

**Deaf World/Hearing World:
Spaces, Techniques, and Things in Culture and History**

Sponsored by the Max Planck Institute in Berlin and
Project Biocultures, University of Illinois at Chicago.

The history of deafness presents an exemplary model of a community's mobilization for the recognition of a cultural identity. It is also an unequaled history of divisions across a broad range of pedagogy, techniques, and scientific inventions.

Across the last four centuries at least, constructions of deafness as a cultural identity and/or as a disability have led to opposite claims. Deafness became a focal point for arguments over citizenship, eugenics, language, theories of the mind, and the like. A different set of categories was produced to give voice to these claims and the dialogue between their supporters has been extremely difficult for lack of a common stake.

Depending on the approach, one can say such a heated debate has given the question of deafness a very specific place among human variations. Sign language, in particular, has led many to question the relationship between mind, body, and language.

We welcome papers on the social, cultural, scientific and philosophical attempts to mediate the space between the deaf and the hearing across history. Topics include the use of objects and techniques for creating a space of encounter, conceptions of the relationship between humans and language, language and thought, or language and society across time and space. We are seeking explorations of the dialectic between hearing and silence, deaf and hearing as well as the technologies and ideologies that intervene between the deaf world and the hearing world, the deaf person and the hearing person.

The Max Planck Institute for the History of Science in Berlin in conjunction with Project Biocultures at the University of Illinois at Chicago will host the conference on December 10-11, 2012 in Berlin. Please send your abstract to Thu-Tra Dang ttdang@mpiwgberlin.mpg.de by July 3, 2012. Scholars will be informed by July 23 if their abstract has been selected. A travel fund is available, please let us know when submitting your abstract if you need an allowance to cover part of your trip.

The conference will be in English and in sign language. The Max Planck Institute will welcome interpreters to make possible presentations in sign language. To facilitate the organization, please contact us as soon as possible if you need an interpreter of American/British/national sign language. Please mention the contact information of a couple of interpreters.

If you have questions please contact Sabine Arnaud at sarnaud@mpiwg-berlin.mpg.de, or Lennard Davis at lendavis@uic.edu If you plan to attend the conference without giving a paper and require special assistance, please send an email to Thu-Tra Dang ttdang@mpiwg-berlin.mpg.de