

COMMUNICATING
DEAF THEORY:
A DATA DRIVEN APPROACH

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A CALL

... TO FORMULATE DEAF THEORY

- ***“...theory is a well-substantiated explanation of some aspect of the natural world, based on a body of facts that have been repeatedly confirmed through observation and experiment. Such fact-supported theories are not "guesses" but reliable accounts of the real world.”***

- American Association for the Advancement of Science

- **“THE RIGHT WAY TO DEVELOP THEORY IS TO COLLECT DATA THEN MAKE THEORY FROM DATA (SLOBIN 2006)”**

WHAT DOES OUR DATA SAY ABOUT US?

*DATA FROM DEAF LIVES

- National and Global Advocacy and Activism
- Pedagogy and Medicine
- Technologies
- Arts, literature and life stories
- Utopia and Superheroes

*NOT EXHAUSTIVE



WORLD FEDERATION OF THE DEAF

NAD 2020 VISION

- **Language**
We believe it is the right of every deaf and hard of hearing person to acquire and express themselves in American Sign Language and English.
- **Attitude**
We must change the society's perception of people who use ASL to one that recognizes us as a unique community with our own language and culture.
- **Self-Determination**
We believe that society must accept our organization as an integral part in any decision-making process that influences any deaf and hard of hearing person.
- **Management**
We are committed to responsible resource allocation through optimal use of our people, time, and money in the pursuit of our mission, vision, and values.

NAD PRIORITIES

[SOME SELECTED ONES]

2008-2010

- Captioning in Movie Theaters
- Certified Deaf Interpreters
- Protect State Deaf Schools
- Federal Recognition of ASL
- ASL as a Deaf Child's Human Right
- National Agenda for Mental Health
- Bilingual-Bicultural Emphasis in Deaf Education
- Early Intervention and Parent Education
- Preservation of American Deaf History and ASL
- Removal of Department of Transportation Requirement

2012-2014

- Establishment of an Employment Task Force.
- National Leadership Training Program
- Mental Health Services
- Legislative Training
- Expand Captioning Access
- Education/EHDI
- National ASL Content Standards

2014-2016

- Preservation and Advocacy of Relay Services (PARS)
- Preservation of Mental Health Services that Meet the Needs of Deaf People
- Defining and Supporting the Education Strategy Team's Focus for 2014-2016
- Outreach to Deaf Youth including Mainstream School Students

2016-2018

- National Employment Resource Center
- Enhance NAD Information Clearinghouse and Communications Strategy
- Child Protective Services and Best Practices with Respect to Language/Culture
- Campaign to End Language and Cultural Deprivation
- Creation of Mental Health Training Program and a Communication Hub on Health Related Information

WFD



- **Vision:** Human rights for deaf people including recognition of sign language in all aspects of life
- **Mission:** WFD works for the realisation of deaf people's human rights in partnership with the United Nations and its agencies, national organisations of deaf people, and relevant stakeholders

WFD POSITION PAPERS AND STATEMENTS [SOME SELECTED ONES]

Role of WFD

- Improve the status of national sign languages
- Better education for Deaf people
- Improve access to information and services
- Improve human rights for Deaf people in developing countries

- 2007 Statement on the Unification of Sign Languages
- 2009 Statement on Unification of Arab Sign Languages
- 2013 Statement on Deaf Women and Girls not able to Enjoy Basic Human Rights
- 2014 Statement on Sign Language Work
Statement on Standardized Sign Language
- 2015 Discussion on the Right to Education of Persons with Disabilities
- 2016 Statement on Deaf People's Right to Drive a Car or other Vehicles
Position Paper on the Language Rights of Deaf Children
- 2017 Statement on the Adoption and Adaptation of Technologies and Accessibility
- 2018 Statement on Use of Signing Avatars
- 2018 Position Paper on Deaf Community as linguistic Identity or Disability
- 2018 Position Paper on Inclusive Education

COMMONALITIES

- Sign Language Rights as Human Rights
- Access to Information
- Quality of Access
- Technical Access and Accommodations
- Bilingual Education
- Removing Discrimination



Colonialism of Communication

PEDAGOGY AND MEDICINE

- History of pedagogical and medical practices
- Revolves around making speech possible (education) and accessible (medical)
- Impact on Deaf Lives (life history)
- Sign Language as **Communication Disorder**
 - National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders
 - Many ASL programs are housed in departments of:
 - Speech and Language
 - Communication Disorders
 - Special Education



COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES



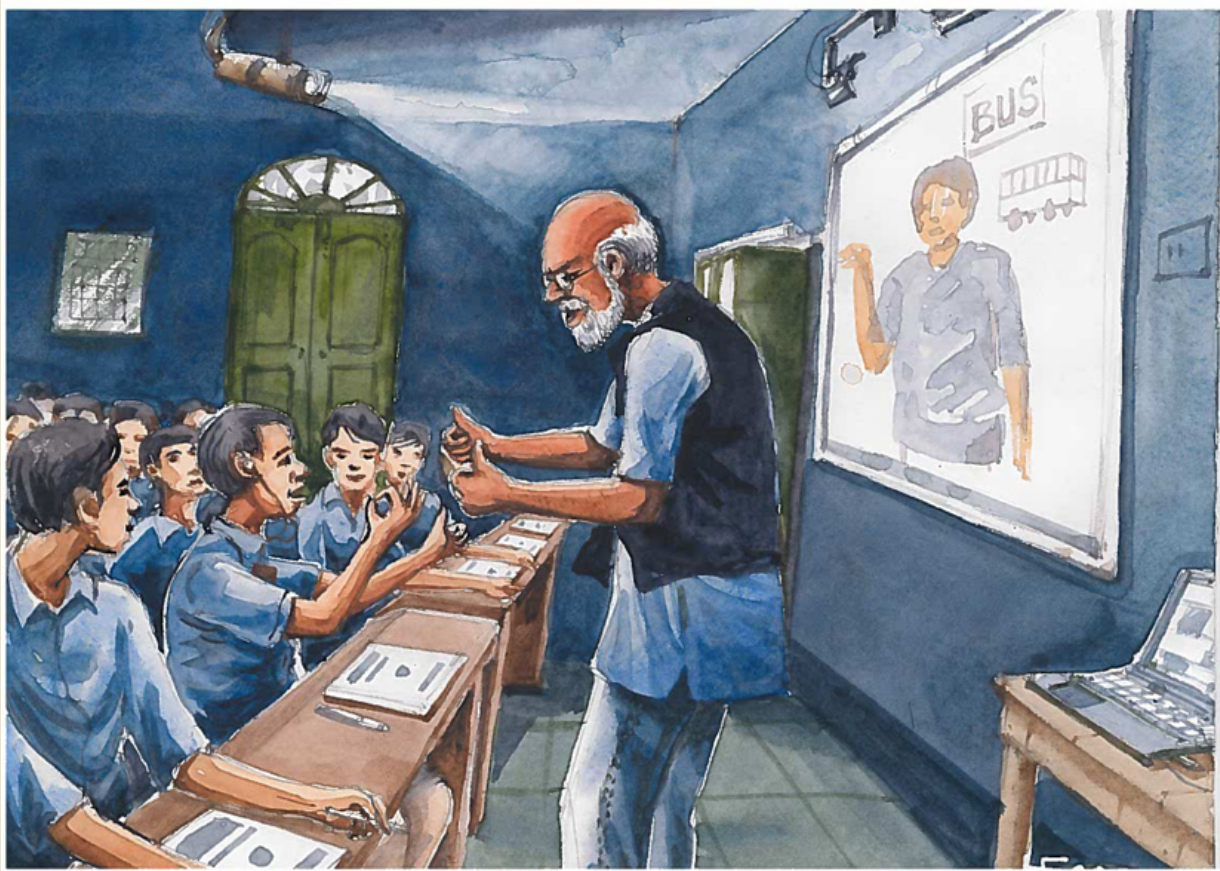
COMMUNICATION ENGINEERING

Cordano, 2017

- Communication Technologies Developed by Others for Us
 - Hearing devices to “assist” us in listening
- Communication Technologies Engineered/Hacked by Us for Us
 - **Hacking other senses** (sensory extensions)
 - Doorbells, baby crier, alarm clock, etc.
 - TTY, Videophone, text messaging
 - Hilde Hauland – T Mobile 2007
 - Next generation—ML2, TAP, Motion Savvy, and others
 - Deaf Expo—booths are predominantly communication related from relay services to electronic devices.

ARTS, LITERATURE & LIFE HISTORIES

Mother Tongue



Master Swastik Jana • Age: 16
Country: India

Mechanical Ear



Chuck Baird
Country: USA

ARTS

Durr (2006) *Recurrent Themes in De'VIA*

Resistance De'VIA

Affirmation De'VIA

Audism

Empowerment

Oralism

ASL

Mainstreaming

Affiliation

Cochlear Implant

Acculturation

Identity
Confusion

Acceptance

Eugenics

Deafhood

LITERATURE: NARRATIVES

Bahan (2006) “Making sense of ASL Literature”

- Over 500 Narratives (mostly focus on NPEs and Deaf Folklores plus a few fiction base on deaf lives)
- The taxonomy of the narratives funneled down into three general themes:
 1. **Communication and Language Values**
 2. **Dealing with Ignorance and Discrimination**
 3. **Sensory Orientation and Sensory Worlds**
- Motifs (refer to sensory worlds)
 - Doors
 - Windows

LITERATURE: POETRY

Dorothy Miles

- Communication & Language Values
 - *Language for the Eye*
 - *The Gesture*
 - *Defiance*
 - *Total Communication*
 - *To a Deaf Child*
- Dealing with Discrimination
 - *Elephant Dance*
- Sensory Orientation/Worlds
 - *The Skunk*

Joseph Castronovo

- Communication & Language Values
 - *Paris' Silent Sleep*

Ella Mae Lentz

- Communication & Language Values
 - *The Treasure*
 - *Sign is like a Tree*
 - *Travels with Malz*
 - *The Door*
 - *To a Hearing Mother*
 - *Silence oh Painful*
 - *The Dogs*
 - *Children's Garden*
- Dealing with Discrimination
 - *Baseball Game*
- Sensory Orientation/Worlds
 - *Eye Music*

LITERATURE: POETRY

Patrick Graybill

- Communication & Language Values
 - *Distant Call*
 - *Paradox*
 - *Defiance*
 - *Total Communication*
 - *To a Deaf Child*
- Dealing with Discrimination
 - *Elephant Dance*
- Sensory Orientation/Worlds
 - *The Skunk*

Clayton Valli

- Communication & Language Values
 - *The Cave*
 - *Dandelions*
 - *Snowflake*
 - *DeafWorld*
 - *Hands Folded*
 - *Sit and Smile*
- Dealing with Discrimination
 - *Lone Sturdy Tree*
 - *I'm Sorry*
- Sensory Orientation/Worlds
 - *Hands*

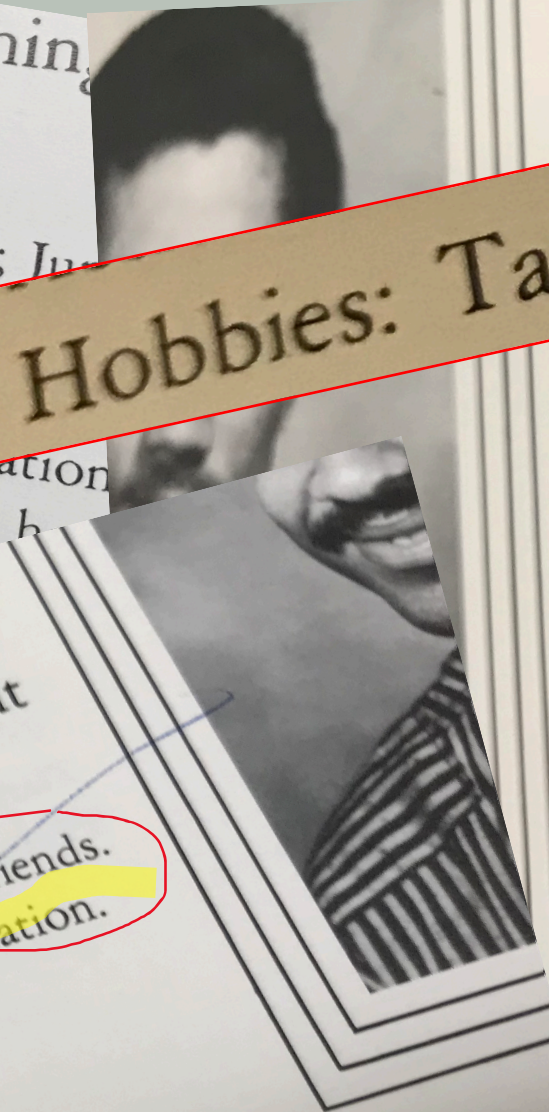
LIFE STORIES

- Deaf Life Stories (Bahan and Bauman - data collected 2001-2006)
 - Feeling at home where communication happens
 - Unsigned home = excommunicated = unhomed
 - Deaf Journeys—often to the site of communication
 - To hearing neighbors who can communicate or play sports
 - To extended families who sign because communication is accessible
 - To deaf friends because communication is maximized
 - To deaf places, spaces
 - Deprivation leads to increased desire to adhere to one another
 - Value of being with one another

Southin

Aquarius

Activities: JrCAD 3; Clerc Dorm Secretary 3; J...
Raffle Committee Chairperson 4; Volleybal
Hobbies: Joking and talking with friends
Plans to work in data processing after graduation
Favorite Saying: "Finish making me laugh so h



Carlos

Hobbies: Talking with friends.

Scorpio
Activities: Track 1; Basketball 1.
Hobbies: Visiting friends.
Plans to work after graduation.
Favorite Saying: "Tough"

DEAF SCHOOL YEAR BOOK

Pisces
Hobbies: Basketball, movies and going out with friends.
Plans to enter DVR training program after graduation.
Favorite Saying: "Sick of you!"

A globe of Earth is the central focus, resting on a white stand. The background is dark, featuring a starry sky in the upper left and a silhouette of a palm tree in the lower left. A white rectangular border frames the central text.

UTOPIA

UTOPIA

- Utopia [OED: 2. A place, state, or condition ideally perfect in respect of politics, laws, customs, and conditions]
- Why Utopia? The benefits of this search looks at how a community imagines an ideal world free of dogmatism.



DEAF
UTOPIA*

- Pursuit of a Deaf state/town/place
 - J.J. Flourney (1855)
 - Jane Elizabeth Groom (1880)
 - Marvin Miller (2004-2006)
 - And others

*See Cristina Gil, forthcoming



DEAF
UTOPIA*

- Literature
 - *Islay* by Douglas Bullard
 - *Eyeth*
- Underlying theme:
 - Paradigm shift: communication is not an issue
 - Freedom from **communication** inequality.
- Superheroes
 - *Sign Gene*
 - *The Fingerspellers*
 - Theme - Power of signing

*See Cristina Gil, forthcoming

UNIFYING THE DATA

- Communication and Language Values
 - Sign Language as Human Rights
 - Bilingualism
 - Access to Quality Information
 - Fighting Oralism
 - Access
- Dealing with Ignorance and Discrimination
 - Audism
 - Stigma
 - Driving
 - Mainstreaming and isolation as best practice
- Sensory Orientation and Sensory Worlds
 - Visual-tactile orientation

COMMUNICATION

- The three general themes listed in the prior slide
 1. Communication and Language Values
 2. Dealing with Ignorance and Discrimination
 3. Sensory Orientation and Sensory Worlds
- The themes boil down to issues of communication.
- So... our data points to different communication issues and practices when it comes to Deaf people

BEGGING FOR A BITE
BY
ERIC EPSTEIN



COMMON GROUND

- “The ability to create common conceptual ground—joint attention, shared experience, common cultural knowledge—is an absolutely critical dimension of all human communication (Tomasello, 2008, p.5).”



A CALL

- The theme of communication is NOT new.
 - It is so OBVIOUS.
 - We have been saying that all over and everywhere.
-
- Now our task is to form a theoretical statement that becomes our “Theory of “Everything” for Deaf Lives”
 - A theory that can then be used to gauge society at large. Using the theoretical lens to examine literature like “*The Great Gatsby*”

OUR TASK BEGINS

Thank you