

SOUND AND FURY

SYNOPSIS

SOUND AND FURY takes viewers inside the seldom seen world of the deaf to witness a painful family struggle over a controversial medical technology called the cochlear implant. Some family members celebrate the implant as a long overdue cure for deafness while others fear it will destroy their language and way of life. This feature documentary explores this seemingly irreconcilable conflict as it illuminates the ongoing struggle for identity among deaf people today.

The Artinian Family of Glen Cove, Long Island is at the epicenter of this conflict which is redefining the future of deafness. We follow Chris and Mari Artinian's family for two years, watching as they learn that their baby is deaf, as they fight with their deaf relatives over their decision to implant their child, and as their son undergoes surgery and hears sound for the first time in his life. During the same time period we follow Chris' brother, Peter Artinian, whose wife and three children are all deaf. Peter is an outspoken leader of the anti-implant deaf community in Long Island, and his world is turned upside down by his daughter's request for a cochlear implant. Initially, Peter and his wife, Nita, suspend their long-standing opposition to the implant, but as they learn more about how deaf children with implants are mainstreamed into the hearing world, they become afraid that their daughter will lose her deaf identity and reject their language, American Sign Language. They decide to move away from their hearing relatives in Long Island in order to become part of a more supportive deaf community in Maryland.

SOUND AND FURY is directed by Josh Aronson, who in the past 15 years has directed television series and specials, documentaries, and hundreds of rock videos and commercials. The film is produced by Roger Weisberg, who has written, produced, and directed 20 documentaries since 1980. Weisberg's and Aronson's films have won over 70 awards including Emmy, Peabody, and duPont-Columbia awards. Their previous productions, including ROAD SCHOLAR, have won top honors in dozens of international film festivals and have been theatrically released and distributed extensively abroad. Aronson and Weisberg are joined by Coordinating Producer Jackie Roth, an educator in the field of deafness and an actress who played the lead role in the critically acclaimed play "Children of a Lesser God." Born to deaf parents, Roth's first language was sign but she learned to lip-read extraordinarily well and has experienced firsthand the conflicts and issues addressed by SOUND AND FURY. By joining forces, Aronson, Weisberg and Roth have created a unique window into the embattled world of the deaf.

For more information about SOUND AND FURY visit our web site at www.pbs.org/soundandfury