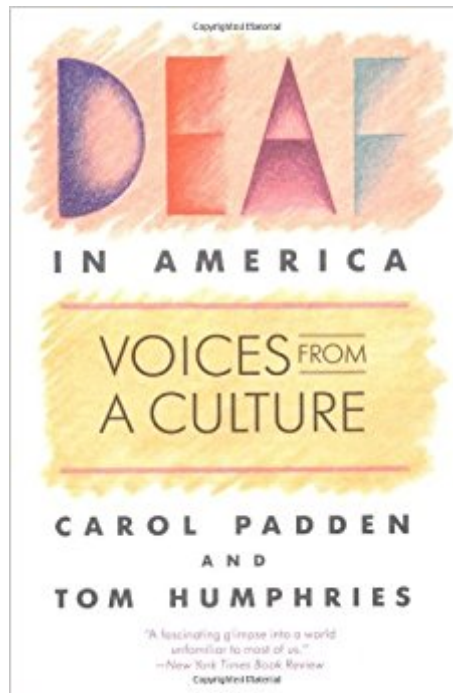




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# Deaf In America: Voices From A Culture



## Synopsis

Written by authors who are themselves Deaf, this unique book illuminates the life and culture of Deaf people from the inside, through their everyday talk, their shared myths, their art and performances, and the lessons they teach one another. Padden and Humphries employ the capitalized "Deaf" to refer to deaf people who share a natural language--American Sign Language (ASL)--and a complex culture, historically created and actively transmitted across generations. Signed languages have traditionally been considered to be simply sets of gestures rather than natural languages. This mistaken belief, fostered by hearing people's cultural views, has had tragic consequences for the education of deaf children; generations of children have attended schools in which they were forbidden to use a signed language. For Deaf people, as Padden and Humphries make clear, their signed language is life-giving, and is at the center of a rich cultural heritage. The tension between Deaf people's views of themselves and the way the hearing world views them finds its way into their stories, which include tales about their origins and the characteristics they consider necessary for their existence and survival. *Deaf in America* includes folktales, accounts of old home movies, jokes, reminiscences, and translations of signed poems and modern signed performances. The authors introduce new material that has never before been published and also offer translations that capture as closely as possible the richness of the original material in ASL. *Deaf in America* will be of great interest to those interested in culture and language as well as to Deaf people and those who work with deaf children and Deaf people.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

A fascinating glimpse into a world unfamiliar to most of us. (New York Times Book Review) To be deaf, it seems obvious, must be to live in a world of silence. That, say the authors of *Deaf in America*, is where most people get it wrong...[Padden and Humphries] challenge their readers to imagine a world, one with a "different center"--one in which ability or inability to hear is not at the core. The thing that links it all together is sign language, which *Deaf in America* contemplates, illustrates, and celebrates. (Paul Berg Washington Post) A long, painful experience of hearing intolerance has generally kept Deaf culture fairly closed to outsiders, even sympathetic ones. But now Padden and Humphries...have written a charming small book that invites the rest of us at least part way in...A most welcome addition to that very small shelf of books that truly illuminate the experience of being deaf. (Beryl Lieff Benderly Psychology Today) Through the use of folklore, apocryphal stories, poetry, jokes, and discussion of split factions and advocacy organizations, Padden and Humphries gracefully explain how deaf culture works, what it means to its members, how they define themselves within it, and how they interact with the world outside. Providing rare insight into this universe of silence, this volume conveys the joy and satisfaction that many deaf people have in their lives and shows that being deaf is not a handicap that most hearing people think. (Booklist) In this wonderful book, we see Deaf culture from inside out and from outside in at the same time--a miracle and a delight. (Harlan Lane, author of *When the Mind Hears: A History of the Deaf*)

In this wonderful book, we see Deaf culture from inside out and from outside in at the same time--a miracle and a delight. --Harlan Lane, author of *When the Mind Hears: A History of the Deaf* --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

As someone who has been involved with ASL and Deaf culture for a relatively long time (I took ASL1 in 1991... I'm now a teacher and interpreter), I find this book worth every page. Perfectly comprehensive and very well organized. A lovely read.

I bought this book for my Deaf Culture class and it was an enjoyable read. This felt more like a storybook, a more lax of a read compared to other books about Deaf Culture. I feel like this book is very introductory. I agree with the reviews that this is more experience than informative. Regardless, it is a great introduction to anyone interested in Deaf Culture, however this should not be the last book you read about Deaf culture.

Padden is a great writer and she explains the Deaf community very well, easy for anyone to understand. I am Deaf myself and she is one of my all-time favorites. She is really well-spoken and we hold her in high esteem in our culture.

You can understand Deaf culture from the point of view of the deaf.

I had a hard time reading this book. I actually only made it about 20 pages in and realized this wasn't what I was looking to read. If this is your type of book it seem pretty informative but I found I had to reread the same sections over repeated. I recommend getting the sample section to read before purchasing. This is the perfect example of why looking at a book in the bookstore before purchasing is a great idea. Not what I needed.

I highly recommend this book to anyone who hasn't taken a Deaf culture class, or anyone who HAS taken a Deaf culture class. It is an excellent read, it's quick and very insightful. It opened my eyes a lot.

This was required reading for a college sign language class. Gives you some insight into Deaf culture but not much. However, It did share some interesting stories. I wouldn't suggest it if you are looking for a great deal of information

Anything by Carol is worth owning, not just reading. I hope to convince her to be my mentor someday. Great book by a fantastic author.

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