate marginalized discourses was the modality of the discourse. African–American and women's languages shared a commonality with the dominant languages, all were spoken. That the Deaf movement communicated in a modality other than speech, presented an issue not evident in the other movements.

Prior to the era of the liberating movements, the Deaf community had been subject to oral domination for years. With the advent of the liberating movements, the Deaf community found a rhetorical opening to implant sign language back into the classroom. They also, however, faced an integrationist faction that demanded conformity to speech as a means of access to the dominant society. Unlike the other liberating movements, the Deaf community's strategy to this conflict was to compromise. The feature of sign language as a polar opposite to the spoken language created a means for compromise not available to the other movements.

The compromise strategy proposed by the Deaf movement to bring sign language back into the classroom was "total communication."[4] Since total communication was a philosophy that purported to embrace speech as well as sign language, it served to placate both the integrationists and separatists. Precisely because total communication retained the integrationist theme of access to the dominant public sphere, the Deaf community was able to sell the implementation of total communication to educational institutions still dominated by integrationists. The community went on record as not opposing speech training, but attributed little value to the practice. Jacobs (1974) was typical in indicating that the acquisition of speech skills was not "a matter of life or death" to Deaf people (p. 15).

Even as the Deaf social movement endorsed total communication, Deaf people reversed the stress: where dominant discourses placed the greatest significance of total communication on speech, Deaf people elevated sign language as the most important. Dominant discourses accepted total communication in which signing would "**reinforce** [emphasis added] speechreading and audition" (Denton, 1972, p. 55). Deaf people such as Leo Jacobs (1974) reversed the status: "the use of total communication, or rather, free expression with the manual communication sector of total communication" (p. 48).

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[4]Total communication is a philosophy, rather than a "method," that endorses individual communication rights. In other words, any and all modes of communication including sign language, speech and lipreading, reading and writing, among others, may be used in the instruction of Deaf students.

The strategy of total communication succeeded because it placated the greatest number of people with diverse ideologies. Opposing ideologies were able to take comfort in total communication since they could glean their own interpretations of the philosophy. Consequently, a majority of educational institutions for deaf students adopted the policy of total communication in their programs. By 1978, 65% of schools and programs educating deaf children had converted to total communication (I. K. Jordan, Gustason, & Rosen, 1979, p. 352).

Once total communication had legitimized the use of sign language in schools, the opportunity was, then, available for Deaf students to assert more control in the classroom. This opportunity began with the stark comparison of the two modes. Because schools were still very much dominated by the patriarchal system, educators adopted integrationists' modalities to prepare deaf children for entrance to the dominant society, anywhere from the use of speech only to speech reinforced by some code of signed English (Woodward, Allen, & Schildroth, 1988). However, studies began to multiply which illustrated the incompatibility of these systems with the visual nature of Deaf children (Baker, 1978; Crandall, 1974; Erting, 1982; Johnson, Liddell, & Erting, 1989; Kluwin, 1981; Marmor & Petitto, 1979; Quigley & Paul, 1984). In addition, many teachers came to the classroom with low levels of competence in signing (Crittenden, 1986). As a result, Deaf students frequently found themselves frustrated in their efforts to learn within a system that often did not accommodate them. Thus, without declaring open warfare on the educational system, Deaf students exploited the opportunity for a strategy for co-optation within total communication. A strategy Genovese

(1972) calls "resistance within accommodation."[5] Genovese illustrated how slaves resisted their masters without appearing to openly oppose them. Slaves broke machinery, or faked illness to put their masters in a position of caring for them, along with other forms of resistance. Similar strategies by Deaf students paved the way toward the transformation of sign language into a symbol of power and cultural unity.

Consider an illustration of how Deaf students may use sign language as a strategy of symbolic control over oppressors. A new teacher with meager signing skills may ask Deaf students how to sign a particular word. Instead of demonstrating the appropriate sign, students might show the unwitting teacher an obscene sign. The unsuspecting teacher will continue to use the "new" sign, to gales of laughter each time it is used, until enlightened. As the Deaf students place the teacher, their unwitting confederate and stooge, into an inferior role, they place themselves into a superior position. This is the power of "inside" jokes--it excludes the outsider such as the teacher and, thus, creates cultural unity among insiders who understand the joke.

Where total communication provided opportunities to locally legitimize the modality of signing, the struggle to authenticize sign language--to achieve

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[5]Genovese argues that this form of resistance could not transcend into collective action because this behavior traps the oppressed into a struggle with their oppressors instead of concentrating on developing a bonding with each other that could lead to liberation. I do not agree with Genovese's premise. It is necessary to "practice" resistance individually, before people can begin to resist collectively. In addition, the move to collective action cannot occur if the people within the oppressive situation do not feel oppressed. The reminder of these resistances can in fact, serve as excellent examples of being oppressed. Thus, the experience of "resistance within accommodation" in addition to being a saving grace at the time of oppression, can also be a necessary prelude to some triggering event that creates collective action.

acknowledgment that sign language constituted a formal language on a par, yet separate from standard English—was an entirely different matter. Although Deaf people shared with other marginalized groups the subjugation of their language, other groups (particularly African-Americans and Women) could achieve their objectives with their language interpreted as a variation of English. Deaf people uniquely faced the danger of their sign language being reduced to a mere different "mode" of expression.

Samovar and Porter (1991) explain that the language of African-Americans and Women are "argots," (or dialects).[6] American Sign Language does not fit the description of argots, nor is it a dialect of English. There are also differences in spoken and signed languages. Instead of the voice, signed languages use space to present signs and aspects of the body (the hands, eyes, head, facial and upper body movements) to create a complex gestural-visual language (Baker, 1983). The Deaf social movement was, thus, faced with the rhetorical predicament of benefitting from the struggle of the liberating movements to elevate the status of previously substandard discourses, yet doing so

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[6]Argots differ from "foreign" languages in two major ways. The first difference is the association between sounds and meanings (Samovar & Porter, 1991). In foreign languages, sounds differ, but meanings remain the same, e.g. the English sound for a greeting is "hello," while in Spanish, it is "hola." They both sound different, but mean the same thing. With argots, the sound remains the same, but the meanings differ, e.g. the African-American dialect uses the term "bad" to refer to something very good, while in standard English, the term means the opposite. While it is true that Black English differs from standard English in the referential meanings of certain vocabulary, this is not the only unique feature of Black English. Smitherman (1989) adds stylistic features "such as cadence, rhythm, resonance, gestures," and similar elements as a unique language pattern of Black English (p. 296).

The second difference between argots and foreign languages has to do with cultural affiliations (Samovar & Porter, 1991). With foreign languages, for instance, one can determine the specific country by the name of the language. English denotes the country of North America or England; French is spoken in France, and so on. Argots on the other hand, do not refer to a dominant culture, but rather to specific groups within a dominant culture.

in a way that escaped the trap of allowing ASL to be categorized as a dialect of English. One strategy was to declare that ASL was indeed, a bona-fide "language." This strategy sought to place American Sign Language on a par with all other languages, most prominently English. Since dominant discourses so prevalently denigrated ASL as substandard, among its' characterizations of ASL as "concrete," "idiomatic," and "bad English," the constitution of ASL as language created a sense of pride among Deaf people. The Deaf social movement was able to point to research which demonstrated that ASL is a rule-governed language that adopts its own grammatical structure, morphology, and syntax (Klima & Bellugi, 1979; Stokoe, 1960; and Woodward, 1973, 1974). These characteristics mark ASL as a complete language, just as are English, French, or German. Unlike most of the non-ethnic marginalized discourses in the United States, ASL shares more commonality in linguistic structure with Latin, Russian (Baker & Padden, 1978), Navajo, and Japanese (Wilcox & Wilburs, 1987), than with standard English.

With mounting research at their disposal, Deaf people like Garretson (1980) were able to exalt: "To know once, and for all, that our 'primitive' and 'ideographic gestures' are really a formal language, on a par with all other languages of the world is a step towards pride and liberation" (p. vi). The rhetoric of "language" increased the stature of Deaf people by positing their language as a distinctive linguistic structure.

From the status created by their "low verbal" English language skills, ASL as language also transformed Deaf people into intelligent beings with not only

one, but two languages at their disposal. Barbara Kannapell (1974) describes the

Deaf bilingual:

> Ideally the deaf adult is a fluent signer of ASL and able to read and write the English language. . . . When he [sic] talks with deaf friends, he will use ASL. When he talks with hearing people he writes English on paper, or speaks through an interpreter, or uses his speech if it is intelligible enough. (p. 10)

The establishment of the "bilingual" identity for Deaf people confers the highest

prominence on those who demonstrate fluency in two languages. ASL is the

badge with which Deaf people are accepted as members of the Deaf community

which indicates that a Deaf person who is primarily monolingual in ASL will be

better accepted in the Deaf community than by the dominant society. On the

other hand, a deaf person who uses primarily English will be better accepted in

the dominant society than by the Deaf community.

However, for Deaf people to be bilingual, they are required to demonstrate

English skills as well. This indicates the compromise position between

integrationist and separatist discourse by placing a high value on both languages.

Even so, those with the strongest Deaf identity are the most likely bilinguals.

Research was available to be called upon here also. Research has consistently

proven that Deaf children of Deaf parents attain higher academic achievement

scores than do Deaf children of hearing families (Stuckless and Birch, 1966;

Meadow, 1968; Vernon and Koh, 1970; Corson, 1973; Brasel and Quigley, 1977).

Although not all Deaf parents use ASL or even any form of signing, the chances

are higher that their Deaf children will acquire ASL skills, thereby, building a

strong foundation in which to learn English skills. Thus, the creation of the

bilingual identity, even as it embraced the dominant language, also was exploited to give the highest prominence to the strongest Deaf identity, in most cases—Deaf children of Deaf parents.

The liberating movements and the attention focused on their struggle for cultural identification created a path that the Deaf social movement took advantage of. Even as total communication was a strategy of compromise, it was significant in promoting sign language as a visible force of the community. From a strategy of compromise, the movement moved to the stronger position of establishing ASL as language and Deaf people as bilingual. The rhetorical strategies to symbolize ASL promoted the Deaf identity and strengthened the Deaf social movement.

Strengthening the Deaf Identity: Reacting to Social Engineering Practices

Along with the struggles between gaining access to the dominant society via the dominant language and the preservation of marginalized discourses, integrationists also found themselves at odds with the separatists over legislative issues. The era of the liberating movements of the 1960s and 1970s resulted in a flurry of court decisions and legislative action. Movements such as the Civil Rights campaign were able to present court cases such as <u>Brown v. Board of Education</u>, or enact legislation such as the 1957, 1960, and 1964 Civil Rights, mandates that sanctioned integration into the dominant society by prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race or sex. The early successes of these social movements, thus, paved the way for an emphasis on integration into American society for all dispossessed groups, including disabled people, and Deaf people.

Integrationists helped enact these legislative actions based on the ideology that removing barriers to access promoted equal opportunity. After all, equality would be difficult to achieve in a predominantly white and racist society without enforced legislation to monitor discriminatory practices that would otherwise persevere. The rhetoric of integration was based on the belief that America was indeed the land of opportunity and freedom, but an invitation not extended to all. Martin Luther King makes this clear in his I Have a Dream speech:

> When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. . . . It is obvious today that America has defaulted on this promissory note insofar as her citizens of color are concerned. Instead of honoring this sacred obligation, America has given the Negro people a bad check; a check which has come back marked "insufficient funds." But we refuse to believe that the bank of justice is bankrupt. . . . So we have come to cash this check—a check that will give us upon demand the riches of freedom and the security of justice. (cited in Oates, 1982, pp. 259–260)

Because America had "defaulted" in her promise of the American dream to African-Americans, legislation was deemed necessary to force America to pay up. The enforcement of integration into the dominant society was, thus, a means to ensure that African-Americans would have the same equal opportunities as their European-American counterparts to achieve a stake in the American dream. By removing barriers to access, the notable American ethic of ambition and hard work would be unleashed, thus, putting the American promise within reach of marginalized people.

To separatists, however, legislation that enforced integration in reality integrated only a few select non-dominant members, rather than the marginalized

group as a whole. Further, integration fostered the destruction of the cultural

identity. Stokely Carmichael (1966) promoted such a viewpoint:

> Its [integration] goal was to make the white community accessible to
> "qualified" Negroes and presumably each year a few more Negroes armed
> with their passports—a couple of University degrees—would escape into
> the middle-class America and adopt the attitudes and life styles of that
> group; and one day the Harlems and the Watts would stand empty, a
> tribute to the success of integration. (p. 647)

In effect, the dominant society would only be interested in "qualified" non-

dominant members. Since the dominant structure determined the terms of access

to their society, those deemed "qualified" were individuals who demonstrated the

most similarity to members of that society. As such, access to the dominant

culture was granted to those that discarded their non-dominant cultural identity in

favor of the values and life styles of that culture. Separatist rhetoric, thus, posited

that integration, rather than favoring the non-dominant culture, recognized only

those members who conformed to dominant standards. Consequently, legislation

to integrate non-dominant peoples into the dominant society not only failed for

the marginalized group as a whole, but denigrated the uniqueness of non-

dominant cultures.

The tensions between integrationist and separatist rhetoric in the other

liberating movements as the dominant society moved toward enacting legislative

measures to reduce discriminatory practices also marked the context of the Deaf

social movement. In this section, the rhetorical processes that illuminate the

integrationist and separatist tensions will be examined. First, I will discuss the

integrationist thrust of the era as legislation was enacted to integrate Deaf people

into society, particularly as laws legitimized mainstreaming for Deaf children. I

will then illustrate how the separatist faction of the Deaf social movement responded to the social engineering practices of the dominant society.

Mainstreaming as Virtue: Responding to Charges of Discrimination

The rhetoric of "separate, but equal" educational facilities as discriminatory carried over to the Deaf community as well. This viewpoint is espoused by Diane Castle (1990): "Many parents, educators, doctors, and audiologists, recognize the competition deaf persons will encounter in the work place and believe that preparation to enter the mainstream of society is the best educational approach" (p. 19). Further, the best means of ensuring such access was for Deaf people to emulate the behavior of their hearing peers. Castle goes on to say:

> Deaf adults who have had the opportunity to develop spoken and written English, speechreading and listening skills have the greatest opportunity for entering challenging employment and gaining good promotions. . . . [M]ost deaf people need to choose to be part of the mainstream and to integrate within the larger society. (p. 21)

This integrationist rhetoric confirms the belief that America is indeed, full of opportunities, but only for those who adapt to society.

Castle echoes the integrationist theme that ambition and hard work are individualistic endeavors that pave the way to successful integration. Castle's argument additionally implies that all Deaf people have at their disposal the ability to develop "spoken," "speechreading," and "listening" skills. Further, mainstreaming in schools provides the best means by which to ensure that Deaf children interact with hearing children and, thus, increase the opportunity for eventual integration into society.

Since the mainstreaming of Deaf children into public schools played upon

the integrationist theme of providing them with access to the dominant society,

legislation was deemed necessary to promote institutional enforcement of

mainstreaming. Proclaimed the "Education for all Handicapped Children" Act,

Public Law 94–142 enforced the integration of disabled students into the

classroom with other non–disabled students, thereby significantly reducing the

chances of their interaction with other Deaf people.[7] By placing Deaf children

into the mainstream of the dominant society, integrationists practiced the theme of

"equal opportunity."

Responding to Social Engineering Practices: The Deaf Cultural Community

To the Deaf social movement, "mainstreaming" did not necessarily pave

the way to "equal opportunity." Rather, separatist rhetoric painted

"mainstreaming" as aversive to the identity and well–being of Deaf children.

Mervin Garretson argued:

> Deaf children may find themselves cast adrift without much of a self-identity because they are compelled to settle for half a life in a hearing community that is only partially accessible to them. When they finally reach their late teens and leave school as young adults and are forced to wrestle with these realities, they will seek out the deaf community. But the process of enculturation and adaptation to a new language is not easy. All too frequently, they wind up not fully accepted by either the deaf or hearing community. (cited in Schein, 1989, p. 143)

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[7]It should be noted that Public Law 94–142 does not directly stipulate that disabled children should be "mainstreamed." However, its statement that all disabled children have the right to a "free, appropriate education in the least restrictive environment" has often been interpreted to mean placement in public schools for Deaf children.

The response to legal enforcements of "mainstreaming" Deaf children into public schools, and the categorization of Deaf people as "disabled," was, then, to create a discourse that reversed the value of mainstreaming for the Deaf community and constructed new images to detract from the pathological definition of "disability."

Deaf people soon discovered that Public Law 94–142 created a rhetorical dilemma for them. The Deaf social movement found it needed to address the issue that this new law created more problems than opportunities for Deaf students. The movement pointed to the Amy Rowley case as an example of dominant practices that created barriers to access.[8] Examples of other dominant practices were also evident: Deaf residential school students were forced to relocate to a nearby mainstream program, even when these programs made minimal or no provisions for Deaf students. Residential schools were also in some instances, threatened with shut downs.

In reaction to social engineering practices that for instance, threatened to shut down residential schools, local communities of Deaf people frequently rallied to preserve their schools. The residential school became a symbol of separatist rhetoric. After all, separatists argued, residential schools meant much more to Deaf people than simply a place to acquire an education. For many Deaf people, the residential school was where they learned sign language, were able to interact

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[8]The case of Amy Rowley was the first to reach the Supreme Court in response to P. L. 94–142. Amy was a Deaf student who was "mainstreamed" and was doing well. However, her parents argued that since she was understanding only 59 percent of what was said in the classroom, that she would benefit optimally with an interpreter present. Although lower courts ruled that she was not receiving an appropriate education without an interpreter, the Supreme Court reversed the decision. Their contention was that the intent of the law was simply to provide access, not to "maximize" each child's capability (Geer, 1986).

freely with peers, and most significantly, where they became encultured into the community of Deaf people. Thus, the preservation of residential schools symbolized the sustenance of the Deaf community, whereas mainstreaming represented its destruction.

Once mainstreaming, now a symbol of destruction for the Deaf community, became legally sanctioned, separatists presented mainstreaming as an antithetical force to the development of the Deaf identity. Along with the other separatist movements, the Deaf movement sought to maintain the identity of their community. The Deaf community, thus, targeted mainstreaming and called upon the resources of its language as a way to build community within the contemporary rhetorical spectacle. The everyday discourse of the Deaf social movement became a rich depository of strategies to cherish residential schools, and condemn mainstreaming as a symbol of their oppression. One such strategy was the use of humor. An example is a joke by Lynn Jacobowitz: "How do you prevent mainstreaming programs? Blow up public schools." While this joke may seem unduly harsh, it enacted the sentiment of many Deaf people toward mainstreaming. When mainstreaming is depicted as the annihilation of the Deaf community, "blowing up" public schools can be viewed as an equivalent destruction, a form of self-defense.

As a strategy, humor is a way to illuminate the inequalities inherent in society, and simultaneously function as a social change agent (Arnez and Anthony, 1968). The use of humor not only allows marginalized groups to temporarily poke fun at their oppressors and gain the upper-hand, it also releases

tensions by allowing them to challenge their oppressors on a symbolic level (Douglas, 1968).

As such, the strategy of humor enables humorists such as Jacobowitz to challenge the social order by illuminating mainstreaming as a form of oppression. Implicit in her joke is the portrayal of Deaf people as victims and dominant society as oppressors. The joke is, then, a "safe" way to illuminate what is perceived as a very real oppressive situation. The shock value of the joke also transforms humor into a jarring consciousness of the harsh realities of mainstreaming. By establishing a "we" against "them" dichotomy, the joke serves to bond the Deaf community and subsequently to resist impositions against them.

Separatist rhetoric also rejects the dominant construct of mainstreaming by creating a discourse of mockery. This is achieved by transforming the dominant position on mainstreaming as opportunity into a symbol of oppression. The rhetoric of mockery is embodied in the transformation of the traditional sign for mainstreaming. The traditional sign illuminates the perception that mainstreaming equates integration in the illustration of many Deaf people equally placed with many hearing people. Inherent in this perception is the myth that once Deaf people are placed among their hearing peers, they will learn to read and write English fluently, speak and hear (by using hearing aids or similar devices)--and by all accounts, become successfully integrated.

To repudiate this myth, another sign for mainstreaming was created in mockery: an image of only one Deaf person in the midst of a mass of hearing people and the Deaf person is subordinately squashed underneath the mob of

hearing people. Inherent in this characterization is the substitution of the myth of mainstreaming as a barrier to discrimination for the reality of mainstreaming as discrimination.

The creation of new discourse, as illuminated in the mockery of the sign for mainstreaming, is a symbolic condemnation of the dominant structure's social engineering efforts. That the new symbols are expressed in the language of the Deaf community is a liberating strategy. Marginalized groups, because they are "suppressed" by a language structure not of their own creation, usually begin to express their ideas in the dominant language. Since the dominant language incorporates the experiences of the dominant culture, the experiences of marginalized groups are excluded.

A recent strategy has been to posit mainstreaming as an evil force by calling it the equivalent of "cultural genocide." Ella Mae Lentz, embodies this notion in her poem, The Children's Garden. In this poem, residential schools are fertile plots from which Deaf children flower. However, society cannot tolerate the beauty of these colorful flowers, wanting them to be "brown" like all the others and, thus, cuts off their roots and transplants them individually elsewhere. This represents society's desire to "de-individualize" Deaf children by mainstreaming them with hearing children. However, without their "roots," they will wither and die.

The "cultural genocide" strategy exemplifies mainstreaming with a strenousness that strengthens the we/they distinction, thereby fostering the unity of the Deaf community. When Lentz analogizes mainstreaming to a garden, Deaf

children in mainstream programs symbolize the slow and wilting death of the flowers. The analogy represents the "death" of the Deaf identity and consequently of Deaf people. Such portraits of death conjure up powerful images that simultaneously strengthen the community for they are "facing the same fate," and urges the move to resist this fate.

Like the other strategies in this stage, the expressions of genocide in the poem illustrate the Deaf movement expressing injustices in their native language. Where previously, Deaf artists were encouraged to express themselves via the dominant language of English, the new assertion of Deaf people as a linguistic group gave rise to artistic expression in ASL. Poets of ASL, such as Lentz, Clayton Valli, Patrick Graybill, and others have publicly declared this viewpoint. These poets often tell of how they struggled to express their poetry in English, but that true empowerment did not occur till they began to do so in their native language of ASL.

Thus, artistic demonstrations are significant in legitimizing public expression in ASL. The promotion of ASL as language paved the way toward greater community acceptance and use of the language. With the acceptance of ASL as a medium in which to express injustices publicly, more Deaf people could be recruited to the cause of the Deaf social movement. By demonstrating inequalities in a medium that was more accessible to many Deaf people, the consciousness of a greater number of Deaf people would be raised.

Rhetorical strategies such as rejecting the word "mainstreaming," creating jokes and a sign to mock its meaning, and defining mainstreaming as "cultural

genocide," are part and parcel in the process of empowerment for Deaf people. By developing their own rhetoric, Deaf people maintain a sense of control over themselves. As Freire (1970) notes, struggles can empower only when the dominated develop their own meanings and strategies. Thus, with the creation of symbols within their own language structure, the Deaf movement not only communicated its ideology, but also confirmed the viability of its language. This is the value of social movements in that a new consciousness often gives rise to a new discourse. Foucault (1980) calls this the "insurrection of subjugated knowledges" (p. 81). The consciousness of a social movement grows and strengthens by creating redefinitions for existing terms, then, advances its cause further by giving rise to a new discourse. Accordingly, the development of new discourse further bonds the Deaf community together and serves to preserve their unity.

Demonstrating resistance to dominant discourses also enables the unveiling of the politics within the dominant rhetoric (Foucault, 1976/1978). Since social movement discourse was increasingly presented in the language of Deaf people, these symbolic entities could be transmitted into structural activities. Additionally, the promotion of collective action served to preserve the Deaf community in its provision of a space for discourse and structural activity. The preservation of the Deaf community became evident in the transformation of rhetorical strategies such as "cultural genocide" into action. For instance, the British National Union of the Deaf, formally charged their government with a violation of the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of

the Crime of Genocide. Their rationale was that: "Deaf schools are being effectively forced to close and therefore children of one ethnic/linguistic minority group, that is, deaf people, are being forcibly transferred to another group, that is, hearing people" (cited in Lane, 1985, p. 10). The rationale clearly distinguished the separatist position from the integrationist. The separatists traded upon this differentiation, while the integrationists sought to eliminate this distinction.

By declaring themselves as a linguistic and cultural group, Deaf people now had a rhetorical tool to shed the prevalent pathological image of them. Although the separatists had adopted the label "disability" for political reasons, such as lobbying for legal rights for all disabled people, Deaf people usually do not identify themselves as disabled. As Padden and Humphries (1988) explain:

> "disabled" is a label that historically has not belonged to Deaf people. . . . Deaf people have a history, albeit an uneasy one, of alignment with other disabled groups. . . . "disabled" is not a primary term of self–identification, indeed it is one that requires a disclaimer. (p. 44)

By projecting the image of a cultural entity, Deaf people could present themselves as "complete" persons. The medical model that had defined them as incomplete was now shunned because it had effectively depicted Deaf people as what Barbara Kannapell, a Deaf sociolinguist, noted are pathologically "broken ears," rather than as human beings, and their communication as "disorders" rather than a real language. Others in the Deaf community brought visual attention to the "big ear" concept. Harry Williams and Clayton Valli created artistic works, the former in a painting, the latter in an ASL poem, simultaneously dramatizing and mocking the "big ear." These strategies mock seeing Deaf people as having a medical condition. By exaggerating the size of the ear, the strategy challenges the

dominant culture to deny their fascination with the "disorder of the ear." It also serves to call on Deaf people to reject the pathological and to reaffirm their cultural identity.

The Deaf community has reacted to the imposition of the "disability" label not by proving their superiority to other disabled groups, but by defying the image of the label itself. Accepting the term, "disabled" and using it politically against the dominant society, as the disabled rights movement has sought to do, was not a powerful enough strategy for Deaf people who sought to reject the pathological image.[9] For Deaf people, the need for shared communication is far more pervasive than the need for access to the public space. The strategies of the Deaf social movement, thus, attend to the need to preserve community which will enable the continuation of shared communication.

Conclusion

The era of 1960s and 1970s brought on a new context for the Deaf social movement. Where in the past, Deaf people had struggled without much success to retain signing in the classroom, the attention given to the other movements rubbed off on the Deaf community. Consequently, signing was eventually transplanted back into the classroom. However, the acceptance of signing left a rhetorical challenge for the Deaf community, in contrast to the other liberating movements that shared the commonality of spoken languages with the dominant

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[9]Joseph Shapiro (1991) in a study of "disability" terminology notes that many disabled people prefer terms such as "crippled," because it is a strategy to take "the most obvious, most scorned aspect of identity [which] was [then] transformed into a point of militant self-pride" (p. C4).

culture. The distinction of sign language inadvertently put it in a position of compromise, the route taken by the Deaf social movement.

The strategy of compromise, in the form of total communication, evidently was an important step forward in the empowerment of the Deaf community. To jump from one extreme--oralism--to the other--sign language--would prove a difficult feat, given the near universality of speech and the adamancy of dominant discourses to retain spoken discourses. The Deaf social movement, therefore, chose the effective strategy of compromise.

Even as total communication appeased integrationists and even allowed them to glean their own interpretations of the philosophy, the Deaf movement benefitted when total communication opened new avenues to them. For instance, research had multiplied, placing their indigenous sign language as an authentic language structure. Eventually, the Deaf movement was able to begin the slow, but gradual shift from a compromise position to a more strengthened Deaf identity. The Deaf identity was validated with the establishment of the bilingual and bicultural identity.

The constitution of the Deaf community as a linguistic and cultural entity served also to de-pathologize the prevailing perception of Deaf people as "broken ears." The pathological depiction had paved the way toward social engineering practices as evident in mainstreaming laws and the categorization of Deaf people as disabled. Rhetorical strategies, such as the self-defined bilingual and bicultural identity of Deaf people sought to challenge these depictions. To further the defiance against pathological practices, mainstreaming was targeted as a symbol of

the destruction of their community. The struggle by the Deaf social movement to spurn the practice of mainstreaming for all Deaf children, also empowered in that it led to other strategies.

These strategies--the creation of new discourse and artistic expressions in those discourses--illuminated newly established channels for legitimacy of the language and culture of Deaf people. The legitimacy conferred upon their language--American Sign Language--embodied this newer movement. This was in contrast to the earlier era in which their sign language was not only not considered a language, but a modality not worthy of respect.

Even as integrationists continued to dominate educational and social service establishments and practices for Deaf people, the separatist rhetoric of the liberating movements certainly influenced the newer shifts that marked the changes in the Deaf community. Separatist rhetoric enabled the Deaf community to bring sign language to a more respectable height. Further, it also brought on a stronger consciousness among Deaf people about their self–identity. Each strategy built on another and continues to stimulate the Deaf community to create further social changes. This would soon become evident with the advent of the impending Gallaudet University protest.

CHAPTER 5

The Deaf President Now Protest

The era of the 1960s and 1970s saw the Deaf social movement move toward constituting the Deaf community as a linguistic and cultural group with a distinct identity. The separatist rhetoric that marked the changing consciousness of the Deaf social movement during that period paved the way to a strengthened "can do" rhetoric. Accordingly, the Deaf social movement began to align their new consciousness with demands for increased participation in the self-determination of their community.

The resignation of Jerry C. Lee, then president of Gallaudet University presented an opportunity for such demands. The Deaf community had expressed desires for a Deaf president the previous few vacancies, but without success. Thus, when Lee and the previous president completed brief administrative terms, the Deaf movement once again began the call. This time, however, a rhetorical moment had presented itself. It was a time of uncertainty, with upheavals from administrative turn-overs. Further, the Deaf community was strengthened by being a distinct cultural entity, which produced a more assertive rhetoric of their abilities.

However, the circumstances that greeted the Deaf movement at Gallaudet presented a shift in rhetorical context. For instance, how would dominant discourses that had prevailed at Gallaudet react to this new consciousness of Deaf people? Institutions such as Gallaudet constituted a paradox for the movement: sites primarily for Deaf people, but most often run by hearing people. Prior to the

Gallaudet uprising, there were a very small number of Deaf superintendents running residential schools for the deaf, and Gallaudet had never had a Deaf president. Consequently, as Deaf people began to assert "Deaf as good" and spurn the "Deaf as broken ears" depiction, this new sense of Deaf pride and "can do" rhetoric served to challenge the dominant hierarchy that placed hearing people in charge of their destinies.

When the Gallaudet board of trustees once again hired a hearing administrator during an era of increasing resistance toward the pathologizing of Deaf people, the Deaf President Now uprising occurred. Where the choice of a hearing president at Gallaudet confirmed the prevailing pathological and paternalistic image of Deaf people, the demand for a Deaf president by the Deaf community challenged this perception. A Deaf president, thus, came to symbolize the rejection of the predominant pathological and paternalistic status of Deaf people.

The Symbolic Force of Paternalism

Dominant discourses of paternalism have always confined the Deaf community. Such rhetoric goes back to the time of Laurent Clerc who patiently waited for then President Monroe to think up a challenging question for him. When the question finally came, it was to ask Clerc what his age was (Lane, 1984, pp. 224–225). The rhetoric of paternalism was also evident at the 1880 Milan Congress, when dominant discourses determined that the society at large was responsible for the care of Deaf people, and created the myth that Deaf people could not determine their own fates. So what marked the difference this

time around, in which the Gallaudet protest symbolized a refusal to condone further paternalistic discourses?

To understand the significance of the question, an examination of the rhetoric of the Gallaudet board of trustees and administration will illuminate the prevailing ideology of paternalism. Additionally, it will be necessary to understand the impact of such an ideology on a marginalized group. So pervasive are dominant discourses of paternalism that they render a social movement immobile at times. Social movements, then, seek to turn into anger, internalized dominant discourses that serve as the wellspring of liberation. The question then arises: How did the Deaf social movement turn this internalization into anger to mobilize the community for the Deaf President Now movement?

In response to these questions, I will first examine the rhetoric of paternalism as illuminated by the Gallaudet board of trustees and administration. Second, I will examine the internal tensions of the Deaf social movement in the struggle to unite the ideological polarities within the Deaf community. A separate section will illuminate the strategies to turn the internalization of dominant discourses into anger for the mobilization of the protest.

The Reign of the Plantation Mentality

Throughout the Gallaudet protest, the overriding rhetoric of the protestors indicated that Gallaudet was comparable to a plantation. The movement adopted the plantation metaphor as a strategy when a Deaf faculty member declared: "The time has come for the plantation mentality, which has for so long controlled this institution . . . to end" (cited in Sinclair & Pianin, 1988, p. A11). This

characterization of the administration was a direct response to the dominant rhetoric of paternalism.

Dominant discourses that so long prevailed at Gallaudet bore evidence of a rhetoric of paternalism. The symbolic reign over Deaf students as well as the Deaf community was depicted in a variety of strategies adopted by the board, one of which was the rhetoric of "responsibility." The rhetoric of responsibility is a form of paternalistic discourse that gives others the responsibility for taking care of Deaf people. This rhetoric trades on the pathological viewpoint of deaf people: if they are not complete persons, then, they obviously need help in taking care of themselves. So pervasive was the paternalistic discourse that practices such as the board not knowing sign language--the integral component of the very people they purported to serve--indicated that they did not think it was necessary since they were only looking after the interests of Deaf people. This characterization symbolized board members who did not feel the need to communicate with Deaf people to find out what they thought their best interests were. The rhetoric of responsibility illuminates this practice in the adoption of parental tones, rather than listening to those affected by the decision.

The rhetoric of "ingratitude" is another aspect of paternalistic discourse. This illuminates the practice of a sort of huffy expression of ingratitude of those one is trying to help. Such a practice is built on the parental stance based in the rhetoric of "children never appreciate what parents sacrifice for them." Jane Bassett Spilman, then chair of the Gallaudet board of trustees, illustrated this practice in a statement she made after the uprising at Gallaudet: "I felt extremely

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hurt that not one deaf person came forward to say: Criticize this woman for anything you wish, but she has not performed in the abysmal, insensitive, uncaring fashion that you describe" (cited in Dozier, 1988, p. 16). This paternalistic rhetoric trades on the perception that Deaf people are "children." These "children" are so "ungrateful" that they do not realize how much their "care-takers," e.g., Spilman, have sacrificed for them.

The discourse of paternalism transformed into an institutional practice creates a cycle of dependency. Consider, for example, the rhetorical power of the myth of financial dependence. Edward C. Merrill (1988), Gallaudet's president from 1970-1982, illuminates this practice in his attempt to intervene in the cycle:

> I am informed enough to know that there are a few members who do not favor a deaf president and who state that it is doubtful that a deaf executive could manage budgetary matters well or could represent the University well in Congressional Hearing. These arguments are entirely spurious. These persons are probably insecure around deaf persons, and this produces a mind set that makes them overly cautious. (p. 2)

As Merrill points out, the argument that a Deaf person would have difficulty managing budgetary matters was a facade with which board members articulated their view of the inferiority of those for whom they were responsible. To argue that Deaf people could not manage finances became a strategy to prevent Deaf people from taking administrative positions. For one thing, the argument symbolized a lack of trust which in turn signified a paternalistic viewpoint of Deaf people. For another, the argument embodied the perception that all Deaf people are alike. The rhetoric of the board indicated that it was alright to assume that no Deaf person could handle budgetary matters, without regard to their respective credentials. Further, this argument stipulated that a knowledge of budgetary

matters took precedence over the significance of a Deaf president running an institution for Deaf people. This perception also assumed that American Sign Language and Deaf culture were easier to learn than budgetary skills.

The paternalistic cycle of dependency and the accompanying reluctance to trust Deaf people in positions of authority, including that as a president of a university for Deaf people, was so pervasive that daily decisions reflected its strength. An electrician who was hired to perform electrical work on House One, asked Joan Lee, wife of Gallaudet's sixth president, whether she would not also want him to install wiring for light signallers that Deaf people often use to alert them that someone was at the door or that the phone was ringing. The electrician explained that this would make House One accessible to Deaf guests and would also be useful in the event of a Deaf president. Mrs. Lee brushed this suggestion aside with a laugh. The electrician went ahead and set the wiring in place without her knowledge and eventually returned to officially activate its use, this time for a Deaf president (R. Burrhus, personal communication, June 4, 1991).

This incident presents an inkling of the tremendous barriers that the Deaf protestors faced. So extensive was this paternalistic rhetoric of dependency that not only did the wife of Gallaudet's previous president find it ludicrous to even imagine a Deaf president, she also was not convinced of the need to equip the house to make it accessible to Deaf people. That the house of Gallaudet's top executive, located right on the campus of the university, did not welcome Deaf people was not only paternalistic, but was the greatest snub to Deaf people.

The Deaf Community: Internalized Oppression

The paternalistic discourses which dominated at Gallaudet, as well as the Deaf community, were strengthened and validated when Deaf people adopted such perceptions of themselves. Deaf people, as victims of these dominant discourses had internalized the convictions of their oppressors. Paulo Freire (1970) points to this quality as "self-depreciation" (p. 49). Self-depreciation comes about when oppressors of marginalized groups routinely and constantly denigrate their sense of self-worth. So extensive is this practice that in the end, members of marginalized groups come to believe in their inadequacy. Another feature that the Deaf social movement had to contend with was the dominant strategy of "divide and rule" (p. 137). This strategy prevents marginalized groups from uniting, and, thus, keeps the dominant hierarchy in place. Since these were two primary factors for the fractionalization of the Deaf community, the Deaf social movement had to counter them in order to effectively present itself as a united front.

The rhetoric of "self-depreciation" within the Deaf community was an internalization of the rhetoric of dependency instituted by paternalistic discourses. This rhetoric was evident in the way that many Deaf people had internalized the discourse of the dominant—that Deaf people "can't." This saying is so widespread because virtually any Deaf person can recount tales of when they have been told "you can't" do this or that because "you are deaf." That the rhetoric of dependency becomes internalized in a form of self-depreciation is confirmed by Sutcliffe as he relates his own experience:

> Our teacher asked us what we would like to be after leaving school. One pupil wanted to be a truck driver. Another wanted to be a school

principal. The teacher responded, "Oh, you cannot be this because you are Deaf. You cannot be that because you cannot use the telephone." We took it seriously. We were dependent on hearing people's judgments and opinions. (cited in Schein, 1989, p. 146)

In the form of a self-fulfilling prophecy, many Deaf people internalized these dominant themes.

Particularly vulnerable to the rhetoric of "self-depreciation" were Deaf children of hearing parents. Most Deaf people came from hearing families, and hence, were at risk of "double oppression." Unlike other marginalized people who can resort to the home as the sanctuary from the oppressive world, many Deaf people did not have this same refuge. The risk was tripled if they were "mainstreamed" into public schools, where they may not be able to seek comfort from Deaf peers either. Solomon (1976) explains that oppression can be extremely severe when it is applied to both the family and community systems. Consequently, these Deaf children were most at risk in facing extensive oppression since they were likely to be surrounded by discourses that depreciated the positive Deaf identity.

This would indicate that many Deaf people were vulnerable to internalizations of disparaging discourses of their community. The power of the dominant society is its ability to influence the rhetoric of the masses under its control. Those who occupy positions of power--the dominant society--often claim the right to knowledge and discourse (Foucault, 1980). Dominant discourses and practices are, then, accepted by most people without question. Thus, the paternalistic discourses that continued to reign at Gallaudet strengthened and reinforced the internalization of their practices. The acceptance of these

paternalistic discourses then transformed into a rhetoric of "pathological limitation" in the Deaf community.

The other challenge was in the form of "divide and rule" strategies or "dividing practices." Mainstreaming deaf children was a practice that served to separate deaf people from each other. These dividing practices, contributed to the differing viewpoints of the "Deaf identity" as a positive feature among Deaf people. Deaf people who internalized negative evaluations of the Deaf community, especially those who had minimal contact with other Deaf people or sign language, tended to have difficulty accepting or being accepted by the Deaf community. Covington (1980) explains the nature of the dilemma faced by these deaf people:

> They may never quite acquire competence in either [Deaf or hearing cultures] but remain marginal. Superficially, they may look and act like hearing persons, without the facial expression play and expressive body movements that subtly distinguish the deaf. Their language and cultural attitudes also remain "hearing." Trained from infancy to prize speech and "proper English" of hearing persons, they may recoil from learning the sign language that will publicly identify them as deaf. Moreover, they fear that using sign language might lead to the loss of their speech skills and to alienation from their families. (p. 271)

Thus, the positive perception of the Deaf identity would most likely be adopted by Deaf people who frequently encountered the Deaf community and sign language. The development of the Deaf identity then differs, usually according to the upbringing of Deaf people. This sense of identity, among other things, would have a significant impact on how a Deaf person viewed the urgency of having a Deaf president.

Other divisions split the Deaf community. Deaf African-Americans, in the District of Columbia, and many other locations, have for years held their own social clubs or sport teams even though similar clubs for Deaf people were available nearby. Most social clubs established by Deaf people are predominantly white. Detroit, Michigan, has for years hosted separate clubs for "oral" and culturally Deaf people, even though both groups use sign language. Deaf college graduates are often perceived as "snobbish" by others. These are only several examples of the many splits in the Deaf community which can make it difficult to collaborate as one big group.

At Gallaudet, these practices were maintained as well. For instance, a course that explores the various causes of deafness and the uses of the ear is required of all students. No equivalent requirement is made for courses on Deaf culture or American Sign Language.[1] That a premier institution primarily for Deaf people requires a course that attends to the pathological, rather than the cultural nature of deafness, sends the message that the Deaf cultural identity is not valued.

Further, this practice is divisive. Many deaf students come to Gallaudet without knowing sign language or being encultured into the Deaf community.[2] As Barnhart (1991) discovered, there are no programs that address cultural differences between Deaf and hearing people. Consequently, these deaf students

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[1]Although Gallaudet presently offers these courses, they are electives, rather than requirements.
[2]There is a New Student Orientation (NSO) program at Gallaudet that offers sign language instruction to incoming students that need it. However, it lasts approximately three weeks and students have commented that they needed more sign language instruction (Barnhart, 1991).

enter Gallaudet, only to find themselves involved in cultural conflicts with Deaf students (Padden & Markowicz, 1976; Barnhart, 1991). This creates a situation in which:

> The subjects' anxieties about changing their familiar behavior to accommodate newer, more acceptable behavior must be understood as a reaction toward conflicts arising from two cultures in contact. This study points to the need to recognize the Deaf community as a separate cultural entity, particularly for those who wish to join it as new members. (Padden & Markowicz, 1976, p. 411)

The paternalistic discourses that dominated Gallaudet created a perception of Deaf people as pathological. Thus, no serious attention was given to the development of cultural programs. Consequently, the rhetoric of pathology sustains dividing practices and upholds the negative perception of the Deaf identity.

Deaf leaders, in seeking to mobilize the community for the protest needed to resolve the rhetorical dilemma of the internalized "pathological limitations" prior to working on the board of trustees. Not presenting a united front would give the board incentive to ignore pleas for a Deaf president. A divided non–dominant group makes it easier for the dominant to prevail. They can simply say: "Well, we obviously can't please everyone, so we will just make the decision that we believe is best." Therein lies the problem for many marginalized movements. If they cannot unite, the dominant claim the right to continued reign over them.

The Gallaudet Protest: A Rhetorical Clash

The Gallaudet protest succeeded where previous attempts did not. This could be attributed to the themes of the protest. Every deaf person, Black or white, oral or signing, college graduate or not, associated with the Deaf

community or not, can identify with the "can't syndrome" or the "plantation mentality." Because these themes reminded Deaf people of the many years of oppression, they were able to unite readily, even if only temporarily.

The mobilization of a movement is no easy feat, however. The difficulty of bonding social movements for a common cause is compounded by the "illegitimate" status of social movements.[3] Simons (1972) suggests that social movements can become legitimate if they adopt a combination of coactive and confrontative strategies. Coactive strategies accentuate similarities with legitimate authorities which serve to illustrate that societal norms and values are respected. By virtue of sharing a common bond with the authoritative institution, the movement confers a status of legitimacy upon itself.[4] Strategies of confrontation on the other hand, stress the dissimilarities and strive to strip institutions of their legitimacy. Thus, by demoting the status of institutions, the strategy of confrontation also elevates the position of the social movement.

As the most effective and prominent movement in Deaf history, the Gallaudet protest adopted both coactive and confrontative strategies. To examine how these strategies turned pathological internalizations into anger for mobilization, I will discuss the movement through the stages of the protest.

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[3]Social movements appear illegitimate in contrast to the symbolic authority of institutions. Dominant practices so pervasively intimidate people into deferring to authorities, such as "legitimate" institutions (McGuire, 1977), that: "violation[s against "legitimate" establishments, e.g., social movements] would be shunned in order to avoid the feelings of guilt or shame which would follow" (Kriesberg, 1973, p. 111).

[4]Cathcart (1978) places the responsibility of legitimacy on the leadership, which: "is not recognized, for it has no legitimacy, and to confer with it would be tantamount to doing business with the devil" (p. 246). Rimlinger (1970), on the other hand, suggests that the success of social movements requires that their modus operandi somehow become legitimate to institutions, the general public, and potential recruits to the movement.

Initiating the Protest

The seeds for the Gallaudet uprising were planted more than a year before it commenced. However, the groundwork for the crucial aspect of the protest—the rally—was established by a small group of Gallaudet alumni (J. E. Tucker, personal communication, November 5, 1991). They immediately worked toward building a coalition, securing financial as well as technical support from Deaf leaders. That influential leaders were supporting the Deaf President Now campaign gave legitimacy to the planned rally and prompted the student leaders into action. The student leaders, Greg Hlibok, Tim Rarus, Jerry Covell, and Bridgetta Bourne immediately set about to convince the student body of the significance of the cause.

A significant element that marked this stage was the number of Deaf leaders who have Deaf parents. These Deaf leaders were more likely to perceive the Deaf identity as a positive valuation through their early ties to their family, as well as the Deaf community. Solomon (1976) suggests that members of marginalized groups may not be as affected by rhetorical devaluations of themselves if "family ties or strong, cohesive group relationships provide a cushion of protection against them" (p. 21). Consequently, Deaf children of Deaf families may not face as oppressive an environment as other Deaf children, and, thus, may be more likely to react strongly when oppressive situations do arise.

This appeared to be the case at the Gallaudet protest. All four of the student leaders and the overwhelming majority of the Deaf alumni who spearheaded the rally have Deaf families. That Deaf children of Deaf families

had a leading role at the protest is significant. Foucault (1980) maintains that those who occupy the highest levels of power structures claim the right to discourse and knowledge. Since Deaf children of Deaf families had head starts in the cultivation of the Deaf identity and came to represent the highest levels of the Deaf hierarchy, they claimed the right and were granted the privilege to discourse and knowledge.

For these leaders, who had grown up with a positive "can do" attitude, the selection of a hearing president to run a premier Deaf institution constituted an insult. Indeed, a recurring adage in the Deaf community was to "can the can't syndrome."[5] However, Deaf children of Deaf parents are in the minority in the Deaf community. It was, thus, pretty much up to them to persuade the vast majority of the Deaf community that now was the time to "can the can't syndrome" in their demand for a Deaf president.

The Rally

On March first, a rally was held on the Gallaudet campus to raise the consciousness of those in attendance, and to create a solidifying base. By then, the momentum was building, as three finalists had been announced, and two of the three were Deaf. The rally was seen by many as the turning point, as it featured many prominent Deaf speakers, including Gallaudet faculty and staff, a dean at Gallaudet, leaders of organizations for Deaf people, and a local lawyer.

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[5]To embody the "can the can't syndrome," a sign was created: in lieu of signing "can," the sign "can't" is done in a fashion that transforms the negative implication into a positive one.

The fact that all the speakers were Deaf was a strategy to legitimize the Deaf identity. It gave Deaf students and their supporters the opportunity to witness a number of important Deaf role models all at once, a coactive strategy to bolster self-esteem and increase the sense of "Deaf pride," thus, legitimizing the cause.

The featured presenters were also making the confrontative statement that although they represented the most successful Deaf people, it was not enough. These leaders were in essence, enticing their Deaf audience to dare to dream of a better future, one in which they could take control of their own destinies. So important was the aspiration to "take control over our [Deaf people's] futures" (cited in Sinclair, 1988a, p. B7), that at least one speaker exhorted his audience to take on the challenge. Jeff Rosen, a Deaf attorney, declared: "People died in the civil rights movement. They were jailed in protesting the Vietnam war. I stand here in 1988 asking, 'What do you believe in? What is your cause?'" (cited in Sinclair, 1988a, p. B2). Here was a successful Deaf lawyer who not only presented legitimacy to the rally, but who challenged his audience to react.

The choice of Deaf speakers at the rally confronted the dominating practices of over a hundred years. After all, the symbolism of a Deaf president for Gallaudet represented very different implications for the Deaf community and the dominant society. For the dominant society, a Deaf president at Gallaudet merely signified upward mobility for Deaf people. And for most of the board of trustees, choosing a president was a difficult task, but it was just that—a task. The movement leaders on the other hand, captured the Deaf community's

understanding of what a Deaf president at Gallaudet would symbolize—an end to the "plantation mentality."

The importance of putting an end to the "plantation mentality" was illuminated in the rhetoric of Deaf leaders throughout the protest. As Gary Olsen, then executive director of the National Association of the Deaf, would later say, "It's a national issue that affects all deaf people of all walks of life" (cited in Bruske, 1988, p. A16). Jack Levesque, executive director of an organization serving Deaf people in California, would note that "No one can imagine the ramifications for education, rehabilitation, and social service programs for deaf people all over the world when an international institution like Gallaudet makes the statement, 'Deaf people are in control of their own destinies'" (cited in Johnstone, 1988, p. 27). A Deaf president would also have tremendous impact on how Deaf children perceive themselves, as Olsen later said on Nightline, "I don't want my deaf children to believe that their only salvation is to be a hearing person." Having Deaf speakers at the rally was, then, an important strategy to most eloquently and convincingly convey the significance of a Deaf president.

Another strategy adopted during the rally was to move the audience from the football field, to other pivotal places on campus, including the front of House One, where the president and his or her family would reside. This strategy encouraged a symbolic attachment to the sites on campus. Gallaudet is one of the few places where Deaf people constitute a demographical majority. The moving from place to place served to remind the audience that the campus was theirs—it was their home—where their "family" resided. Further, Jeff Rosen, in front of

House One, pointed out that the President's home did not possess any of the devices found in most Deaf residences, such as ttys, or light signallers. But most importantly, it did not have a Deaf person living in it (DeLorenzo, 1988).

Further, this strategy demonstrated the visibility of supporters for the cause. The estimated 1,500 people in attendance was, according to university officials, "unprecedented in its size and scope" (Sinclair, 1988a, p. B1). At the very least, the large attendance would serve to illustrate that a good number of people were paying attention to the cause. It would also send a message to the board that a serious coalition was gaining momentum. The visibility of a large crowd at the rally would also serve to persuade those still on the fence, of the legitimacy of the support for a Deaf president at Gallaudet.

The rally was successful in inspiring many Deaf people who had attended and in stimulating further action, as well as recruiting those who had remained hesitant. For instance, quite a few Deaf people prior to the rally had expressed ambivalence or concern about whether the university was ready for a Deaf president. The internalized "can't syndrome" spoke in such doubts as: Would a Deaf president be able to grasp fiscal responsibilities? Some worried that if a Deaf president did poorly, then chances of a Deaf president would be lost forever. These concerns prompted at least one student to argue that only "the best qualified should be chosen," and to plead that the student body should "let the Board decide who is best qualified and accept" their decision (Cometor, 1988, p. 5). The strategy at the rally was to break internalized dominant convictions by responding with, "the time is now!" If Deaf people waited, when would it ever happen? The

rally successfully produced a number of converts. Amy Hartwick, for instance, had remained uncertain about the choice of a Deaf president until the rally, when she "realized" that she felt "very strongly" about the need for a Deaf president (cited in Piccolli, 1988, p. B1). The rally was a crucial strategy in inspiring the audience. One student attempted to explain how much the rally meant to her, "I cannot find words enough to express how much the rally . . . inspired me. . . . This was, for me, a great expression of deaf pride" (Beckwith, 1988, p. 7).

After the rally, students gathered in bull sessions, picketed and camped out at the Edward Miner Gallaudet building (where the president's office is located) and at the front gate of the entrance to the campus, and sent a letter to Dr. Zinser urging her to withdraw her candidacy (Multra, 1988a). In addition, an unfounded rumor was generated around campus that Spilman had called rally participants "a bunch of fools" (DeLorenzo, 1988, p. 1). This strategy helped irk the students into portraying Spilman as the "enemy" even before the protest was begun. The depiction of Spilman as a devil figure was only beginning to emerge at this point and would eventually become an instrumental strategy for characterizing Spilman as the epitome of the more than one hundred years of oppression.

These strategies before the final selection was announced were very visible and also served to exert pressure on the board of trustees who were meeting on campus. These strategies were very effective in mobilizing the impetus for the movement. As it would turn out, these demonstrations would be a necessary prelude in creating expectations, firing supporters up, and setting in gear a coalition that was ready to move if things did not turn out as expected. The

expectation that the next president would indeed be Deaf was the overwhelming sentiment on campus. After all, the board had chosen two Deaf candidates among its three finalists, and could the board really ignore the very visible demonstrations of support for a Deaf president?

Paternalism at Work

Apparently however, the board could—the movement strategies did not influence the final decision of the board. Either the majority of the board did not take any of the strategies of the movement seriously, or their inability to communicate with Deaf people created an illusory image of the mood of the campus.

To the board, the two Deaf candidates were only tokens, which would serve to appease Deaf people. In effect, the board's intent was to send a message to Deaf people that they were almost ready, but not this time around, maybe next time. Catherine Ingold, then provost at Gallaudet demonstrates this paternalistic rhetoric: "Politically, we had to have some deaf candidates going forward to the board. Nobody questioned that. Even if none of them was qualified, we were going to do that" (cited in Dozier, 1988, p. 18). Not only did the discourse of paternalism dictate a rhetoric of responsibility, Ingold's statement demonstrated a willingness to patronize the Deaf community. The rhetoric of "tokenism," then, illuminated a perception that Deaf people could not possibly be "qualified," but the practice of choosing a few Deaf candidates would suffice to appease the movement. Further, the Deaf community would not object if a Deaf president was not chosen, after all, they were not "qualified."

Indeed, paternalism was evident in many of the rhetorical statements the administration made. Spilman herself purportedly "wanted so desperately to have a deaf president" that she carried around with her two pads to categorize the "positive" and "negative" where she could "jot down all the reasons we had to have a deaf president and all the reasons I didn't see how on earth we could" (cited in Dozier, 1988, pp. 11–12). The language used by Spilman seems to be a contradiction. If as she says, she wanted a Deaf president so "desperately," her choice of terminology for the "positive" and "negative" lists are not comparable. The "reasons we had to have a deaf president" is more neutral than the rather dramatic, "I didn't see how on earth we could." Spilman may have been trying to illustrate through her choice of terminology how agonizing the decision had been for her. However, the latter phrase also illuminates her ideological viewpoint of the capabilities of Deaf people.

In addition, her lists considered only the issue of "deafness," rather than the persons involved. For Deaf people, this would make sense, because "Deafness" is a central feature of identity. For Spilman, however, it is more illustrative of lumping Deaf people together as a "condition." Her rhetoric here delineates discourse of paternalism in her expressed need to make a pro and con list for having a Deaf president. She made no mention of making a similar list for having a hearing president and it is rather doubtful that one was made.

For Spilman, the choice of a Deaf versus a hearing president came down to fiscal expertise, a traditional expression of paternalism. During the aftermath of the protest, Spilman explained:

They want a very visible, viable role model, and they think it is the most important thing they can do. And yet, if your institution wobbles and waffles from lack of clear direction or runs into trouble economically, . . . then it makes no difference if the person is hearing or deaf, if they cannot perform the job. (cited in Dozier, 1988, p. 12)

In expressing this perception, Spilman's rhetoric is both condescending and demonstrative of how out of touch she was with the pulse of the Gallaudet movement. Of course, she carefully included both hearing and Deaf candidates in her warning that an unqualified person could cause an institution to "wobble and waffle." However, the aspiration which she is answering frames the implication that a Deaf university president would not be able to provide direction or fiscal management.

The strategies of the rally while successfully inspiring the Deaf community to mobilize for the cause of a Deaf president, did not have the same impact on the board of trustees. The board of trustees held onto the stance that had served them well over the years. From the viewpoint of the board, "deafness" was not a criterion. Rather, the continued well–being of the university could occur only with a well–qualified person at the helm. However, the question of "qualification" created for the board a disparate position from the protestors. To the board, "deafness" was a condition, and from that perception, a liability. Viewed from the frame of a Deaf president as a liability, the rally rhetoric was not persuasive to the board.

Even though the rhetoric of the rally did not move the majority of the board, it may have been an instrumental factor in driving a wedge into the board

that would eventually prevail. Philip Bravin, a Deaf member of the board would later reflect:

> I had worked hard to make people more aware of the needs of the deaf, that there needed to be a deaf president now, but apparently all the work did not carry enough weight. The hearing people were not ready or were not aware of the importance of having a deaf president. (cited in Dozier, 1988, p. 13)

Bravin's statement illuminates a break in the discourse of dominance on the board. A rhetoric of paternalism unites the board in carrying out its message of responsibility to the community. Such rhetoric contrasts "responsibility" with "identity." The paternalistic discourse that had so prevailed on the board embodied the "we have the responsibility to make decisions for them." Bravin's statement illuminates divisive rhetoric in the separation of the hearing and Deaf board members. Such a division confronts the previous unity of paternalistic discourses. It is a statement of the assertion of identity.

The Protest Begins

The Gallaudet protest was in essence, a message that a new discourse would replace the discourse of paternalism. However, the success of the protest at Gallaudet was likely enhanced by the rally which had served to unite and activate the Deaf community. As it was, Deaf people who flocked to the field house that fateful evening of March 6, were expecting to celebrate their first Deaf president. They arrived only to find the board had not even extended the courtesy of a public announcement, but had simply left a pile of news releases announcing the choice of Elisabeth Ann Zinser, a hearing candidate.

The numbing shock and disbelief at the continued paternalism of the board quickly turned into anger. That the board could so completely disregard their very visible expressions of support for a Deaf president symbolized the continuing reign of plantation owners. The intense reaction to this single moment of paternalistic communication came to articulate the years of repressed feelings about the continued attempts of the dominant society to control Deaf people.

The protest leaders moved to turn this frustration into support. Bourne, one of the student leaders, declared: "We want to be free from hearing oppression" (cited in Sanchez, 1988, p. A12). The leaders declared an end to the time of compromise. It was now their call. They burned the news releases, and thereafter did not recognize Zinser as their president. Zinser was called a "non-person" and "not our president" by the students. So great was their anger that they immediately marched to the Mayflower Hotel where the board was meeting.

There was no turning back now. A rhetorical moment had come and the movement seized it. The students, as well as alumni, faculty and staff, all started warming up outside of the hotel with chants of "Deaf President Now" and demands that the board come out. Deaf people were not there as good "children" to hear the board's explanation of why a hearing person had been chosen. Rather, they wanted to confront the board, to confront paternalism. This became evident when after a long wait, Spilman and Phil Bravin, a Deaf board member, finally emerged.

The movement seized on confrontative strategies to enact Spilman as the "villain." Spilman had come out from the hotel flanked with one interpreter at

each side and with Bravin behind her barely visible. This scene worked against Spilman in several ways. The arrangement of two interpreters, both signing at the same time, was not customary, especially with smaller crowds where one interpreter is clearly visible. This represented Spilman's inability to communicate directly with the protestors. That two interpreters were needed also implicitly gave the impression that Deaf people were so rowdy and difficult to communicate with that Spilman not only needed "bodyguards," but needed two people to help get the message through.

In addition, the portrayal of three hearing people (Spilman and the two interpreters) in the front, and a Deaf person in the back (Bravin), implicitly sent the message that Deaf people were once again relegated to the back seat. The protestors reacted to this symbolized paternalism by refusing to listen to Spilman's explanations, shouting and booing at every turn. The group that remained at the hotel after a majority had left for a march to the White House, then, confronted Spilman, challenging her expertise by questioning her own inability to use sign language. This strategy served to undermine Spilman's authority.

Although Bravin was termed a "Judas" and received many obscene calls during the week (Gannon, 1989), the crowd that remained at the hotel that first night witnessed a different scenario. His presence also smacked of tokenism. However, when the crowd demanded to hear from Bravin, he stepped forward and the group listened. What he had to say further supported their cause, for he explained that although there had been support for a Deaf president, the "majority had prevailed." Since the board was comprised of a hearing majority, Bravin's

message was that qualifications were once again based on the dominant society's standards. Bravin had articulated the split in the board. No longer was the board simply undertaking the task of being "responsible" for the community, it was now apparent that the blanket of oppression had extended to the Deaf members of the board as well. Bravin's statement of the "facts" exemplified the "can't syndrome," and redeemed him to the Deaf crowd at the hotel.

In a confrontation with several protestors the same night, Spilman made the infamous quote, "Deaf people are not ready to function in a hearing world" (Pianin & Sinclair, 1988, p. A21). Although she later claimed to have been misunderstood in her use of a double negative, purportedly, "Deaf people are not, not ready to function in a hearing world" (p. A21), this statement was widely quoted by the students and the media which helped to portray Spilman as the villain.

The protestors had an "unexpected gift" in Spilman. It was easy to enact her as the utmost villain as she was a visible object who kept making statements that played right into the protestors' hands. Her rhetoric served to prove the students' charge of the plantation mentality. On the first day of the campus shut-down, where students blocked all the entrances and boycotted classes, Spilman was ushered into the field house to announce the board's position after a morning meeting to reconsider the demand for a Deaf president.[6]

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[6]In addition to the demand for a Deaf president, the protestors made demands for Spilman's resignation, a 51% Deaf representation on the board, and no reprisals against protestors.

Apparently undeterred by the growing adamancy of Deaf people for their self-determination, Spilman stepped onto the stage to announce that the board's decision remained unchanged. Before she could proceed, however, Harvey Goodstein, a faculty member, came onto the stage to inform the audience that the board had decided to pay no heed to the students' demand for a Deaf president and further instructed everyone to leave. Spilman, not knowing sign language, did not grasp the situation and did not know why all hell had suddenly broken loose. In addition to people leaving, much noise was generated, including that of a fire alarm. Spilman complained, "We aren't going to hear you if you scream so loudly that we can't have a dialogue." The students retorted, "what noise?" and "if you signed, we could hear you" (cited in Sinclair, 1988b, p. A12).

In a strategy of confrontation, where Spilman's inability to use sign language was exploited, the protestors seized upon the moment to enact the authority of their mode—signing. The symbolism of the noise also demonstrated that contrary to popular views of Deaf people as "silent," the students were not silent. Further, they were very aware of sound and used it to their advantage. Extreme noise is not going to be as bothersome to Deaf people as it is to hearing people. Recognizing this, the protestors blatantly generated as much noise as they could to thumb their noses at authority, doing so in as annoying a way as they could.

Confrontational strategies such as these are often used by movements because of the potential to expose the real positions of the opposition. By provoking adversaries, they may be caught off-guard and say things that reveal

their true beliefs (Scott & Smith, 1969). Spilman dug a hole for herself when she made such incriminating statements, and when authorities lose control in this fashion, their legitimacy becomes discredited. Since the showdowns at the protest were successful in exposing Spilman's true ideology, the media picked up on it and assisted the protestors in portraying Spilman as the antagonist.

The Escalating Forces at Battle

With the assistance of the media, the Gallaudet protest was for the most part, characterized favorably, and the movement gained momentum as support increased. The Gallaudet University Alumni Association voted to support the protest, and its president flew in from California to participate in the events. The Gallaudet faculty also voted 147 to 5 to endorse the demands. Moe Biller, the American Postal Workers Union president and Mitch Snyder, advocate for the homeless, came on campus to lend their support. Money flowed in. Students at the California (Fremont), Georgia, Illinois, Maryland, Missouri, and Rhode Island schools for the deaf held rallies. Students at the Southwest Collegiate Institute for the Deaf in Big Spring, Texas, marched through the city (Gannon, 1989, p. 94).

As movements garner support for their cause, the opposition builds up resistance. This occurred for the Gallaudet protest when Zinser abruptly left her post in North Carolina and came to the District. At a ensuing press conference, two strategies by the opposition further irked the protestors. Zinser evidently miscalculated the intensity of the protest and declared, "I am in charge" (cited in Pianin & Sinclair, 1988, p. A20). She asserted her authority to exert control on what she perceived to be several leaders trying to usurp the power of the trustees.

This strategy backfired, however, because by this time, it was not only the students who were actively participating, but many other Deaf adults as well. Her attempt to take over the campus also exemplified the parental tone that dictated a "take charge" attitude toward "disruptive children"--the very discourse of paternalism that the protestors were exploiting.

The board's press briefing also backfired when it furthered the perception of the Gallaudet administration as the villains. The board's strategy was to claim that the two Deaf finalists supported the decision to appoint Zinser. However, the appearance of a pallid-looking I. King Jordan, at the briefing did not appease the protestors as hoped. Rather, they turned his appearance into fuel for further speculation among the protestors of their power. Faculty members at a special meeting pointed out that Jordan's "appearance and manner would have led one to question whether he was truly speaking his mind" ("Faculty minutes," 1988, p. 1). A call to Harvey Corson, the other Deaf candidate, also confirmed that he had not avowed his support for Zinser ("Corson Denies," 1988). It was further reported that "several administrators are being coerced into refraining from supporting the strike" ("Faculty minutes," 1988, p. 1). These accounts,--depicting an administration now using the force of intimidation on Jordan as well as other top-level Deaf administrators--spread and infuriated many. These charges served to portray Spilman and her cronies as evil figures.

The strategy of "recruiting" support from Jordan and Corson worked against the administration in more dramatic ways. Jordan was first enacted as a victim, then a hero. The protestors were rewarded for standing their ground when

Jordan retracted his support for Zinser the next day. In doing so, Jordan rhetorically created a bond with the protestors and legitimized their cause. He related his "personal reaction to the Board's decision" which was "anger at the continuing lack of confidence in . . . deaf people" (I. K. Jordan, 1988, press release). Jordan now symbolized the struggle of the movement. No longer was the rhetoric of the decision centered around a question of "qualifications," it became a condemnation of paternalistic discourses. Consequently, his support and expressed anger presented legitimacy to the protest and propelled him into the role of the hero. After all, only a Deaf person could fully empathize with the cause of the movement. As Jordan later indicated, he chose to support the protestors rather than the administration, because: "My role as dean or president of Gallaudet is temporary. My deafness is not" (cited in Dozier, 1988, p. 12). Jordan's statement rejected the pathological view of deafness that so predominantly framed the perception of the board. Further, it declared his affiliation with the movement and its struggle for self-identity. Jordan knew his community. He knew he could not abandon Deaf people, but most of all he could not abandon his "Deaf" self.

Two other strategies considerably weakened the board's position. One was to bring the protest to the attention of the United States Congress. Congressional members David Bonior and Steve Gunderson, also Gallaudet board trustees but who had not attended the meeting to vote for Zinser, were instrumental contacts for the protestors. They solidified the protestors' position by questioning the validity of the board's stand and contending that the students' requests were

reasonable. Bonior even suggested that it might be in everyone's best interests for Zinser to resign. This Congressional support helped destruct the myth created by the board that a hearing president could best encourage funding from Congress. Since the bulk (75%) of Gallaudet's financing came from Congress, the board's justification that Zinser would help maintain that funding no longer held water.

The other episode came on <u>Nightline</u>, on which Hlibok, Deaf actress Marlee Matlin and Zinser were featured guests. Zinser invoked the wrath of both Hlibok and Matlin with her statement: "I believe very strongly that a deaf individual [will] one day . . . be the president of Gallaudet." Deaf people had heard it all before and were very tired of it. Both Hlibok and Matlin interrupted Zinser, an emotional Matlin saying "Why not now? Why not now?" Hlibok brushed Zinser off, saying, "That's old news. I'm tired of that . . . one day, again and again, someday a deaf person. We've got to break this cycle. The past presidents have always said that. Some day." Ted Koppel then lent his support to the protestors by questioning Zinser's authority, "if you'll forgive my saying so, Dr. Zinser, it's a little bit disingenuous to suggest that you are some kind of puppet who cannot act on her own because the board has said, 'You're in'" (Koppel, 1988, pp. 7-8).

The cause of the Gallaudet protest was notably legitimized by the media and members of the dominant society in these and other instances. The media, despite their membership in the dominant society, were able to empathize with the Deaf protestors. This indicated an empathetic relationship between two entirely different segments of American culture: if the predominantly hearing Congress

and media could understand and endorse the rationale for the protest, then the conflict was between the protestors and the paternalistic plantation owners, rather than that between Deaf and hearing.

A Journey Through the Rhetoric of Mockery

Ted Koppel's depiction of Zinser as a "puppet" was quickly transformed into a symbol of paternalism and stimulated a flurry of rhetorical strategies centered around the theme. As the momentum of the movement stepped up, so did the intensity of collective mockery. That the puppet theme particularly rejuvenated the protestors had historical implications. It captured years of ongoing resistance to educators, administrators, and other representatives of the "human sciences." Imposing on Deaf people speech training, and other "normalizing" strategies, as well as the "can't syndrome" were equivalent to controlling Deaf people. As such, Deaf people were treated as "puppets." Now, by taunting Zinser as a "puppet," they were emancipated. They were able to retaliate by shedding their "puppet" image and presenting it to a nemesis who epitomized the many years of paternalism.

The rhetoric of mockery, including the illustrative puppet theme, provided the students with a legitimate opportunity to assail Spilman and Zinser. A collective form of mockery allowed the protestors to demean their opponents' credibility while strengthening their own. This strategy was accomplished by mocking Spilman and Zinser as well as burning their effigies on the football field. This form of ridicule is constructive in that it allows the protestors to reject the social order and institute a new order. Kenneth Burke (1945/1969) calls this

process the "symbolic kill" as a reference to the "desire to transform the principle which that person represents" (p. 13). For Burke, the symbolic kill "is a special case of transformation" in which "the killing of something is the changing of it" (pp. 19–20).

For Deaf people, the mockery of Spilman and Zinser signified a symbolic kill in which the oppressors and the principles they represented were "killed." By killing the representatives of their oppression, Deaf people set themselves free. Spilman and Zinser symbolized the "plantation mentality" so oft quoted during the week. That Deaf people killed the image of themselves as slaves or puppets and transformed themselves into the "regime" was evident in the themes of many of the posters.

One poster showed Deaf people previously situated as puppets, with ropes secured around the mouth which symbolized the imposition of oralism, and presently emancipated, free of the ropes and handcuffs. The slogan on it was "The 'CAN'T SYNDROME' is NO MORE!" Another poster portrayed the earth as "DEAF WORLD" and both Spilman and Zinser squashed underneath. Yet another poster featured Spilman losing control while the enraged Bison (Gallaudet's mascot), wearing severed shackles, brandishes a pair of scissors cutting off Spilman's "puppet" hold on Zinser. Zinser is shown falling and a book from which she has been trying to learn ASL falls out of her hands.

These posters illuminated the killing of the old image of Deaf people as slaves under the control of slave–masters on a plantation for a new one of Deaf people in control of a new world. This new world was theirs and in this new

order, Deaf people and their language would not be demeaned. Only in the old order could Spilman think it unnecessary to learn sign language or Zinser believe she could learn ASL and Deaf culture from books in a matter of weeks. This new society allowed the Alice Cogswell of old to grow up. No longer would Alice be merely content to sit on Thomas Gallaudet's lap, gazing adoringly up at him. She was now a liberated Deaf person, fully in charge of her destiny.

Mockery was a popular strategy to create a bond among Deaf people and their supporters against the dominant order, especially during the later stages of the protest. Signed chants of "Spill-man" and "Sinner" maintained the inspirational tone of us against them. An ASL lesson for Spilman was "home-go-now." Jokes went around, Zinser now knows three signs, "Deaf-president-now." A saying went that "Dr. Zinser is not ready to function in the Deaf world." Even a dog was seen trotting around with a cloth: "I understand sign better than Spilman." These forms of ridicule served to intensify the gap between Deaf people and the two outsiders who embodied the oppression of everything Deaf people stood for.

By creating such a gap, the protestors could reveal the weaknesses of the oppressors and pave the way for a redistribution of power. That the rules were different for hearing and Deaf people did not go unnoticed by the protestors. Only by exposing the inequities of rules maintained by dominant discourses could a transformation occur. Christine Multra (1988b) in an editorial for the student newspaper noted this double standard:

> Who cannot help but laugh ironically at Spilman's statement that Zinser 'fit all the criteria with the exception . . . of understanding deafness and deaf

culture?' Zinser says she is learning sign language and reading books on deaf education and deaf culture. Bravo Zinser! Rules are different for hearing people, you see. They are allowed to remedy their deficiencies by reading, but deaf people are not allowed similar privilages [sic]. Consistency, truly thou art a jewel! (p. 5)

In addition, both Spilman and Zinser symbolized two opposing anathemas to Deaf people. Spilman was the "Iron Lady" and Zinser was the "Nurse." As the Iron Lady, Spilman epitomized the "mean old lady" theme often depicted by Deaf storytellers and humorists. The "mean old lady" character was one that could be found in virtually every school for the deaf. She could be an unsmiling teacher who penalized students for enunciating incorrectly, or the dormitory "houseparent" who sought out behavior they could punish with relish.

Zinser, as the "Nurse" was a kinder soul than the "mean old lady," and not a central theme in Deaf tales. However, the "Nurse" personified the guardian who wants to help care for the little children. Deaf people also wanted to reject this image that they could not care for themselves. As Olsen put it, "She's a nurse. Nice. We're sick of being nursed. Let us be off the bottle so we can prove we can do things on our own" (cited in Houston, 1988, p. I-2). By the symbolic linkage of Spilman and Zinser to personages that many Deaf people could identify with, a common bond was maintained. This bond was critical in the rejection of the old principles and a creation of a new image of Deaf people.

That the protestors did not unleash the strategy of mockery to its fullest until later in the protest demonstrated their acuity in executing their strategies on a timely basis. Their intensified rhetoric culminated in the resignation of Zinser as well as the subsequent achievement of their three other demands.

A New Order

Deaf people could look back on their efforts at the Gallaudet protest with pride, for this was a hard–fought struggle they had won. Not only did they attain all four demands, they also received a bonus in the form of Bravin, newly selected as the board of trustees' first Deaf chairperson. Most importantly, it taught Deaf people that they could wage an effective battle and win. The newly announced President Jordan said as much in his victory speech:

> In this week we can truly say that we, together and united, have overcome our own reluctance to stand for our rights and our full representation. The world has watched the deaf community come of age. We will no longer accept limits on what we can achieve.
> And I must give the highest of praise to the students of Gallaudet for showing us all exactly how even now one can seize an idea with such force of argument that it becomes a reality (cited in Gannon, 1989, p. 144).

Indeed, for Deaf people, a victory meant the creation of a new image. A newly produced vision for Deaf people and the world watching them was that indeed, Deaf people "can." To effectively enact this image, Deaf people had to "produce, reinvent and create the ideological and material tools they need[ed] to break through the myths and structures that prevent[ed] them from transforming an oppressive social reality" (Giroux, 1983, p. 226). The strategies adopted by Deaf people throughout the protest effectively destroyed many of the negative images maintained by dominant discourses and substituted a newer image of the able competence of Deaf people.

Indeed, the success of a social movement and the ensuing transformation of the perception of the group has empowering capabilities. Not only does the dominant society begin to perceive the dominated differently, but the dominated

increase their feelings of self-worth. Elsasser and John-Steiner (1977) note that a "sense of personal power and control emerges largely as a result of the increasing movement of his or her social group towards self-determination" (pp. 356-357). The experience of success that comes with such a victory produces feelings of self-worth and control as well as an increased awareness of oppressive tendencies. It thus becomes more difficult thereafter, to accept perceived injustices based on one's marginalized status. As student leader Bourne put it, "this is not the end; this is the beginning" (cited in "Deaf Protesters," 1988, p. A1).

Conclusion

Previous collective action resulted primarily in the preservation of self-respect for Deaf people. The Gallaudet protest, however, also gained respect from many members of the dominant society. In some cases, hearing people realized that previous conceptions of Deaf people based solely on their sense of hearing were not appropriate. As one letter writer noted, "I now see myself less as 'hearing-able' and more as 'signing-illiterate'" (cited in Gannon, 1989, p. 134).

The protest also signified a struggle for Deaf ownership. Implicit in the controversy was the struggle between integration and separatism. Some perceived the protest as an avowal of support for separatism. As someone wrote in the Washington Post:

> It cannot become a chapel or a kingdom unto itself. It would lose contact with the surrounding world and become a foreign enclave. . . . true wisdom [is to] . . . have the head of Gallaudet be a person of the hearing community who would help lead graduates into the mainstream of American life, of which he or she is a vital part (Stein-Schneider, 1988, p. A24).

Mark DeLoach (1990) in his dissertation about the protest makes a similar argument. He contends that the move in the direction of separatism symbolized in the Gallaudet protest would not be a positive change in that it would continue to maintain the distance between Deaf and hearing worlds.

Deaf people, however, did not perceive the Gallaudet protest as a theme of separatism. Rather, many saw it as a means to self-governance and, thus, pride and empowerment of their community. Jamie Lowy (1988) explains in a letter published in the Post the same day as Stein-Schneider's letter, that she herself grew up in a mainstream environment and took "little pride in being deaf." Not until she entered colleges for Deaf people (NTID and later Gallaudet) did she begin "to really develop an identity as a deaf person. By the time I graduated, I was able to say 'I'm proud to be me, and I'm proud to be deaf'" (p. A24).

Thus, one of the primary empowering functions of the Gallaudet protest was to promote an environment that fostered a positive development of the Deaf identity. Further, although the Gallaudet protest signified a form of separatism to some people, Deaf people perceived it differently. Since American society had not yet conformed to the needs of Deaf people, this form of separatism was bred out of necessity. And if Deaf people were going to be, in a sense, segregated from society, then, they would be further empowered by having representatives of their own community governing them. The Gallaudet protest was, then, an empowering movement to enable Deaf people to further empower themselves.

Another strategy that enabled the success of the Gallaudet protest was the choice of themes. Themes such as "can the can't syndrome" and the "plantation

mentality" represented issues that likely struck at the heart of many, if not most Deaf people. Such a strategy also empowered because it united. The Deaf community had faced much difficulty in creating large–scale unity in the past in large part due to the inability to polarize divergent ideologies. The themes at the Gallaudet protest however, crossed these divisions.

The strategies of legitimacy and confrontation also led to a strengthening of Deaf pride and empowerment. Legitimacy gives credibility to a movement, and without gaining respect from insiders and outsiders, a movement may be perceived as merely a fad or the work of crazed radicals. However, a movement cannot move on without confrontational rhetoric. A polarization of ideologies is needed to create change.

The Gallaudet protest established legitimacy through a number of strategies. The rally organizers strategically chose presenters who were all respectable, prominent Deaf leaders. The student leaders were active in campus affairs and had the respect of the student body. Support was garnered from the faculty who endorsed the protest. Various national organizations were also contacted to lend their support. I. King Jordan was convinced to back the students after his initial hesitance. The organizers also established a significant relationship with the media and were rewarded by a stamp of approval which helped to promote the students' cause.

Confrontational rhetoric also empowers because it gives the protestors a sense of control. By giving voice to the rhetoric of "NO!" the Gallaudet protestors challenged the authority of the administration. The rhetoric of

confrontation used by the protestors also included the mockery of Spilman and Zinser as the villains. This strategy empowered because as Richard Gregg (1971) points out, "by painting the enemy in dark hued imagery of vice, corruption, evil, and weakness, one may more easily convince himself [sic] of his own superior virtue and thereby gain a symbolic victory of ego–enhancement" (p. 82).

CHAPTER 6

Seeking a Diversified America

The Gallaudet protest phase of the Deaf social movement typified what Stewart, Smith, and Denton (1989) characterize as the "enthusiastic mobilization" stage (p. 25). During this stage, optimism among movement participants climaxes. Movements, however, cannot remain in the enthusiastic mobilization stage for long periods of time because of the high level of energy required to maintain this stage. Society, the media, and even the participants become exhausted and turn their attention elsewhere. Most movements enter the "maintenance" stage at this point (p. 28). The maintenance stage, thus, represents a crucial time for the movement to determine its future direction. The Deaf social movement has likewise entered the maintenance stage in the period following the Gallaudet protest as it determines its contemporary strategies.

Although the contemporary Deaf social movement has not solidified to the point where it can be studied as a fully accomplished rhetorical phenomenon, the strategies that mark this stage thus far indicate an emerging rhetorical form. The American Deaf social movement after Gallaudet, has capitalized on the move by African-Americans, Native-Americans, Hispanic-Americans, and others to create community through promotion of cultural diversity.

The rhetorical trends of these cultural diversity movements exemplify three necessary attributes for community building within a multicultural ideology: creating a sense of self-worth, establishing an internal foundation for community building, and accessing the public sphere. This newer ideology stipulates that

these attributes promote the preservation of each culture not only to enable marginalized peoples to take pride in their cultural identity but also to foster greater multicultural tolerance and acceptance in the dominant society. Therefore, striving for a greater amount of ownership within a marginalized community corresponds to a greater demand for participation in public life and ultimately contributes to a more pluralistic society.

Balancing Integration and Separatism

The post 1960 multicultural movements balance separatism and assimilation. As Lisa Jones, daughter of African-American poet Amiri Baraka, puts it: diversity movements seek "to fuse self-help and the fight against racism together into one" (cited in Harrington, 1991, p. 25). These movements have made inroads in creating Women's and African-American studies at many universities and curricula that reflect the diversity of cultures in America. The cultural diversity movements have also been embraced by more members of the dominant society than was, for instance, the Black Power movement.

The cultural diversity strategy has, however, adopted many of the goals of the earlier separatist movements such as creating a sense of pride in cultural groups and establishing the power to make decisions that affect the lives of members. For example, Black Power presented the 1960s with a growing militancy, which threatened many members of the dominant society. Many integrationists, fearing a backlash of Civil Rights efforts, painted the dominant sentiment of Black Power as symbolic of "antiwhite power" (Wilkins, 1966, p. 14): a hatred for white people and for America. Since many people also believed

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Black Power proponents preached violence, it was feared that this "hatred" would transform into violence.

However, critics have noted the prevalent societal misinterpretations of the phrase. Scott and Brockriede (1969) explain that to people like Stokely Carmichael, Black Power symbolized "personal pride in being black, responsibility to other blacks, and power as a group to deal with outsiders" (p. 5). Inherent in Black Power rhetoric was the struggle for the right of marginalized peoples to define and identify themselves (Scott & Brockriede, 1969; Campbell, 1971).

Scott and Brockriede (1969) also point out that contrary to rejecting access to the public sphere, Black Power was a statement in support of institutionalized integration, rather than individualized integration; in other words, integration as promoted in the Civil Rights legislation only benefitted the most "qualified" African-Americans, rather than the entirety of the group. Further, Campbell (1971) argues that the violent threats in Black power were symbolic:

> because it threatens, because it is frightening, assures him [sic] of his equality, dignity, and manhood. When so assured, it becomes possible for the Black man to confront the White man as an equal, with pride, self-respect, and dignity. (p. 159)

The cultural diversity strategy is an expanded descendant of the Black Power symbolism. However, rather than using the rhetoric of "power" which is seen as threatening by the dominant society, the movements adopt words such as "cultural diversity," and "multiculturalism." These terms succeed where Black Power struggled, since they play on the democratic idealism of America. Cultural diversity sends the message that America, the home of freedom and opportunity to numerous immigrants, would be mean-spirited to begrudge marginalized groups

that same right, especially if her strength comes from that diversity. Where Black

Power demands group integration, cultural diversity extends an invitation to

society to celebrate along with marginalized groups their culture and identity as a

solution to institutional integration. Further, Black Power speaks for African-

Americans, where cultural diversity presents a spirit of coalition for all

dispossessed groups.

In effect, cultural diversity has transformed Black Power rhetoric into a

position of respectability. Additionally, cultural diversity presents a solution to

integrationists in the form of access to the dominant society. By legitimizing the

preservation of unique groups within the dominant society, cultural diversity

becomes a strategy to ensure access to the public sphere.

The Deaf Movement Adopts the Multicultural Ideology

The rhetorical trends of the Deaf social movement since the Gallaudet

protest indicate this direction as well. To illustrate the movement toward seeking

a diversified America, I will briefly discuss strategies through which the Deaf

social movement balances separatism and assimilation within a multicultural

framework. Through the strategies the movement develops a sense of self-worth,

builds a strengthened internal foundation of their community, and commands

greater access to the public sphere.

Creating a Sense of Self-Worth

One function of social movements is to develop a sense of self-worth in

the membership. At Gallaudet this was achieved through the many confrontations

with the board. But in the post–Gallaudet atmosphere, the movement has sought

to provide an on–going rhetoric that establishes the self–worth in more pervasive

ways and, in turn, serves as a basis for acceptance of the Deaf community within

a framework of diversity. Legitimizing the group identity as "the good" serves to

instill pride and creates a buffer against dominant characterizations of the group as

"the bad" or the "deviant." The sense of self–worth that emerges is a crucial

element if social movements are to succeed in establishing communities within a

dominant society.

The aftermath of the Gallaudet protest has produced within the Deaf social

movement a new rhetoric of assertion that performs a sense of self–worth.

Perhaps the comparison of an old and a more recent Deaf joke illustrates. The

age old joke takes on varieties of this form:

> There was once a Deaf man who was driving until he came to some train
> tracks. However, he was not able to drive through because the crossing
> signal gates were blocking his way. After waiting for a very long time,
> the Deaf man got out of the car and walked to where the gate controller
> was stationed. While the gate controller was talking on the phone, the
> Deaf man wrote on a piece of paper, "please but." The gate controller
> couldn't figure out what the Deaf man was trying to get across.

This joke does not make sense to non–signers because it is based on a sign play.

The written word "but" is a reference to a sign in ASL that means "to open the

gate," which is also the sign for the word "but."

The more recent joke takes on this form:

> A Deaf person was riding on a train and met a Cuban and a Russian.
> After smoking only half a cigar, it is thrown out the window. The Deaf
> person asks, "Why did you throw that out?" "Oh," says the Cuban, "we
> have plenty of cigars in Cuba." Later, the Russian too throws out a half–
> empty bottle of vodka. "We have plenty of vodka in Russia" says the
> Russian. The Deaf person contemplates all this. Then, as a hearing man

walks by, the Deaf person picks him up and throws him out the window. "We have plenty of hearing people in this world" is the explanation.

Douglas (1968) explains that jokes reveal the marginalized group's vision of the inequalities in society and this one articulates a vision of a strong Deaf person challenging an inferior status.

The "but" joke establishes the gatekeeper in a symbolic role of the hearing person who is frequently in control of the Deaf person's destiny and pokes fun at Deaf people's struggles with English. Anthropologist Susan Rutherford (1989) explains that this joke is "a picture of lack of control, lack of self-determination, negation of identity, stifled development, blocked communication, external control characterized by benevolent paternalism and authoritarianism" (p. 76).

In contrast to the older joke, the newer joke illuminates a sense of power and control, depicts self-determination, and is a positive enactment of the Deaf identity. However, hearing people often express distaste for this joke. Such a response could be expected because there is a rhetoric of confrontation--even a threat--in the joke. If expressive of a mood of many Deaf people in more recent times, it bodes a challenge.

Nevertheless, the transformation of consciousness evident in the two jokes exemplify the newer sense of self-worth. The previous joke that mocks the Deaf person as the "deviant" reinforces societal perceptions. The newer joke rejects the negative depiction and symbolically substitutes "the bad" for "the good."

Oppressed groups often use humor as a coping strategy against prejudice and discrimination from the dominant culture. Humor enables an oppressed group to symbolically condemn its unequal status which manifests the transformation of

its "misery by poking fun at oppressors" (Fine, 1983, p. 173). By attacking the dominant culture, a symbolic release from oppression transforms into the inculcation of pride, of self–worth in marginalized peoples, thus, creating a strengthened framework for cultural diversity (Martineau, 1972).

Another example of such humor, perhaps less pointed but still confrontative, appeared in the treatment of the hearing aid in the comic strip Oxford created by Bruce Hanson, featuring a Deaf monkey.[1] The Deaf monkey is shown to snatch a hearing aid from a nurse handing it to him, then proceeds to swallow the hearing aid and comments that it needs more ketchup. This comic strip takes a current manifestation of the dominant pathologizing strategies and attacks it in a way that promotes self–worth. In doing so, it brings humor to a more general strategy to build self–worth by attacking the pathological dominance.

The hearing aid, and more recently, the cochlear implant, symbolize age–old dominant practices to convert Deaf people into hearing people.[2] Where previously Deaf people sought to ward off pathological discourses by promoting the Deaf identity, current strategies essentially reverse the earlier by directly attacking symbols of pathology to promote identity. By celebrating the Deaf identity, the current strategies of confrontation blatantly denigrate the high value placed on the ability to hear by dominant discourses.

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[1]Hearing aids are "assistive devices" that help people with much residual hearing and word discrimination understand speech to some extent. However, for a majority of Deaf people, hearing aids serve little or no use.

[2]Cochlear implants are a fairly recent development in the medical field in an attempt to restore or augment at least some residual hearing. The cochlear implant requires major surgery during which a hole is drilled in the skull to transplant the device.

Past internalization of such dominant discourses reinforced the status of Deaf people by stressing inabilities rather than abilities. Such reinforcement maligned their self-worth. The direct assault on these symbols of pathology, on the other hand, performs a rhetoric of self-worth within a culture of diversity. To embody this rhetoric of self-worth, practices such as the ceremonial destruction of hearing aids have been carried out by Deaf people at an international symposium in France ("The Future," 1990). National Association of the Deaf (NAD) president Roz Rosen (1991) has also concluded that ears have usefulness as a resting place for her glasses. Such declarations assert the wholeness of the Deaf being.

The symbolism of the cochlear implant has provoked an especially intense reaction. In 1990, the Food and Drug Administration approved the marketing of cochlear implants for children aged two to seventeen. The NAD has established a task force and developed a position paper condemning this "experimentation" on children as "ethically offensive" ("Cochlear Implants," 1991, p. 1). Slogans have materialized—to "stop the cochlear madness" or "if its not broken, don't fix it"— to denounce the spread of cochlear implants. The cochlear implant embodies the prevailing painful and torturous medicalizing strategies, so many Deaf people have experienced, especially in childhood, to convert them into hearing, speaking people.[3] The cochlear implant is perceived as an especially agonizing process, because unlike hearing aids that can be taken off on a whim, cochlear implants

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[3]Medicalizing strategies include hearing aids, listening devices worn by Deaf students with gigantic earphones while the teacher wears a microphone, and other similar devices to thrust the development of speech and listening faculties on Deaf children.

are surgically implanted.[4] Deaf adults, after going through, in many cases, a difficult process to accept themselves as "Deaf," perceive the cochlear implant as an affront to their self-worth. Further, it is deemed offensive to their experiences which indicate that the cochlear implant is simply an extension of the hearing aid and not likely to be of much help to most Deaf people. The central theme captured in the movement's response to the cochlear implant is that the hard won battle for self-worth has become so precious that given a choice, many Deaf people would rather remain Deaf. As a Gallaudet student has avowed, "if there was a medication that could be given to deaf people to make them hear, I wouldn't take it. Never. Never til [sic] I die" (cited in Karlen, 1989, p. 134).

Not only has the Deaf social movement assaulted the rhetoric of pathology to reinforce the self-worth of the Deaf community, some discourse even turns the tables of pathology back onto the dominant society. Deaf people label members of the dominant society much the same way that Deaf people have been labelled. Stratiy (1989), for instance, created a chart evaluating the skills of hearing people just learning to sign, assigning them such characteristics as "signing impaired," "hard-of-fingerspelling," "dexterity disabled," and other such labels. These labels have often been attributed to Deaf people by dominant discourses. By creating a reversal in the rhetoric of pathology, such discourses by Deaf people illustrate a conscious refusal to be categorized according to dominant standards. By doing so, the sense of self-worth is legitimized.

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[4]The cochlear implant is especially condemned by many Deaf people because its value is highly doubtful, and because of its side effects, such as loss of balance, tinnitus, intense pain, and severe headaches (e.g., Roche, 1991).

The strategies to perform a rhetoric of self-worth illuminate discourses of assertion, even confrontation to attack prevailing discourses of pathology. Such a strategy, even though confrontative, validates the self-worth of the Deaf community. With this validation, the movement creates a discourse of difference, a rejection of the norm, and, thus, a celebration of diversity. Strategies of confrontation are more reminiscent of Black Power strategies than those of the diversity movements. Even so, the rhetoric of self-worth performs a necessary function that enables the movement to work for the internal building of community and eventually toward a multicultural society.

Creating an Internal Foundation for Community Building

Within the family of cultural diversity strategies, the rhetoric of self-worth moves the social movement to a higher plane of challenging dominant discourses through themes that seek greater ownership of the dominated community. African-centered curriculums and other multicultural practices illustrate. The Gallaudet movement embodied the ownership theme in the protestors' confrontation with patriarchal forces that had dominated the campus for years. The contemporary movement capitalizes on this theme by expanding it as a strategy to declare greater ownership within a multicultural framework.

One of the themes that characterized the rhetoric of Black Power was that the African-American community was occupied--white people ran the community, administering it for those who lived there (Carmichael & Hamilton, 1967). A central strategy in the post-Gallaudet movement has been the declaring of Deaf ownership of their community. The movement to place Deaf people in

positions of authority in the community is illustrative of this strategy. The Gallaudet protest was a step forward in this direction. The theme of declaring ownership was exemplified at the Gallaudet protest in its demand for a Deaf president, as well as its demand for a 51% deaf board composition. The successful launch of these demands at Gallaudet has paved the way to similar themes elsewhere.

To ensure that the Gallaudet protest would not be a one time thing, the Deaf social movement took advantage of the impetus to spread the discourses of Deaf ownership throughout the Deaf community. A particular venue for the strategy of Deaf ownership has been to point to the prevailing pathological practices within the educational establishment. Some Deaf people have argued that such practices are best illustrated by the meager numbers of educators-- popularly quoted as between 10 to 20%--who are themselves deaf (e.g. Bahan, 1989b; Coyne, 1991).

The rhetoric of Deaf ownership is illustrated in Ben Bahan's (1989b) proposal that the Deaf movement demand that for the next ten years, educational programs for the deaf be restructured to accommodate a quota of at least 50% Deaf educators. The discourse of Deaf ownership has expanded from the call for increased deaf people on the "outside" (e.g., the board) to that of the "inside" (e.g., a greater number of deaf teachers).

The call for more Deaf teachers has been transformed into several rallies across the nation for increased Deaf ownership. The contemporary Deaf movement has also capitalized on the success of the Gallaudet protest by adopting

rallies as occasions for communicating their demands. A recent illustration of this

practice was a protest held at the Wisconsin School for the Deaf. The Wisconsin

school protest bore resemblance to the Gallaudet protest in demands that the

hearing Dean of students be replaced with a Deaf person; that the present hearing

superintendent be replaced with a Deaf person upon his anticipated retirement in

1993; a goal to hire enough Deaf people to compose of a 51% deaf staff; and no

reprisals against the students (Moering, 1991a).

These strategies explicitly convey the promotion of Deaf ownership. Less

implicit is the relationship between Deaf ownership and access to the language of

the Deaf community—ASL. The superintendent at the school, John Shipman,

however, picks up on this connection:

> In the [a] deaf community in general, there's a movement toward bilingual
> and bicultural approach that also carries with it a belief that there should
> be a larger percentage of deaf employees. This thinking is developing, and
> our school is not the only place where that thinking is going on. (cited in
> "Deaf Students," 1991, p. 1B)

Indeed, the newer Deaf social movement has turned toward the strategy of other

diversity movements to establish more control over their own community as a

means to seek acceptance as a diverse culture with its own language.

The protestors at the Wisconsin school movement gained momentum by

capturing the attention of the state department of education that has jurisdiction

over the Wisconsin School for the Deaf. Assistant Superintendent of Schools

Victor Contrucci, in representing the state department, legitimized the protestors'

efforts to focus attention on their cultural and linguistic needs. Contrucci

announced that his department was in contact with the state Department of

Employment Relations to ask that civil service tests for candidates to the school incorporate consideration for users of ASL, as tests typically were given in standard English presenting a potentially discriminatory situation against Deaf people. Further, affirmative action efforts would be examined to encourage the recruitment of more Deaf personnel to the school (Moering, 1991b).

The protest at the Wisconsin school is illustrative of the practice adopted by the Deaf social movement to target educational institutions as places to promote Deaf ownership. As places that foster the cultural community of Deaf people, educational institutions symbolize the home of Deaf people. And to ensure that these "homes" truly belong to Deaf people, it is necessary to establish ownership by placing them firmly under the control of Deaf people.

But administrative control is not the only characteristic of ownership that has caught the current movement's attention. In addition, an old theme is back with increased intensity: the effort for full recognition of ASL as the language of the Deaf community. Where previously, ASL was legitimized as a language outside the classroom, the newer movement brought it into the classroom in a fashion consistent with the multiculturalism cluster of rhetorical strategies. Consider, for example, the recent strategy to promote ASL through the rhetorical demand for a shift from "communication" to "language" policies in schools. Virtually every educational institution for deaf students has communication policies which dominant discourses have long enforced based on the premise that such policies serve as a guiding force for classroom communication. The movement's stress on "language policy" effectively shifts the focus of debate. No

longer is the question: How will communication with the deaf student in the classroom be best facilitated? Instead the question is: How will the language of the Deaf student be best facilitated?

The movement from communication to language policies has become a strategy to implement bilingual and bicultural approaches in the education of Deaf students. While the discourse of bilingualism promotes Deaf ownership, it also challenges the dominant society to take on a multicultural framework. In keeping with this strategy of the other diversity movements, Gallaudet students, two years after the Gallaudet protest, established an ASL Now campaign to rally for the recognition of ASL at Gallaudet. The students petitioned the Gallaudet faculty senate to "develop a language policy that officially recognizes American Sign Language and English as two official languages of Gallaudet University." Specifically, "We want Gallaudet to be a bilingual university" (cited in Nye, 1990, p. 5).

The push for language policies validates the bilingual and bicultural identity of Deaf people and condemns communication policies as a password or a "veiled term" (Valli, 1990, p. 130) to legitimize the prevailing normalizing practices of Deaf people. This rhetorical move differs from the previous co-optative stance on total communication policies. The earlier struggle illuminated the acceptance of total communication as a way out from oralism even while it retained the theme of integration. The newer movement has brought the struggle into a different context. The shift to communication versus language policies creates a battle between integration and the preservation of cultural identity.

To support the argument that communication policies are normalizing

practices, those making these arguments marshal evidence such as survey results

which demonstrate that many teachers of Deaf students use sign and speech in the

classroom, rather than adopting the tenets of the total communication philosophy

(Woodward & Allen, 1987). Others depict a "tower of Babel" scenario to

illuminate total communication as a ridiculous practice. Bahan (1989c), for one,

marshals support for a language policy with such a rhetorical strategy:

> Imagine a teacher going over this sentence: George Washington never
> chopped down a cherry tree. Seven times for each child's need, using oral
> method, Rochester method (fingerspelling all the words in the sentence),
> SEE 2, writing, simultaneous method, drawing, and, if necessary for a
> child, Morse code. When the teacher finally finishes her sentence seven
> different times, it might be time for the child to go to another class.
> (p. 119)

Deaf people point to policies that enforce the use of speech as granting teachers

permission to order signing Deaf students to "sit on your hands." Even more

"flexible" communication policies validate practices that require a conformity to

the norm of speech. Simultaneous communication, for example, requires one to

speak and sign at the same time. An editorial in the student newspaper at

Gallaudet University illuminates how normalizing practices have been implicitly

enforced by prevailing values placed on speech skills:

> I find it strange that in the course of my school career, virtually all of the
> teachers and people that ask me to use my voice while signing are the ones
> who really suck dead dogs in sign language. These are the ones who ask
> me to speak for their _____ing benefit, while they don't make the slightest
> effort to improve THEIR signing. (Whetter, 1989, p. 4)

Communication policies however, not only promote normalizing practices

of enforcing the standard modality and language on deaf children, they have also

become a strategy to legitimize discrimination against Deaf people. Deaf teachers who do not speak face employment discrimination, especially in earlier grades where policies stipulate the need for teachers to train Deaf children to speak.[5] Many Deaf people have also related tales which illustrate practices by educators to give lower grades to students who do not speak. Consequently, by ridiculing communication policies such as total communication, the movement targets language policies as a strategy to legitimize ASL in the classroom. Thus, language policies that recognize both ASL and English validate Deaf people's bilingual and bicultural status. Such policies encourage the acknowledgment and respect of the cultural uniqueness of the Deaf community in keeping with the discourse of the diversity movements.

Further, this type of policy presents a rhetorical statement to the dominant society that Deaf people, as a distinct culture, should not be expected to function as the hearing people they are not. A language policy, thus, creates the distinction between pathological and cultural practices. The Indiana School for the Deaf makes such a distinction:

> The concept of bilingual/bicultural education for Deaf students is founded on a cultural perspective of Deaf life. This differs greatly from previous educational approaches that have been founded on a medical or pathological view of Deaf people, thus a bilingual/bicultural program represents a major shift in educational philosophy and attitude. ("Bilingual/Bicultural," 1990, p. 3)

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[5] Beverly Hanyzewski (1989) for instance, was denied an internship at a pre-school program for the deaf because according to the principal of the school: "[employees] must have good vocal skills, listening skills for evaluation of vocal skills" (p. 3).

The rhetoric of language policy, rather than communication policy, has begun its transformation into institutional practice at a few pioneer programs. Both the Indiana School for the Deaf and the Learning Center in Massachusetts have established bilingual and bicultural programs. Other schools are currently exploring ways to facilitate this approach. A significant move by Gallaudet toward this end has been the establishment of a task force to study the implementation of an ASL and Deaf Studies program.

Strategies that promote Deaf ownership foster a strengthened internal foundation for community building. By this token, the Deaf movement adopts the strategy of "institutional" rather than "individualized" integration as presented by the diversity movements. Even though Deaf ownership illuminates separatist rhetoric, as the diversity proponents have argued, creating a discourse of self-worth and building a healthy foundation of ownership are actually necessary attributes for challenging dominant discourses of inequality. Declaring ownership is, thus, a strategy to invalidate discourses of inequality and consequently, to promote a rhetoric of multiculturalism in the dominant society.

Transforming the Internal Foundation to the External: Access to the Public Space

The Deaf-as-good phenomenon and the move toward greater control of the Deaf community serves the function of validating the self-defined perception of Deaf people as equal to their hearing peers. And by establishing a rhetoric of equality, Deaf people assert their right along with their hearing counterparts to access the public sphere. However, a rhetorical dilemma is faced by diversity

movements, along with the Deaf social movement when dominant discourses posit the marginalized in a status of inequality.

For the Deaf community, a discourse of inequality has been created in the rhetoric of "it's a hearing world." Jane Bassett Spilman, then chair of the Gallaudet board of trustees said it with the infamous line that Deaf people are not ready to function in the "hearing world." Educators of the deaf also prescribe the importance of speech skills and fluency in English based on its being a "hearing world." This rhetoric legitimizes a standard based on the norm of hearing people. Discrimination against Deaf people who do not speak or who do not possess native-like fluency in English is validated based on the premise that they do not fit into a "hearing world." By accepting the ideological "it's a hearing world out there," Deaf people are placed in a subordinate position. To counter this dominant practice, the Gallaudet protest adopted a strategy of reversal: responding with assertions that Zinser was not ready to function in the Deaf world. The post-Gallaudet movement has moved to a higher plane, however. Rhetoric such as "Hell, it's our world, too!" (Bahan, 1989a, p. 47) illuminates this newer strategy.

In line with multicultural rhetoric, the strategy of "it's our world, too" explicitly asserts the right of Deaf people to fully participate in public life. The integrationist position that adapting to societal norms is the only way for Deaf people to acquire full accommodation is challenged by Bahan (1989a) who stipulates such an approach "will never work" (p. 48). As some of the protestors of the Wisconsin protest point out, it "will never work," because: "Your

[dominant society] world revolves around sound, ours revolves around sight – and that is why our language is so important to us. . . . You can learn our language, but we can never learn to hear" (Karlecke, J., Karlecke, R., Kelly, S., & Kelly, D., 1991, p. 11). The strategy of "it's our world, too," thus, insists that society accommodate the Deaf community in the move toward a multicultural society, because it will not work the other way around.

As a strategy to induce society to accommodate the Deaf community, the rhetoric of "communication violence" (J. E. Tucker, personal communication, November 5, 1991) has surfaced.[6] As Tucker explains, the rhetoric of "communication violence" is a charge against dominant practices that do not fully accommodate the Deaf community. This includes a wide spectrum from the inability to communicate with non-signing family members to the non-availability of ttys at most telephone booths, to non-access to intercoms and radios (J. E. Tucker, personal communication, November 5, 1991). The rhetoric of "communication violence" is, thus, a strategy to awaken the consciousness of both the Deaf community and the sensibilities of the dominant society.

More significantly, however, strategies such as "communication violence" reject minimal accommodation, and demand full access. Bilingual proponents argue that it is language access that Deaf students need, not merely

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[6]James Tucker coined the term on an inspiration from the Reverend Jesse Jackson, who frequently speaks a rhetoric of "diversity." Jackson had employed the term "economic violence" to refer to the failure of the government to distribute equally to its constituents. He argued that all Americans should have at the very minimum, basic health care, as the present system affords the best health care to those who can afford it. As a result, innocent children suffer from this practice, thus, the institution of "economic violence."

communication access. Accordingly, the rhetoric of "communication violence" is a demand for equal and total participation in the public sphere.

One recent strategy embodies the rhetoric of "communication violence," evident in the transformation of a device that symbolized their oppression into a symbol of diversity. Alexander Graham Bell left behind a legacy that would present an insurmountable barrier toward access to the public sphere for Deaf people--the telephone. The telephone has for years legitimized discriminatory practices against Deaf people, especially in employment. Even in Deaf establishments, virtually every institution has made it a practice to hire at least one hearing employee to answer voice calls. Such a practice focuses on what Deaf people cannot do, rather than what they can do.

Consequently, some Deaf people have chosen to target the telephone as the symbol that obstructs access to public participation. The choice of telephone as a symbol is a bold strategic move. With the Gallaudet movement, the rhetoric of Deaf ownership was played out in the strategy of claiming turf that should officially have belonged to the Deaf community. The newer strategy of the telephone on the other hand, is a brazen move to turn an object held dear by the dominant society into an object that legitimizes discriminatory practices of deaf people. The telephone is pointed to as a symbolic obstruction to public access since the practice of hiring hearing people to answer voice calls sends the message that there are indeed some things Deaf people are not able to do, even within their own establishments. And if they cannot perform these functions in their own

community, then employers outside Deaf establishments are justified in not hiring Deaf people, because they cannot fulfill these crucial operations.

As such, declaring the telephone as a symbol of discrimination has prompted Deaf people such as Levesque (1991) to propose that programs and services providing services to Deaf people enact policies to accept only tty calls.[7] This proposal would require voice callers to access establishments with such a policy via a telephone relay system, and, thus, places the telephone which has long legitimized employment discrimination against Deaf people, into a subordinate position.[8]

The proposal to ban voice calls would also alter the technology of communication, opening up very different rhetorical possibilities. By reversing the roles, with non–tty callers at the receiving end having to adopt technologies, this strategy serves to place these callers in a subordinate role. Most of these callers, presumably hearing people, will, then, experience what Deaf people go through every day of their lives in placing calls to people who do not have ttys. In this vein, the condemnation of the telephone promotes self–worth by validating the Deaf–as–good motif and establishes access to the public sphere, thus, creating an environment for greater tolerance of cultural diversity.

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[7]A tty is the original abbreviation for a device used by Deaf people to communicate over the telephone. In order to communicate with another party, it is possible to do so only if the other party also possesses a tty. A tty carries messages that are typed back and forth between the two parties on the screen. A recent term used by some Deaf people for tty is "tt" to represent the "text" telephone, where "vt" refers to the "voice" telephone.

[8]Telephone relay systems refer to the process in which Deaf people communicate with people who do not have access to a tty, and vice versa. The consumer of this service can call either via a tty or voice call, and "operators" are the third party that translates calls between the caller and the person called. Not all states presently have provisions for this service. However, recent legislation has mandated the establishment of telephone relay systems in the United States.

This strategy of the newer Deaf movement appears to create a paradox—
seeking greater public access by refusing to communicate in the dominant
technology of the very society the community is trying to access. However, this
strategy illuminates the power of cultural diversity strategies—marginalized
groups reject the practice of acquiring access on terms that deny their identity.
The conversion of self-worth and the strong community into public access built
with bridges to diversity rather than with access as inferior members—marginal
members of the broader public community. Rather than seeking integration, as
illuminated in the practice of accommodating on society's terms, this strategy
demands access on their own terms. Such a strategy also mocks an old nemesis-
-Alexander Graham Bell—recaptured in a different mode.

For the Deaf social movement, demands that society adapt to Deaf people
are also tempered by an invitation to work together to achieve that goal. The
movement to officially recognize ASL as a language across the nation is such a
strategy. As Bahan (1989a) contends, since Deaf people cannot conform to
society, the dominant society can and should accommodate the Deaf community.
One way to make this possible is to teach them ASL.[9]

Diversity movements share the theme that offering a multicultural
education will enable the dominant society to better understand and, thus, respect
various cultures. Accordingly, practices to teach ASL as a recognized language—

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[9]A poll in Deaf Life magazine suggests overwhelming support for hearing people to learn ASL
(96%). Among some of the comments: "More barriers between the hearing and non-hearing
communities will fall." "Hearing people [would gain] . . . a better understanding of the Deaf, [besides]
. . . they see the Deaf more often than foreigners." And, "DEFINITELY! Then more hearing people
will feel comfortable talking to & [sic] meeting Deaf people" ("Readers' Viewpoint," 1989, p. 31).

analogous to "foreign" languages common in our society, such as Spanish—is a strategy to create a pluralistic society. For the Deaf social movement, the official recognition of ASL throughout the country would validate its bilingual and bicultural status. Consequently, success in officializing ASL would promote a humanistic image of the Deaf community as a cultural and linguistic entity, and put to rest the predominately pathological view of Deaf people. The movement to officialize ASL promotes an environment that is willing to accommodate diversity and is, then, a strategy to create a pluralistic America.

Conclusion

Traditionally, rhetorical studies become interested in describing the full diffusion and effects of rhetorical strategy. The strategies of this chapter are contemporary strategies. They have neither diffused to their full potential, nor have the effects of their power been witnessed. Nevertheless, the rhetorical scholar can see their use and their coherence in the service of the Deaf movement and community.

For instance, a dilemma that has just begun to be addressed by the Deaf social movement has been: What is the balance between separatism and assimilation? Is there even a need for such a balance? As separatist rhetoric argues, total assimilation will not work because it deprives the cultural individual of his or her cultural identity. For Deaf people, full assimilation is additionally not possible since society does not accommodate the very basic communication needs of Deaf people. On the other hand, integrationists contend that total separatism is not possible for economic survival. As the three proposed attributes

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for community building indicate, a solution would appear to be a fusion of the best elements of each faction.

This theory is substantiated by Killian and Grigg (1964) who discuss a similar dilemma in regard to the assimilation of African-Americans into society. They argue that for assimilation to work, African-Americans need to have a psychologically and mentally healthy regard for themselves so that white people will be dealing with people who have a positive sense of their history and themselves as whole beings.

Killian and Grigg's evaluation need not be restricted to African-Americans. Such a diagnosis can extend to other cultural groups, including Deaf Americans. In societies which deem certain groups of people, such as Deaf people, as not normal, strategies are needed to modify dominant perceptions. As this chapter has illustrated, a positive sense of self-worth, internal community building, and access to public life have become strategies for maintaining a distinctive cultural identity.

As with the other diversity movements, in contemporary trends, the Deaf movement has created new strategies to address prevailing themes. The newer strategies exemplify a strengthened rhetoric of self-assertion as evident in the transformations of jokes, the condemnation of the fixation on the ear, and mockery of the pathological labelling of Deaf people. These strategies pose a stark contrast to earlier co-optive practices. The increased rhetoric of self-assertion lends credence to arguments that social movements pave the way toward empowerment among the membership evident in their break from traditional patterns and moving to create further changes (e.g., A. King, 1987).

This study of the rhetorical shaping of empowerment for the cultural identity of the Deaf movement illuminates the position taken by the Black Power advocates. Creating a sense of self-worth gives the marginalized group a sense of self-pride and, thus, generates an increased cycle of assertive rhetoric among the membership. With this healthy regard for themselves as a cultural identity, members become empowered to establish a greater stake in their territory which in turn increases their self-worth and pride. In turn, staking out a greater territory emboldens and empowers the members to approach the dominant society from an equal, rather than marginal standpoint. Since the dominant society has created the rhetoric of pathology, demeaning marginalized groups, empowerment must come from within. Black power takes this position, as do the contemporary diversity movements, and in turn, as this dissertation illustrates, the Deaf movement has begun to move toward this direction as well.

The earlier practices of the Deaf social movement, enhanced by the successful Gallaudet protest, thus, validated and strengthened the power of self-worth and presented new opportunities to create collective ownership and demands for access to the public sphere. A break in the vicious cycle of pathologic rhetoric has occurred, but is not yet complete. Consequently, the Deaf social movement is continuing the work begun by chipping further away at that break. This practice is demonstrated in the promotion of bilingual and bicultural approaches, for instance, to reinforce self-worth and to establish opportunities for greater control over their own establishments.

The strategy of retaining a separate cultural identity not only creates the basis for a healthy foundation, it also presents a means by which the cultural group can gain access to the dominant society as an equal, rather than subordinate. That is the strategy of multiculturalism--to promote a strong foundation by which cultural groups retain their identity and yet, be respected as exactly that while being extended the invitation to become a equal partner in society.

CHAPTER 7

Conclusion

This dissertation began as an examination of the Deaf social movement's rhetorical strategies to shape empowerment of its cultural identity. Such a study brings on a new understanding of the role social movements play in the empowerment of not only the Deaf community, but of other marginalized groups as well. The uniqueness of the communication modality used by Deaf people also brought on a status that distinguished it from other marginalized groups. This dissertation being a rhetorical study placed this distinction as a further unique phenomenon in that it became a reflexive study in which communication was not merely the means, but was the issue. This phenomenon presents a vision of a different world for communication. To illustrate, this conclusion will feature two sections. The first section will center on what has been learned about social movements and their treatment by rhetorical scholars. The second will address what has been learned about the Deaf social movement.

Toward a Theory of Empowerment in Social Movements

The study of social movements by rhetorical scholars is still a relatively new area of research, thereby affording rich opportunities to contribute to the field. I believe this dissertation makes such a contribution by presenting a new context through which to study social movements. The dominant theory of social movements has tended to treat movements as marginalized groups trying to establish access to the dominant society. Such an approach is basically an

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integrationist theory of appeal. Social movements are, thus, studied from the framework of the marginal trying to access the dominant society by persuading the dominant to allow them to do so, rather than the framework of converting society into accepting diversity.

As this study of the Deaf social movement has illustrated, studying social movements from a framework of empowerment and Foucault's characterization of the normalizing process brings out a new dimension of social movements. Such a treatment places social movements as a powerful force challenging the dominant society to create change by accommodating marginalized peoples. This approach to studying movements brings on an understanding of how the process of empowerment not only creates the impetus for a social movement, but sustains and expands a cycle of empowerment that reaches out to marginalized members and increases from one generation to the next. This understanding of the role of empowerment explains how each generation of marginalized groups become emboldened and, thus, more willing to challenge the dominant society.

In the application of a theory of empowerment to the Deaf social movement, we were able to see how the process of dominance and resistance played out through the historical struggle of the Deaf community and the dominant society. Even as dominant themes of normalization repeatedly dominated throughout the years, the Deaf movement was able to resist by creating counter strategies. As this dissertation entered each stage of the Deaf movement, it was evident that these counter strategies increased in strength and assertiveness as more Deaf people adopted strategies to create pride in themselves.

By studying these stages in the Deaf movement through a theory of empowerment, we were for example, able to appreciate the efforts of the movement to build an internal community. In this vein, the integrationist approach to the study of movements restricts in that a narrow frame of access to the dominant society overshadows the research and thus, significant strategies for empowerment may be overlooked. This suggests that studies of social movements would benefit from a theory of empowerment to escape from integrationist inclinations.

Using Foucault's depiction of the normalizing process to study movements fits in well with a theory of empowerment. For one thing, a Foucaultian approach helps us understand the position of social movements as they challenge the normalizing pattern so ingrained in the dominant society. Beyond that, the rhetorical construct of normality helps us reach an understanding of how movements become marginalized by rhetorical studies in the assumption that movements seek access to society. The perception of the dominant society as "normal" has inadvertently created a parallel expectation that movements in representing the "deviant" seek access to the "normal." So implicit is this practice that rhetorical scholars have accepted this integrationist approach as the norm. By using a Foucaultian approach, this tendency becomes clear and, thus, becomes a useful guide in preventing such tendencies.

In addition to the empowerment and Foucaultian frame of study, the treatment of the Deaf social movement in this dissertation is a departure from previous studies in one other way. Traditionally, movements have been studied

synchronically--by isolating them in their particular point in time. The treatment of the Deaf movement has on the other hand, spanned a time period of over a hundred years. Making this study diachronic has proved illuminating for a number of reasons. Including the historical events of the movement provides a means for comparison of strategies and has allowed us to learn how these strategies adapted over time. In this dissertation, for instance, we were able to see the emergence of empowerment as the cycle shifted over the years from strategies of co-optation to strategies of confrontation. Addressing the various stages as the movement evolved has also brought us a better understanding of how current strategies are adopted and how they compare to strategies of other movements over time. We were, thus, able to discern how the other liberating movements and societal trends influenced the strategies of the Deaf movement. Further, this approach allows us to look at the whole picture and at the common links among the phenomena. Without addressing the historical context of the movement, for example, the emergence of a Deaf identity, the demand for a Deaf president and current multicultural strategies may be misplaced.

Toward a Vision of the Deaf Movement in a Multicultural Society

The history of the relationship between the Deaf movement and the American culture traced in this dissertation has featured a reading of the rhetorical empowerment of the Deaf community. The early beginnings of relative isolation for deaf individuals to the emergence of the Deaf community via residential schools, to struggling for the recognition of their signing and later their language and culture amidst prevailing normalizing practices, to the bold assertion of Deaf

pride and contemporary strategies of demanding equality within a multicultural framework mark this cycle of rhetorical empowerment.

A dissertation that traces such emergence requires some sense of completion. Completion requires, however, a different mode of scholarship: the researcher must step beyond the assessor of past strategy and present configuration to become visionary and prophet. If the step is firmly grounded on the lessons about the past and present movement, it allows us a view of the journey upon which the society has embarked from a perspective inaccessible to those who would not venture the step. Therefore, the step from the firm footing of the past into the possibilities of the future completes.

The question of the future posed by this project grows from the previous chapter's discovery of the attributes of community building which are shaping the current movement: Can the rhetorical world envisioned by multiculturalism succeed?

The Multicultural Community

Roz Rosen (1990) describes what an "Utopia" for Deaf people would be like:

> There would be no difference in education, employment, communications and community life. . . . There would be total access, around the clock, on television, in movie theatres, over the phone, and in any human interactions. . . . There would be captions and signers everywhere. . . . Programs serving deaf people would be managed by deaf people. In the absence of attitudinal barriers, paternalism would fly out the window. There would be total acceptance of a multi-cultural society and valuing of natural differences in people. There would be true partnerships between deaf and non-deaf people in all walks of life. (p. 3)

Is such a society possible? Documented evidence of societies in which Deaf

people are perceived as normal suggest that it is. Studies of these societies

indicate that "normality" is a culturally constructed practice that results in an

environment that fosters a more successful assimilation for Deaf people than has

been evident in America and elsewhere.[1] The significance of these communities

is that the society accommodated Deaf people, rather than the other way around.[2]

Even though most of these communities were small, making it easier to

accommodate diversity, that the phenomenon of assimilation occurred at all

illuminates evidence that Deaf people [or other diverse groups] can be

accommodated by a dominant society.

Further, these studies suggest that a willingness to accommodate a cultural

group corresponds to its perception of the group as "normal." This thesis is

substantiated by a study of Providence Island. Woodward (1982) concluded in his

survey of hearing informants on the island that more positive attitudes were

generally held about their Deaf residents than are held by hearing people of Deaf

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[1]Assimilation has occurred in large part at the following communities: Little Cayman Island (Doran, 1952); Ayent, a Swiss commune (Secretan, 1954, Hanhart, 1962); Katwijk, a Dutch village (Aulbers, 1959); the Lancaster County, Pennsylvania Amish and Mennonites (Mengel, Konigsmark, Berlin, & McKusick, 1967; McKusick, 1978); a clan of Jicaque Indians in the Honduras (Chapman & Jacquard, 1971); Adamarobe, a village in Ghana (David, Edoo, Mustaffah, & Hinchcliff, 1971); the Guntar area of Andhra Pradesh in India (Majumdar, 1972); a Scottish clan, Jewish communities in Britain (Fraser, 1976); cultural units in Israel (Costeff & Dar, 1980); a Mayan Indian village of Nohya (Shuman, 1980); villages of Providence Island in the Caribbean (Washabaugh, 1979; Woodward, 1982); and Martha's Vineyard (Groce, 1985).

[2]Years ago on Martha's Vineyard, many hearing people used sign language in their daily interactions because there were a high number of Deaf inhabitants. The residents were so accustomed to using sign language, that it was treated as a way of life for the inhabitants--hearing or Deaf (Groce, 1985). This ability to interact without hindrance carried over to the perception of Deaf people by the hearing residents. When one informant was asked how the Deaf residents were perceived, the response was: "Oh, they [hearing residents] didn't think anything about them, they were just like everybody else" (p. 2).

people in the United States. For instance, in the United States, dominant discourses have constituted Deaf people as pathologically deficient.[3] In contrast, Woodward (1982) found that 77% of the hearing informants on the island determined that Deaf people are equally or more intelligent than their hearing peers, and equally mature (81%). In regard to employment, Deaf people in the United States are victimized by pervasive discrimination practices.[4] Hearing Providence Islanders were more receptive, however, to hiring Deaf people, although the motivation to do so was diminished at the time of the survey due to economic problems on the island. Nevertheless, payment scales were equal between Deaf and hearing people, unlike the situation in the United States.

Another difference in perceptions of sign language was also apparent.[5] Of the hearing islanders, only one person believed that Providence Island Sign Language was brought to Deaf residents from outsiders, 11% gave credit to hearing people for developing the sign language of Deaf islanders, and only 14% believed sign language was universal. Additionally, 77% believed Providence

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[3]Woodward (1982) cites a review of 38 major studies over a 37 year span demonstrated that it was a common occurrence to find hearing people in the United States equating a Deaf person's intelligence with his or her speech ability, regardless of the said person's actual level of intelligence (Mindel & Vernon, 1971). Even hearing educators of Deaf students have demonstrated a tendency to pathologize the behaviors of Deaf people.

[4]Rickard, Triandis, and Patterson (1963) found that personnel directors were more willing to hire people with tuberculosis or in wheelchairs than Deaf people. These directors were only more receptive to hiring Deaf people than people with epilepsy, ex-convicts, or former mental patients. However, when it came to the hiring of third grade teachers, Deaf people were placed last, next to people with epilepsy (cited in Woodward, 1982).

[5]Dominant discourses in the United States often posit that sign language was brought to Deaf people, rather it being a natural phenomenon (Woodward, 1982). Woodward also indicates the mistaken belief of many Americans that ASL is an universal sign language, not realizing that each country possesses its own sign language (Battison & Jordan, 1976). Further, many Americans (both hearing and Deaf) have constituted ASL as a broken or ungrammatical language (see Woodward, 1982, for sources). This dissertation has also illustrated the overall preference as constructed in dominant discourses for oral skills over sign language.

Island Sign Language was grammatical, and 63% regarded sign language as a different language from their spoken language. Most significantly, a strong majority (79%) maintained that hearing people should learn sign language to communicate with Deaf people, rather than Deaf people learning to speak in order to communicate with the dominant society.

Much can be gleaned from these studies. Certainly, there is a relationship between how a society defines people who differ from the norm and their reaction toward such people. These studies suggest a positive relationship between a dominant society that adapts to its diverse populations and their perceptions of equality. In view of these results, the proposed theory of community building appears warranted. Since the perception of "normality" is culturally constructed by dominant societies, the theory of community building presents a strategy to modify these dominant constructs so firmly held in place.

The Status of the Deaf Movement

This brings us to the question of how the Deaf social movement has fared thus far in the move toward a multicultural society. In comparison with other marginalized groups, one may be forced to concede that Deaf people have not come as far in making dents in the prevailing pathological perceptions held by the dominant society. Although the Deaf social movement has made inroads in making Deaf people more visible and in generating a greater sense of awareness about their community in the dominant society, much ignorance remains.

Other movements for the most part are represented by spokespeople who are members of their cultural community. White people are rarely featured as mouthpieces for African-Americans, nor for that matter do men speak for the Women's movement. Most non-dominant groups hold decision making power and are predominantly represented by their membership, at least, in their own establishments. Dominant discourses, while still a discourse of inequality in regard to the structural hierarchy, have undergone a transformation that for the most part restricts such discourse to a subtle level.

Deaf people on the other hand, are more often than not represented in the media by hearing people who constitute themselves as experts on the Deaf community. While making strides, especially since the successful Gallaudet protest in placing Deaf people in authoritative positions, the progress toward that end remains a gradually emerging process, and has yet to reach the levels of representation evident in other non-dominant controlled establishments. Dominant discourses while seeking to be helpful, continue to unconsciously adopt blatantly paternalistic tones in addressing issues of the Deaf community.

This slow progress of the Deaf social movement in comparison to other marginalized movements does not indicate the ineffectiveness of the strategies used by Deaf people, however. When evaluating the strategies used by the Deaf community thus far, it is necessary to note that the Deaf movement is restricted by barriers that may prove far more pervasive than evident in other movements. For one thing, most Deaf people are not born into their community. This creates an automatic gap not problematic in most movements with the possible exception

of the Lesbian and Gay movement. Accordingly, Deaf people take longer to create coalition. Further, additional barriers prevent most Deaf people from readily entering the Deaf community. Adapting to the Deaf community requires a period of adjustment and this process must be completed before a Deaf person can even begin to warm up to the Deaf social movement.

For another thing, the numbers of Deaf people actively participating in the Deaf social movement may be much smaller than in other movements. This is further compounded by the pervasive divisions in the Deaf community.[6] Further, the modality of speech holds reigning power almost universally. This modality so pervasively separates Deaf people from society that it creates a path in which society resorts to gleaning information about the Deaf community through people who share their modality. Thus, the modality difference makes it easy for hearing people to maintain symbolic and literal control over Deaf people.

In view of these barriers unique to the Deaf social movement, the Deaf community has indeed, come a long way in asserting their rights and empowering their community. To further advance their cause, the Deaf social movement should take into account the added rhetorical barriers they face and strategize to resolve these dilemmas.

For instance, it may benefit Deaf people to acknowledge the pervasive rhetorical barriers they face in American society rooted in the ideology of normality, in order to ascertain that the movement toward Deaf ownership may be

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[6]The Deaf community, as delineated in Chapter 5, has traditionally faced internal divisions, including deaf oralists, ASL users, those from mainstreamed schools, those from residential schools, African–Americans, and so on.

perceived as especially threatening. The Deaf social movement might, then, as a case in point, consider these factors in the struggle to enact bilingual and bicultural programs in schools. This move may be perceived as intimidating, especially to people not fluent in the language or culture of Deaf people. It need not be. Granted, the increasing prominence of ASL in educational institutions and other establishments may impose greater demands on hearing employees who do not possess fluency in ASL and legitimize a hiring system that favors Deaf people.

However, bilingualism and biculturalism can actually empower both Deaf and hearing people. Since ASL symbolizes the status of Deaf people as equal, yet distinct from hearing people, the dominant society will be forced to re-examine its perception of the Deaf community. Further, the increased visibility of Deaf people as co-workers will improve the fluency of their hearing peers' ASL skills, which usually correlates with the amount of interaction made with the cultural group. By being in close proximity with Deaf adults, hearing people would be given greater opportunity to interact with Deaf people. Frequent association with Deaf people is also likely to reduce the "mystery" of Deaf culture and to create a perception of Deaf people as their equals.

Along with this view of Deaf people as "peers" is the potential for greater respect for them. Respecting Deaf people means also to value their views, their experiences, and consequently to trust them in leading their own community. And if Deaf people are trusted to create environments where other Deaf people are allowed to maximize their abilities and to accept their Deaf identity, the self-

image that develops is far more healthy. People with healthier self-images are more likely to relate well to other people. Thus, Deaf people who are brought up in positive environments where their Deaf identity is valued, are likelier candidates for successful assimilation. As Killian and Grigg (1964) argue, a lasting solution for assimilation is not for African-Americans to pass as white, but to explore the meaning of "American." As long as being American implicitly denotes being white, it will remain difficult for African-Americans to have equal standing as Americans. By the same token, for assimilation to become effective for Deaf people and other marginalized groups, American society needs to examine its ideology of "normality."

To address these rhetorical dilemmas, the proposed theory of community building may prove inadequate. There is a need also to allay the fears of members of the dominant society. This may well be the fourth attribute for the vision of a multicultural society. Even if the three attributes were fully accomplished, inequalities could still prevail. If care is not taken, previous oppressors may simply be placed in the role of the oppressed. The fourth element, thus, needs to be the discourse of "humanitarianism." This may be the most difficult criteria, yet necessary in order to achieve a more egalitarian society. The struggle to break free from the constraints of oppression may place the oppressed in a position to penalize the former oppressors for their long-term suffering. This process only serves to continue the vicious cycle. Such a cycle can only be broken by establishing new precedents. The discourse of humanitarianism embraces the oppressors and strives for a more equal society--

but, only after the oppressed have built up the foundation that enables them to reach this stage.

The diversity movements in the United States appear to be a step in the right direction.[7] As illustrated in this dissertation, the Deaf social movement has come a long way in empowering its people and in striving for a more equal partnership with their hearing counterparts. The rhetorical strategies of the Deaf social movement are empowering in the implications for a more pluralistic society. After all, these strategies draw society away from the "melting pot" ideology, which restricts in that it encourages conformity to the norm, in favor of pluralism, which respects and celebrates diversity. The practice of pluralism empowers because it accommodates American democratic ideals and enables everyone equal respect regardless of differences.

[7]Consider for instance, a government task force on Native American education which recently submitted a report promoting the provision of a "multi-cultural environment" to the Education Department (Cooper, 1991, p. A19). In response to the high drop out rate of Native American students from public schools, (only 10 percent attend tribal schools on Native reservations), among the following are some of the recommendations made. Schools should "offer Native students the opportunity to maintain and develop their tribal languages and [schools] will [then be able to] create a multicultural environment that enhances the many cultures represented in the school" (p. A19). The number of Native American educators should be doubled. Existing Native preschool programs and tribal colleges should be strengthened to improve education for Native students.

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