

DEVELOP, DIVIDE, DESTROY

by

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(An Original Deaf Drama in Three Acts)

Submitted at the Request of Dr. Donna Clevinger

University of North Texas

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CHARACTERS

Abbe Charles Michel de L'Epee---Hearing educator.

Samuel Heinicke---Hearing educator.

Edward Miner Gallaudet---Hearing educator.

Alexander Graham Bell---Hearing educator.

(Note: Two actors can double in the above roles.)

Onstage interpreter(s)---Hearing and Deaf, males.

Robert McGregor---Deaf orator, uses Amer. Sign Lang.

#1---Deaf female, model student.

#2---Hard of hearing(HH)/hearing "speech" model.

#3---Deaf male, sign singer or comedian.

#4---Hearing male, opera singer.

#5---Deaf or HH or hearing female dancer.

#6---HH or hearing male dancer.

#7---Deaf male athlete.

#8---HH or hearing male athlete.

#9---Deaf or HH or hearing male.

#10---Hearing male.

#11---Female hearing who has a "Deafie" mentality.

#12---Deaf male who is forever "neutral" or in limbo.

#13---Deaf or H.H. female who has a double-personality.

#14---Deaf female who is always confused by the issues.

#15---Hearing female who is fluent at ASL and has an

excellent narrator's voice and an expressive

disposition as well as mime skills.

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED IN SCRIPT:

American Sign Language: A language used by the deaf when communicating among themselves. Also known as ASL or Ameslan. ASL has its own syntax, rules and concepts.

Authoritarianism: This word often means that the hearing people make pivotal educational, legislative, political, economic and social decisions related to the welfare of the deaf without soliciting or consulting the deaf community.

Cued Speech: A method of teaching deaf through the use of eight different handshapes placed on the face. The cues represent visible syllables the spoken language.

Deaf and Dumb: Outdated terms used to refer to deaf students or people who could not use intelligible speech. Today the word "dumb" is considered derogatory.

Deaf Mutes: A mute is someone who does not use intelligible speech. The term "mute" is also outdated and misleading.

Deafie: An infrequent slang used by deaf people to describe themselves in a humorous way. The word also refers to hearing people who think and feel like deaf people.

Fingerspelling: Refers to the use of the hand to spell the alphabet. Also known as dactylology.

Gesturing: A way of communicating with the body or parts of the body to express an idea or emotion.

Hard of Hearing: Persons who are able to utilize their residual hearing through amplification and possess sufficient oral skills to maintain a normal conversation in the appropriate environment.

Hereditary Deafness: Pertains to one of the causes of deafness in which the hearing loss is inherited.

Interpreter: A professional translator of sign language who signs the spoken words for the deaf. A reverse interpreter is someone who translate the signs to voice or signs to another interpreter.

Limbo: Sometimes refers to deaf or hearing impaired people who are caught in between the deaf and hearing world and cannot associate themselves fully with either world.

Lipreading: An educational method that believes that the deaf and hearing impaired should learn to recognize letters, sounds or words on the lips. Also known as speechreading.

Listening Skills: An approach commonly used in deaf education to teach the deaf to utilize his residual hearing with the help of amplification. Also known as auditory training.

Manual Communication: Refers to the various sign systems used by most programs for the deaf. Signing and fingerspelling are used in this process. English is often stressed in this method.

Mouthing: Pertains to the way the mouth is exaggerated as to make the words clearly understood or read, with or without the use of the voice.

(Definitions, continued.)

National Association of the Deaf: A national organization of and for deaf people that protect the political, social and economic rights of the deaf and hearing impaired. The NAD has a network of deaf state associations that also enhances awareness of deaf rights, culture and needs.

Oral Communication: A philosophy or method that supports the use of speech, lipreading and listening skills as primary means of education of the deaf without using any fingerspelling and manual communication. Also known as oralism.

Oralist: Refers to a person who uses the oral method and opposes to any signs or fingerspelling: Prefers to use his speech in everyday life.

Paternalism: This word is used often by the deaf community who refer to hearing people who treat deaf adults like children.

Rochester Method: Another method of teaching the deaf by using primarily fingerspelling and speech throughout the school hours.

SEE1: An abbreviation for Seeing Essential English which is another sign system that uses basic ALS signs in English syntax and is sound-oriented, regardless of the meaning of the word.

Signed English: A sign system that follows the English syntax rather than ASL and has its own English oriented vocabulary, verb endings and word cues.

Tinnitus: Pertains to a painless condition of internal ringing or whistling in the ears. Tinnitus is not curable and the person has to live with this annoying "head noise."

Total Communication: A method or philosophy or approach that uses signs, speech, speechreading, listening skills, fingerspelling, reading, writing, and even mime for the overall benefit of the deaf child.

Two Camps: Refers to the deaf education controversy between two primary methods, oralism (speech) and manualism (signs).

Voicing: Refers to the use of the voice, intelligible or not, when signing or fingerspelling.

World Congress of the Deaf: An international organization of deaf and hearing people who are interested in a variety of issues such as education, arts, audiology, psychology, rehabilitation, and communications.

#15 (Enters spot on downstage center and addresses the audience in signs and voice): Good evening. Before I start my prologue, may I ask how many of you in this audience have a hearing loss? (Raises hand and counts and says to the audience) There are obviously deaf people here. Perhaps most of you may not know that the deaf and hearing impaired are highly diversified. It is difficult for them to comply with a hearing society. Their lives are dictated by those who wish to mold them into society's image: to speak, to hear, to act, to behave, and to think like them. We share this story with you from the hearts of those who faced continuous changes, endless divisions, and many deaths of their dreams. (Moves to join her group as stage lights come on, except for two dim spots on downstage right and left.)

Handwritten notes:
The story
the man

Handwritten note:
what story, Steve?

SCENE ONE:

There are three large upstage screens hanging above the stage: Upstage center, SR and SL. Fifteen people are lined up horizontally on a single raised platform near center stage: They are wearing a units-type of clothing that can be eventually switched to different periods. On downstage right is SAMUEL HEINICKE, age 26, a proud German educator

who is seated in front of a letter-writing desk. Also sitting and writing is CHARLES MICHEL ABBE DE L'EPEE, a French priest, age 43, on stage left. Pictures of ancient Greece flash on left and right screen and offstage music of a flute and harp is heard as the "chorus" of the same 15 people sway and move, then turn to face the center stage caption which says in English and Greek: "Born deaf become senseless and incapable of reason." The chorus members break up in pairs, leaving the 15TH one as a mysterious and detached observer. Each pair mimes out their reaction to the Greek statement. The 7th pair ends the flowing chain reaction by expressing stark fear of more ignorance to come. Greek music ends and is replaced by Roman marching drums and horns, corresponded by pictures of ancient Rome on the side screens, then captions in English and Latin saying, "To instruct the deaf, no art could reach, No care improve, and no wisdom teach," on the middle screen. The 15TH person remains detached as the others march like Roman soldiers, moving with military precision. The chorus members continue to demonstrate battle formations, especially the phalanx, until each chorus/soldier is divided and "killed." Then the sound of church music and accompanying Georgian chant accompany the pictures of the

ecclesiastical Middle Ages. The chorus members now become common serfs as they stand up to see the following captions in English and illuminated Latin: "Because of the sins of their parents, the deaf cannot be saved." The chorus/serfs offer to pay for penance, but all in vain. The 15TH one stands in defiance, points to the right screen which says in English, "Saint Frances de Salle," points to the left screen that says in Gothic English, "The Deaf are saveable, therefore I baptize you in..."(all make the sign of the cross). Center screen shows a picture of Saint Frances de Salle. Then chorus members baptize each other, except the 15TH one who watches the ceremony with detached interest. When the peer baptism ends, the year "1755" appears on the center screen, light on HEINICKE and DE L'EPEE who are writing to each other. Captioned on the left screen is "Abbe Charles Michel de L'Epee." Right screen then shows "Samuel Heinicke." #7 and #9 walk from the platform to step forward; each stands beside the writers and each interprets simultaneously what each non-signing writer says. Rest of the chorus are mere spectators who sit on the raised platform like a group of tennis fans observing a close match. The 15TH one is isolated spatially: She acts like she sees a pivotal and tragic moment just about to happen. All freeze

and 15TH steps forward to narrate to audience.

#15: (Watch carefully. Those two men will change the destiny of the deaf with their methods of teaching.) (Pointing to de L'Epee) He is the father of manual communication...and (pointing to Heinicke) he is the father of oral communication. They have never met. This is the only correspondence between them. Watch. (Returns to her place.)

*What will they do?
Don't say it, show me!*

DE L'EPEE (he writes and speaks as HEINICKE reads):

Learned Sir, I maintain that a lack of hearing can be replaced with the help of sight. My new institution provides the Deaf and Dumb with an opportunity to absorb abstract ideas by the methodical signs. Words may never be heard by my students but their eyes will catch them when there is signing and fingerspelling. Our system provides our students with a shorter and readier way to learn. I trust that we share the same interest in providing the Deaf and Dumb with the best means of educating them.

HEINICKE (he writes and speaks as de L'Epee reads):

It is very pleasant to correspond with you to share a cause that applies to these handicapped persons

without permanent usefulness. Unfortunately, your institution, though on a noble mission, is not the only alternative. Indeed, I've tried signs as well as fingerspelling, but all were in vain. It is a mistake to believe that the sense of sight can through written speech replace the sense of hearing for deaf mutes. We hearing people grasp them only through our auditory sensation but never as representations. Words come from sound, not sight, therefore concepts without percepts are empty. Not only do my students retain more concepts in speech, they also write, read and think normally.

DE L'EPEE: So you affirm that you have discovered an even shorter and easier method of instructing the Deaf and Dumb. Monsieur Heinicke, to make the students write, read and think like normal hearing people is absurd. Afterall, the ear is shut against us: But we recourse to the eye, a window which is pervious to all sensible images, and by which their minds only receive an accurate and durable impression of the various forms of letters. If your pupils can speak so distinctly, then they are merely imitating the art of declamation. My students can recite, in signs, Antony's eulogy of Caesar...

HEINICKE: So can my pupil...

[Copy of the funeral speech is at the end of script.]

[#1 moves next to de L'Epee and signs the eulogy just as #2, who stands next to Heinicke, recites the same speech orally. When they both finish, they return to the platform.]

HEINICKE: We have shared the results of our successful works but I must confess that our notions touching most eligible manner of instructing the deaf and dumb are wholly at variance, and I very much doubt, will never be reconciled. My deaf pupils will always be taught by a slow and easy process to speak both their vernacular tongue and foreign languages with a clear and distinct voice, from habit and from understanding, just as well as those who enjoy the faculty of hearing. (Heinicke gets up to begin to select the chorus members with even numbers and all seven of them are lined up single file.)

DE L'EPEE (also gets up to gather all the odd-numbered chorus members, except #15, and lines them up next to Heinicke's students):

[Both educators proceed to dress their respective line with colored smocks, blue for the de L'Epee's charges and black for Heinicke's side...the numbers remain the same...but #15 quickly pulls two members from each line and gives those four "saved" members a white smock to

wear and all five stand on the raised platform.]

[After each educator bids the other farewell, de L'Epee EXITS stage left and Heinicke EXITS stage right. Left screen is blue, center screen is whitish grey, and right screen is fuzzy black.]

[Beat. Scene 2 begins]

[All freeze as #15 steps forward to narrate.]

#15: Now we are split: two camps, two teams, two lives,
two personalities, two minds, two souls. Absurd!
Like between faiths, there is a race for the most
deaf souls. Watch. (Steps on raised platform.)

[Offstage Olympic theme music is heard. Left screen shows word "Swifter"...center screen captions the word "Higher"...and right screen shows the word "Stronger." Each member of his/her respective team completes with the adjacent one. #15 and her white team, at first, do not react: They watch without emotions but eventually they start to cheer or boo vocally and physically in a random way.]

COMPETITOR #1 (signing and mouthing clearly) I shall
win!

COMPETITOR #2 (vocalizing and gesturing): Don't make me
laugh! (Laughs) I'm going to win!

[Both #1 and #2 recite Lincoln's "Gettysburg Address"
very quickly (speech in back of script). #1 finishes
first. As #2 finishes next: He is panting hard. Score
is displayed on left screen, saying "1" and right screen
shows "0." #1 and #2 move back of the line to allow
for the next round of inter-team competition.]

COMPETITOR #4 (speaks clearly): For...our...singing
contest,...I...would...like...to...sing...an...
aria... called ..."In The Springtime Days of Life."
(Although he sings Beethoven's aria very well, the
performance seems to border on sadness and absurdity.)

[After aria ends, COMPETITOR #3, does a mock imitation
of COMPETITOR #4 by mouthing, gesturing and miming,
all without voicing. This "satirical" aria is strong
but COMPETITOR #3 loses this round on account of
society's need to hear more than it sees.]

[COMPETITORS #3 and #4 go back to the end of the line
and the score is now "1" to "1" and #3 is angry.]

COMPETITOR #5 (signing, gesturing and mouthing): Can you

do this?... (does a tap dance or special choreography that is quick, brief and difficult).

COMPETITOR #6 (laughs and does a better style of the same dance):

COMPETITOR #5 (takes the duel dancing more seriously and executes a difficult number):

COMPETITOR #6 (surprised but confident and dances the number even better):

COMPETITOR #5 and #6 (both start their duel dancing together until #6 gives up and both move back to the line):

[The score is upgraded, "2" to "1."]

COMPETITOR #7 (gesturing and pointing to #8): I challenge you to beat me, oralist! (Does a Greco-Roman wrestling stance and beckons to #8 who accepts willingly.)

[In the Greco-Roman wrestling, COMPETITOR #8 wins on three falls out of five. Both return to the back of the line. The score is now "2" to "2."]

COMPETITOR #9 (walks up and challenges #10 with a gentle slap on the face with an "invisible" glove: a call to duel together for honor and pride):

COMPETITOR #10 (returns the challenge by slapping #9 twice on the face):

[A duel is taking place. COMPETITOR #1, a "seconds"/counter, moves to downstage left. COMPETITOR #2 moves over to downstage right and serves as seconds/counter. COMPETITOR #9 faces #1 with his back to #10 who faces #2. The rest of the teams lines up horizontally between the duelists while #15 and her "saved" four move to the raised platform, looking sad. The teams stamp their feet to the count of the number while #1 and #2 lead the actual count for #9 and #10 who start the paces.]

COMPETITORS #1 and #2 (the former signs with one hand while latter voices the count as well as gestures with two hands): One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten!

[COMPETITORS #9 and #10 turn and aim with an "invisible" pistol. PAUSE. The thumb, like a "hammer," goes down and the seconds, namely #1 and #2, are shot dead instead. This is a paradoxical killing: A reminiscence of an emotional F. Goya painting of a firing squad scene. Everyone freezes in place, some looking shocked or fearful or cynical or vindictive or victorious or sad or angry or happy. #15 moves to down center. Lights dim and spot on #15.]

[Offstage tinnitus sounds begin: corresponding visible sound waves are seen on the three screens.]

#15: The sounds you hear and see are called tinnitus. Painless sounds increase in your head. The deaf experience ear ringing frequently. But tinnitus is not worst than being second-class citizens for thousands of years. The deaf were baptized for the first time only 400 years ago. But (smiles), people are still trying to save the poor deaf souls. (Cynically) What terrible...pitiful...sinners they must be! They became divided, not by choice, but by a religion of teaching methods. The deaf were separated but equal. Society keeps them apart for reasons the deaf do not condone. And no matter how they were developed, they became divided again and again. How they dream of a unity untouched by a society that will let them live for who they are. But event after event made the dream an illusion. Time after time, they begin to wonder ...whose side God is on?

(Blackout.)

END OF ACT I

The three suspended screens are each now divided into three different parts: each part has a different shape and color. There are three raised platforms: each has its own color, from left to right, black, white and blue. The middle platform has a three-level folding stand. EDWARD MINER GALLAUDET, age 47, an advocate of manualism, stands in front of the blue platform that holds characters #1, #3, #5, #7, and #9. Standing in front of the black platform with five people (#2, #4, #6, #8, #10) is ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL, age 37, a die-hard educator of oralism. #15, the narrator, is facing the audience on down center.

#15: In 1880, two major events in the history of deaf took place. This one happened in Milan, Italy. With only one deaf delegate at the World Congress of the Deaf, hearing people voted to outlaw sign language. It was a tragedy for all those who believed in the rights of the deaf to sign. Leading the delegates from America was Edward Miner Gallaudet: He fought a gallant but futile fight. Alexander Graham Bell was the man who orchestrated the meeting. A lone deaf delegate stood in the middle to witness the debate that was to alter the lives of many generations. (Goes to the middle platform to sit and to observe with interest.)

[Stronger lights on stage. An INTERPRETER enters on stage right to interpret for Bell. BELL steps forward before a small podium to start his debate before the audience.]

*If they are going
to sign and
allow
1. 2. 3.*

BELL: Members of the World Congress of the Deaf! You have just voted for the best method. You have endorsed oralism as the only means of educating the deaf. After 125 years of debate, the fittest method has survived! Equally important is the divine right of the deaf to learn to talk and to function normally in society. Yes, God has guided you in this historical moment. (Pauses.)

#1 (steps forward, signing and voicing in sotto voce to audience): But Dr. Bell is wrong. God gave us signs and (took them away.) *God did it?*

#2 (interrupting #1): You fool! God wants us to speak. Society doesn't sign, so why bother to sign at all.

[Offstage tinnitus sounds.]

[Both returned to their respective platforms, shaking clenched fists at each other.]

BELL: The greatest gift in the world is giving speech to the deaf. Your noble resolution will bring the deaf back into the fold of normal people. (In midst of cheers from his section, Bell returns to his place.)

GALLAUDET (steps forward. Partially signs and speaks part of the time while the interpreter continues): As you know, I am a hearing minority but I speak for the majority among the deaf. You have disgraced the deaf with your vote. You are also selfish, blind and vain. If you think that God is a party to this tragic decision, you are gravely mistaken: God's name has been taken in vain. You are blind to the truth because sign language IS God's gift. And you are selfish because you never bother to ask the deaf what they want. (Pauses.)

#4 (emotional. Sotto voce to audience and numbered people):
I want to learn to talk and sing like hearing people.
My parents are hearing. My children are hearing.
Therefore, I need good speech to help me. I want to speak!

#3 (also sotto voce: talks to #4): Are you crazy? Is that possible? It's not. You know it. My family never understood a word I said, nor did I ever understand their constant chatter, their meaningless words.

[Both prepare to fight, but make threats instead.
They return to their places in empty "triumph."]

GALLAUDET: I cannot call your action just. In a way, you have stolen the rights of the deaf. You will be guilty of many educational...and spiritual deaths. May God

forgive you. (Returns to his place; his team cheers.)

[Onstage INTERPRETER exits stage left.]

#15 (steps off platform): Ever wonder whose side God is on?

(Short pause. Then points to Bell and Gallaudet.)

Sometimes both of them asked too much from the deaf.

[Offstage tinnitus sounds increase.]

BELL (signing and speaking): I propose that the deaf be
legally sterilized!

[#10 and #9 "defect" over to middle platform in disgust.]

ALL NUMBERED PEOPLE [not #15] (in unison): Why?

BELL (turns to numbered people, then faces audience): So that
they will not breed more deaf babies.

[In anger, #8 and #7 also move to the middle platform.]

ALL NUMBERED PEOPLE: What?!

BELL (casually): And I propose that deaf never marry deaf.

[Disillusioned #5 and #6 also defect to the middle.]

ALL NUMBERED PEOPLE: But why?

BELL: To eliminate hereditary deafness! (EXITS SR.)

Handwritten notes:
this is
domestic
sexual
and
was
apparently
planned

[#4 and #3 also move to the middle platform.]

GALLAUDET: I propose that you use fingerspelling more.

ALL NUMBERED PEOPLE (voicing and fingerspelling) All the time?

GALLAUDET (voicing and fingerspelling) Y-e-s.

[#1 moves to the middle platform.]

ALL NUMBERED DEAF (voicing and fingerspelling): Ohhhh, noooo!

GALLAUDET: And I propose that you use your voice all the
time, whenever signing. (EXITS SL.)

#1 (steps in front of her deaf peers, signing and vocalizing):
Use your voice! Use your voice!.... (Begins to act
like conductor before her "band" of deaf voices.)

[#15 is amused and moves to downstage left. People #13
and #14 ENTER from SL to join the chant and step on the
white platform. And people #11 and #12 ENTER from SR
to do the same.]

#15 (to the audience): The second major event took place in
America where the National Association of the Deaf
was established. Robert McGregor became its first
NAD president (EXITS SL.)

[Beat. Scene 2 begins.]

[The chant now changes to...]

ALL NUMBERED PEOPLE (led by #1 as ROBERT MCGREGOR enters
SL with a telegram): Signs, signs, signs, signs..!

[INTERPRETER enters next to RM to reverse interpret.]

MCGREGOR [ASL] (asks for silence, holds up the telegram): I have in my hand here, a paper of brutal irony. Dr. Gallaudet says that sign language is being outlawed! (Reaction from platform is one of shock and mixed feelings.) As we form our association, our rights are denied. My friends, this is not only a day of infamy but the beginning of another long struggle to preserve our rights as deaf people. In the eyes of Dr. Bell, we are now children! (Becoming angry.) Yes, children who must obey hearing people who want us to talk, think, walk, and act them. Is that what we want?

ALL (chanting; signing, fingerspelling): No, no, no, no...

[#2 suddenly steps over to the black platform, raises and waves her hand desperately. All eyes turn to her.]

#2 (voicing and signing): Yes, yes, yes! (Pause.) That is what I want.

ALL (voicing and signing): What do you want?

#2: Even though I am the only delegate to say this, I want

What do you want?

to be a hearing person in any way I can. I hereby
move that we endorse the Milan Resolution!

ALL (showing thumbs down): Booooooo!

MCGREGOR (asks for silence; looks at #2): But why?

#2: Signs are too limited: they cannot teach abstract
ideas. I neglect my speech when I sign. That is
not good. Dr. Bell is right.

MCGREGOR (referring to the telegram): It also says here
that deaf teachers will be outlawed. Is that
what you wish to see happen too?

#2: If we must make such sacrifices, so be it.

[All, except McGregor, and #10 who moves toward #2, are
led by #1...chanting slowly and strongly...signing
..."Wrong, wrong, wrong..." They are taunting #2.
Then #10 steps to her rescue.]

#10 (voicing and signing): No! You are wrong! As the only
hearing minority of a true majority, I ask you to do
what is best for you...your education, your families,
your jobs, your lives. You all know that the deaf
people cannot monitor speech. There is no way in which
a true society will compromise with you. Can't you
understand...

MCGREGOR (interrupting): But we are realistic! This Milan
Resolution deviates from the truth. We will not concede
to the evil elements of paternalism and authoritarianism!

[Scene 3 begins after MCGREGOR/INTERPRETER exit.]

[All except MCGREGOR, #2, #10, and #15, chant the words...
"paternalism!"..."authoritarianism!"..."traitors!" #10,
followed by #2, rushes up to McGregor to snatch the
telegram and a chase is assured by chanting foes. At
this point, the interpreter and McGregor EXIT. Then
the chase evolves into a rugby football game. (In this
scene, perhaps there should be an OS fight song). This
is to be a comical scene: A comic relief. #15 ENTERS
to become a referee: She blows the whistle randomly
but no one hears her. The people split in three groups:
The "neutral" whites, #11 to #14, move to the middle
platform to cheer for both teams; the blue team, moves
to stage left; and the black team forms a wedge or a
so-called scrum while #10 holds the football. Then there
is passing and handing off until there is a tackle by the
blue team which now runs, passes and hands off the football.
Another scrum develops until the blue team scores on a
kick. Then the blue team kicks off for another round in
which the black team also scores. After battling to a
tie, #15 blows the whistle and waves a towel to end the
first half. Both teams are exhausted as they return to
their respective platform to recover and to regain their
strength as well as their sanity.] [Pause.]

[#15 beckons the white group to pass out the Gatorade
drinks to the weary players. #11 and #12 move over to
mime the passing out of the refreshing drinks to the
black team. #13 and #14 do the same for the blue
team.]

[The white team conspires to spike the drinks with an intoxicating alcohol. Again, this is comically done and not an indication of anything sinister. After this undetected second round of potent drinks, the players are more relaxed and friendly. The spirit of comradeship prevails over the conditioned animosity. OS tinnitus stops.]

^ #15 (smiling): The deaf share a comradeship despite the factions that would isolate them...when the mood is right.

#9 (waving to get #10's attention): Hey! Do you think Dr. Bell wants to...sterilize us?

#10 (shaking his head and meeting #9 on middle stage): He will not do that to us. (We will fight him.) (Both sit down and have a small talk together.)

#8 (gets football and invites #7 to play catch near stage right where they play on and off stage): Come play.

#6 (walks up to #5 to invite her to dance a soft waltz on stage left; to the music of Beethoven's "Moonlight.")

#2 (brings an extra drink to #1): Do you think it's wrong for Dr. Bell to forbid us to marry?

#1 (smitten with #2): I think...it's a stupid idea. Won't you please sit down beside me (#1 does so and both

Let's!

just stare at each other affectionately).

#1: Dr. Gallaudet wants us to use our voices all the time.

(Pause.) Don't you get tired of using your voice?

#2 (nods and signs): Yes. I suppose you get tired of
fingerspelling too much.

#1 (nods): Dr. Gallaudet can be wrong too.

[#3 and #4 spy each other across the middle platform.
The tune of "I Can Do Anything Better Than You" from
the musical, "Annie Get Your Gun," begins. They both come
up with this friendly song to share.]

[As #4 vocalizes and #3 signs together or separately,
depending on the dueling verses of the song. As they
near the end of the song, they start to disagree.
The song leads them to the reality of their conditioned
animosity. The rapture in the rhapsody leads everyone
back to his/her respective team. Offstage tinnitus
sounds resume. #15 blows the whistle to signal the
beginning of the second half of the rugby football game.
The white team resumes the random cheering, the black
team kicks off, the blue team catches, and both teams
form a bull-kicking-dirt scrum and move collectively
toward each other...]

BLACKOUT

END OF ACT II