

course. Kendle has written one of those rare books that locate the episodic history of an idea firmly in the context of the contemporary politics. He states very early on that "the American federal system . . . was born out of practical necessity and did not rest on any full-blown federal theory" (p. 18). If federalism comes to the United Kingdom, or to Europe for that matter, it will not be because of a belief in "federalism" (or, as Harold Laski once intoned, "all power in federal") but as the only way to solve great practical difficulties.

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SUSAN PLANN. *A Silent Minority: Deaf Education in Spain, 1550-1835*. Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press. 1997. Pp. xvi, 323. \$40.00.

The tradition of deaf education is often traced to what is believed to be the earliest published work on the subject, Juan Pablo Bonet's *Reducción de las letras y arte para enseñar a ablar los mudos* (1620). As Susan Plann explains in meticulous detail in her book, Bonet himself had little direct experience with deaf people. Plann describes Bonet's account of the methods of educating the deaf as most likely plagiarized from Manuel Ramírez de Carrión, a tutor who had been employed to teach Luis de Velasco, the deaf son of the sixth constable of Castile, Juan Fernández de Velasco y Tovar. As secretary to the head of the Velasco household, Bonet lived in the household at the time de Carrión was employed. Furthermore, de Carrión in turn probably borrowed heavily or entirely from an earlier tutor, the Benedictine monk Fray Pedro Ponce de León, who had also taught de Velasco's deaf sons. Like de León, de Carrión did not record his successes, leaving Bonet, after only a brief experience with de Carrión's young charge, to write what is considered one of the earliest and most detailed accounts of how to educate the deaf. Bonet's role is at the heart of Plann's skillfully written account of deaf education in what she calls the "preprofessional era," from the middle of the sixteenth century through the start of the nineteenth century, when education was carried out individually and selectively, that is, for the privileged and wealthy few.

Plann traces the start of Spanish involvement in deaf education to a time of epistemological shift, occasioned by the appearance of writings by Renaissance thinkers such as Girolamo Cardano and Rudolph Agricola, who suggested that learning and thinking could take place "by eye" and without speech. Although there were others who argued that speech was the likely vehicle of the intellect, the novelty of ideas about the separation of speech and thinking most likely circulated among monasteries in Spain and thus eventually reached de León. Fray de León undertook the teaching of speech to de Velasco's two sons as his most urgent duty, since, as Plann explains, de Velasco was anxious that his sons be able to inherit and the

family's holdings remain intact. The courts would be persuaded of their fitness as landholders if they were able to speak Spanish as well as to read and write it. Thus began what Plann describes as the first task of deaf education in Spain: the preservation of wealth and privilege.

Although de León and later Bonet received a large measure of contemporary recognition for their work, Plann tempers claims of their achievements. As she sorts through records of their lives, where they were born and how they came to enter the employment of the wealthy families, she digs deep into their motives. Plann suspects that the unusual absence of information about de León's family suggests he was most likely of illegitimate birth and lost privilege. By teaching the children of the nobility, de León found himself invited to enter the most privileged of spaces that would otherwise be denied him—the homes, offices and courts of the rich and landed in Spain. As for the secrecy he built around his methods, de León was motivated by a fear that his methods would be stolen and his livelihood (and the recognition that came with it) would disappear. De Carrión likewise found he could command his price as long as he was the only available tutor. Bonet did little if any teaching himself; instead, he counted on his writing to gain him acclaim. Plann describes Bonet as an opportunist; he designated himself first author because no other before him would. Instead of portraying these men as benevolent teachers, Plann finds that they were allowed almost complete freedom in how they accomplished their teaching, which included, in some cases, harsh treatment and the development of psychological dependence in their young charges.

Plann scours this early history of deaf education for evidence that de León might have used sign language with his students, or that the deaf students themselves signed and formed a community with other deaf individuals. De León's students all had deaf relatives, either siblings or cousins as well as aunts and uncles, so the possibility of coming into contact with other deaf people was almost certain, but whether this small elite number of deaf nobility signed or formed communication alliances with each other is not indicated in the records of their education. Plann speculates that there is a good chance the deaf nobility signed, because recent research suggests that whenever small groups of deaf people are found in closed societies, a sign language is used by them as well as by hearing relatives or community members. Plann also speculates that the Benedictine monks might have been the source of at least some of the gestures that the deaf used among themselves. The monks, including de León, resided at monasteries where the practice was to refrain from speaking by voice during most of the day; instead the monks used gestures for necessities and basic activities. Quite possibly these gestures were adapted by de León for use with his deaf students, but there are very few records referring to any signing. Indeed, throughout the nineteenth century, the signing behavior of

deaf people is recorded sparsely and distantly. Instead, as Plann shows with example after example, early records of educating the deaf are largely about how to succeed at teaching articulation and vocalization to individuals who cannot hear themselves speak. There was no attempt to record where and how deaf people lived, how they met each other, or how they engaged in communication and perhaps even commerce with each other.

By the end of the eighteenth century, the ideas of Enlightenment began to take hold throughout Europe and sentiment shifted to favor educating a broad class of deaf children. Spain began to consider establishing schools for deaf children, following the lead of France, Italy, and Germany. Here Plann addresses a key question in deaf history: why did some of the earliest schools recognize and incorporate sign language while others refused, instead insisting on an oral pedagogy? Her answer is nicely textured as she moves between the history she has uncovered and histories written by other historians of deaf education, including Harlan Lane, John Vickrey Van Cleve and Douglas Baynton. The establishment by the Abbé Charles-Michel de l'Épée of the first public school for deaf children in Paris around 1795 is taken to be a watershed in deaf history; the school became a stable core around which a deaf community could develop. Graduates of the school moved outside the walls of the institution, took jobs in the community, and continued their association with friends and schoolmates. Lane has argued that de l'Épée's achievement was to recognize the existing gestural usage of the deaf children who came to the school and to incorporate it into his method of education. Plann points out that Bonet, however, made only one reference to signs used among the deaf in his entire volume. Instead, he saw the role of the educator as insisting on speech and on the "total exclusion of signs in communicating with deaf people," a view of "intransigence" that Plann describes as the "cornerstone of oralism" (p. 49).

Spain's entry into public deaf education followed that of France by a number of years and was in fact accomplished by a Frenchman, Antoine-Joseph Rouyer, who was born in Paris, but spent most of his life in Spain. He returned to Paris to attend university there and became acquainted with de l'Épée's successor at the Parisian school for deaf children, the Abbé Roch-Ambroise Sicard. After studying Sicard's methods, Rouyer returned to Madrid and petitioned a philanthropic organization, the Friends of the Country, to support his proposal for a school. The shift from individual privileged tutoring to education on a larger and common scale such as that proposed by Rouyer represented a significant shift for Spain, as monasteries ceased to be sites of education and the state began to take over the function of educational management, albeit through a crown-sanctioned philanthropic organization such as the Friends of the Country.

But the state's assumption of responsibility for the education of deaf children proved to be tenuous,

indifferent, and, at critical times through the nineteenth century, nonexistent. By the time the War of Independence ended in 1813, the crown's support of the Royal School for Deaf-Mutes in Madrid had declined to such trivial amounts that its students were reduced to starvation and begging in the streets. Its employees ceased to be paid, and the head teacher lost his post. As Plann traces in exhaustive detail the changes in management of the school through these disruptive times, she shows how sudden departures and political replacements pushed the school toward a nationalist stance. When it reopened in 1814, its new head rejected the French methods and insisted on a return to Bonet's system, a decision that Plann describes as "more political than pedagogical" (p. 158). Thus education in Spain returned to its roots in Bonet's methods, a philosophy that would largely remain in place in state-supported schools throughout the twentieth century.

In her epilogue, Plann addresses a number of contemporary questions, but not the question that preoccupies many of us who study sign language and deaf communities. As America and Europe both experiment with moving away from nationally organized deaf schools toward local, deinstitutionalized management of deaf education, could we be returning to the fragmented and dispersed communities of the type that characterized Spain before the founding of its deaf schools in the early nineteenth century? Plann is appropriately restrained about comparing without context, but this is a question that one cannot help but ask after reading her splendidly written history.

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TIMOTHY MITCHELL. *Betrayal of the Innocents: Desire, Power, and the Catholic Church in Spain*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. 1998. Pp. 178. Cloth \$39.95, paper \$16.50.

Combining the best of history, sociology, and psychology, Timothy Mitchell is well known in Hispanic studies for eclecticism, insightfulness, and originality. In four previous books, he has illuminated the nooks and crannies of familiar Spanish institutions like the bullfight, Holy Week, and flamenco music as well as providing diverting and witty overviews that make one think in fresh and exciting ways. The present book continues in this vivifying tradition, tackling the problem of ecclesiastical misconduct and anticlericalism in Spain, mainly between 1870 and 1936.

In fearlessly tackling this subject, Mitchell has done signal service by opening the matter up to a new debate, which will be, one hopes, free of the political passions of the past. It is indeed curious that this important topic has not been adequately investigated previously. Spanish anticlericalism was virtually unique in the extent to which its protest took on an erotic coloration with chiliastic overtones. Anti-church fanatic-