

Markotic, Nicole. *Yellow Pages: A Catalogue of Intentions*. Thesis (MA [English]), University of Manitoba. Ann Arbor: ProQuest/UMI, 1993. (Publication No. MM85949)

### Abstract

My Master's thesis, a creative writing project, takes the form of a novella. It narrates, by various strategies, the story of the Canadian "hero," Alexander Graham Bell. That the famous inventor was much involved with the deaf world has largely been ignored. After marrying a deaf woman, Alexander Graham Bell became immersed in the deaf "problem." His powerful stance and his interference in the deaf community often led to disastrous results. My novella tells that story.

That the man who considered himself a champion of deaf people in North America was the same man who invented a machine deaf people would be excluded from using is an irony not usually pursued in history books. I contrast the official history of Bell as entrepreneur with the lesser known "facts" of his dabbling in politics, in eugenics, and his attempt to obliterate deaf culture.

Alexander Graham Bell discredited Sign Language and prioritized the spoken word, thus invalidating deaf culture through the erasure of its language. By inventing the telephone, Bell established a verbal hierarchy that rendered deaf people invisible. My novella narrates this complete "deafness" to the language of the "other" by the man deemed most sympathetic.