Deaf Identities

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Holcomb’s Deaf Identity Model

- Balanced Bicultural
- Deaf Dominant Bicultural
- Hearing Dominant Bicultural
- Culturally Separate
- Culturally Marginal
- Culturally Isolated
- Culturally Captive
Glickman’s Deaf Identity Model

- Bicultural
- Immersed
- Culturally Hearing
- Culturally Marginal

(Scheetz 2004 p. 20-21)
Bicultural (G)

- The person is able to ascertain and appreciate the differences between the Deaf and the hearing worlds.
- A value is placed on both English and ASL
- Alliances with support Hearing people are maintained.

(Scheetz 2004 p. 20-21)
Balance Bicultural

• Deaf people
  – Are individuals who are truly comfortable in both the Deaf and hearing communities
  – Do not display a preference in terms of associating with one group or the other.
  – May or may not have the ability to speak fluently
  – May or may not wear hearing aids.
Balanced Bicultural

• More likely, this identity requires the ability to both speak and sign well in order to move freely between these two communities.

• Some Deaf who are nonspeaking individuals and can interact with hearing people, can speak but are not comfortable among hearing people
Deaf Dominant Bicultural

• Individuals function well around both Deaf and hearing people but, they would choose to be with Deaf people or, more specifically, people who can sign.

• Communication Issues: they may
  – Request interpreters
  – Write notes to communicate
  – Do their best to speak and lipread
Hearing Dominant Bicultural

• Deaf people
  – can function well within Deaf community, but
  – have relatively limited contacts with other Deaf people
  – Do not shun the Deaf community

• Location issues:
  – Rural area (vs. metropolitan area)
  – Corporate work/white collar job
  – Unique hobby or interest
Culturally Hearing (G)

• People
  – use the hearing world “as their reference point for normally and health, the Deaf world for abnormally, disability and deviance”
  – identify themselves as experiencing a hearing loss
  – Avoid deaf people in general.
  – Become more “hearing like”

(Scheetz 2004 p. 20-21)
Culturally Separate

• Deaf person
  – Intentionally keeps contacts with hearing people to a minimum.
  – May decide that to live more effectively they need to avoid situations in which awkward interactions with hearing people
  – Prefers to work in deaf settings and to attend Deaf events.

• Deaf person has issues with hearing people in his past experience.
Immersed (G)

• Individuals immerse themselves totally in the Deaf world.

• ASL is thought to be superior to English

• Hearing people are viewed as malevolent and oppressive toward the Deaf

(Scheetz 2004 p. 20-21)
Culturally Marginal

• Individual
  – Does not feel at ease in the Deaf community
    – Does not feel part of the larger, hearing society either.
    – Does not speak or hear well enough and possess sufficient sign language skills
    – Has difficulties with communication and limited social skills.
Cultural Marginal (G)

• Deaf individuals
  – Experience life by trying fit between Deaf and hearing worlds, but
  – Never become comfortable in either.
  – A weakened command of both English and ASL
  – A sense of isolation
(Scheetz 2004 p. 20-21)
Culturally Isolated

• Individual
  – chooses not to be affiliated with the Deaf community.
  – Rejects sign language and the Deaf culture
  – may have “oral failures”
  – remains “isolated” in the mainstream.
• Life of isolation and loneliness
Culturally Captive

• Individual
  – Grew up without any knowledge of the Deaf community
  – Have been sheltered from the Deaf community by their parents and the educational system.
List of Deaf Identities

• Bicultural (G) (omitted)
• Balanced Bicultural
• Deaf Dominant Bicultural
• Hearing Dominant Bicultural
• Culturally Hearing (G)
• Culturally Separate
• Immersed (G)
• Culturally Marginal/Culturally Marginal (G)
• Culturally Isolated
• Culturally Captive
Deaf Identity Development

• Breda Carty’s theory of six stages of Deaf Identity Development
  1. Confusion
  2. Frustration/Angry/Blame
  3. Exploration
  4. Identification/Rejection
  5. Ambivalence
  6. Acceptance (non acceptance?)
Deaf Identity Scale

- Hearing Identification
- Deaf Identification
- Dual Identification
Deaf Identity Scale

- Hearing Identification 18%
- Deaf Identification 24%
- Dual Identification 54%

(Weiberg & Sterritt 1986, book 2009)