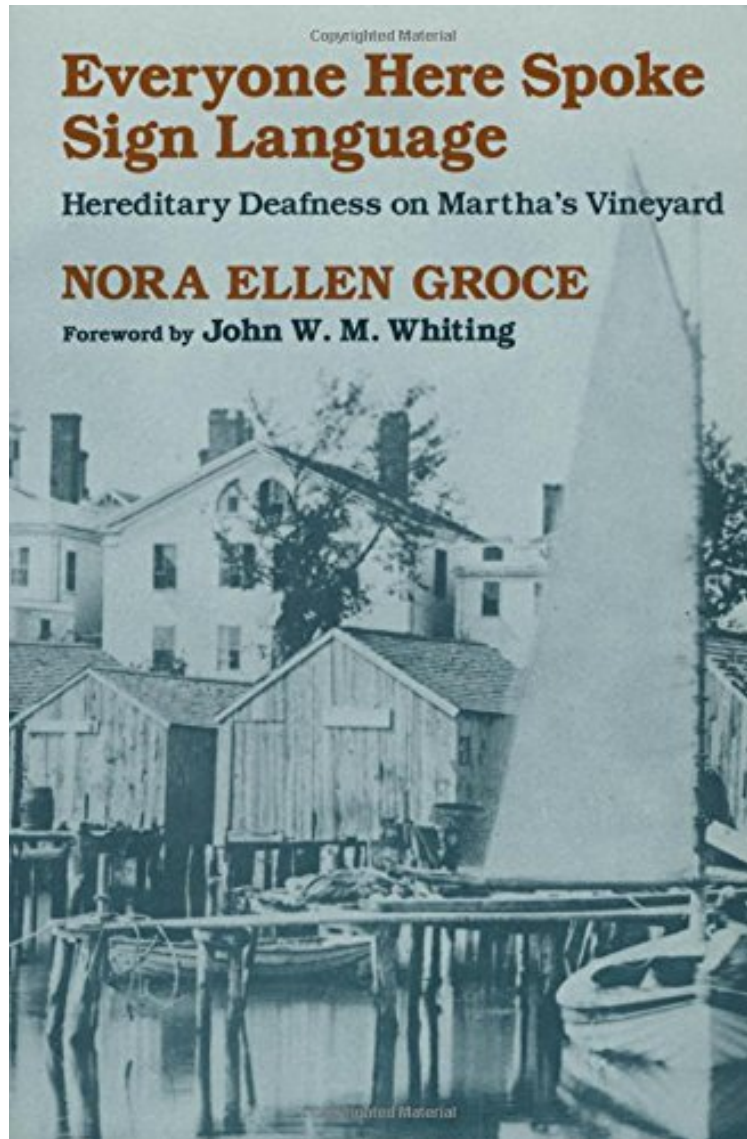


(Read download) Everyone Here Spoke Sign Language: Hereditary Deafness on Martha's Vineyard

# Everyone Here Spoke Sign Language: Hereditary Deafness on Martha's Vineyard

*Nora Ellen Groce*

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**Nora Ellen Groce : Everyone Here Spoke Sign Language: Hereditary Deafness on Martha's Vineyard** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Everyone Here Spoke Sign Language: Hereditary Deafness on Martha's Vineyard:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Loved by deaf peopleBy Old enough to know betterI am a physician

and have a number of patients who are deaf. I also live near Martha's Vineyard. Over the years I have purchased this book for a number of them and their response is extremely positive. I have also gotten it for sign language interpreters. They all loved it. If deaf people are enthralled by this book you know it has to be worth reading. 1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Not Just a Book About Sign Language, But Quite Interesting By Brian S. Shaffer I initially read this book 20 odd years ago for a class and found it very interesting. It really isn't just a book about sign language, but a combination of early history of Martha's Vineyard, seafaring, societal norms, social perceptions, deafness, sign language, with a sampling of population genetics theory presented in such a manner that no genetics background is necessary to understand. One of the lessons I came away with from the book is that the concept of being handicapped is really a cultural perception. At one point, Groce is interviewing one of the old timers from the island who was recounting individuals who had lived in various houses. Groce noted that it might have taken two or three interviews before the person remember that a given individual had been deaf. Deafness was not perceived as a handicap as it was fairly common place in the early Martha Vineyard's society. Instead, it was simply seen as a trait, like being tall or short or speaking a different language. As a result, everyone learned sign language and Martha's Vineyard society was notably different from other societies on the other islands or on the mainland as a result, with different communication dynamics. This is a very interesting read. Over the years I have shared this book with several individuals. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Four Stars By anne palmariello Very interesting how well accepted the deaf were embraced

From the seventeenth century to the early years of the twentieth, the population of Martha's Vineyard manifested an extremely high rate of profound hereditary deafness. In stark contrast to the experience of most deaf people in our own society, the Vineyarders who were born deaf were so thoroughly integrated into the daily life of the community that they were not seen--and did not see themselves--as handicapped or as a group apart. Deaf people were included in all aspects of life, such as town politics, jobs, church affairs, and social life. How was this possible? On the Vineyard, hearing and deaf islanders alike grew up speaking sign language. This unique sociolinguistic adaptation meant that the usual barriers to communication between the hearing and the deaf, which so isolate many deaf people today, did not exist.

When is deafness neither handicap nor stigma? When, as this remarkable book recounts, the entire hearing community learns from childhood to be bilingual in conventional speech and sign language, and when the deaf are wholly integrated into the community's social, economic, religious, and recreational life...A vivid ethnography of a hearing community's full acceptance of, and adaptation to, deafness. Groce also constructs a fascinating ethnohistory of this genetic disorder. (Choice) Beautiful and fascinating...I was so moved by Groce's book that the moment I finished it I jumped in the car, with only a toothbrush, a tape recorder, and a camera--I had to see this enchanted island for myself. (Oliver Sacks New York of Books) Brilliantly argued and lively...[Groce's] information consists of the oral history she herself garnered from some 50 witnesses, almost all more than 75 years old, and the documents in print and in manuscript that cross-check and extend their first-hand accounts. Human genetic theory, ethnographic counterparts and a clear-eyed account of social attitudes are the analytic tools that form her brief and telling work...[A] persuasive and compassionate investigation. (Scientific American) Fascinating...Groce accomplishes much just by pointing out that "handicaps" are something a culture creates, and thus the joint responsibility of us all. That's what places this book squarely within the best tradition of anthropological writing, and makes it both moving and encouraging. (Village Voice) About the Author Nora Ellen Groce, a cultural and medical anthropologist, received her doctorate from Brown University. She is currently a Fellow at the Family Development Study, Children's Hospital, Boston, and in the Department of Pediatrics, Harvard Medical School.