

Stepping out of the Shadows of Invisibility: Toward a Deeper Conceptualization of the Role of Sign Language Interpreters



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Professional Boundaries...

The space between the
practitioner's power and
the consumers
vulnerability



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Early Role Conception

Faulty Paradigms

- Role socially constructed based on narrow view
- Early Deaf leaders responding to social context of the era
- Boundaries assume “equal footing”

Inherent Contradictions

- Interpreter as machine/telephone
- “Act as if invisible”
- Event should transpire “as if the interpreter were not there”
- These roots continue to permeate our practices in harmful ways

Objectivity/Neutrality



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When our practices...

- work in opposition to our basic intention,
 - promote self-interest over consumer well-being,
 - result in behaviors that are oppressive,
 - lead to indifference, detachment, fear or complacency,
- **we are out of integrity with ourselves and consumers!**



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Without authentic engagement, there is no commitment. Mark it down, asterisk, circle or underline it. **No engagement, no commitment!**



A Continuum of Professional Behavior



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Authentic Role Conception

In reality our role **is socially constructed...**
within our particular social relationships
and power structures in which
professional practice is embedded.

-Witter-Merithew & Nicodemus, 2010



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“Habit is the intersection of knowledge (**what to do**), skill (**how to do**), and desire (**want to do**).”

--Stephen R. Covey,
Powerful Lessons in Personal Change

*It is relationship with Deaf people that will **INSPIRE** the **DESIRE** part of our learning!*



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