Special Section on Deaf Studies

Deaf in the Time of the Cochlea

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The American Deaf community for several decades has been involved in sometimes complicated and often contested ways of defining what it means to be Deaf. It is our thesis that the processes of identity construction and the recent discourse of Deaf identity are not unique phenomena at all but echo the experience of other embedded cultural groups around the world, particularly those that are stressed by the assertion of hegemony over them by others. We turn to 2 particular theorists, Jose Martí and W. E. B. DuBois, to help us understand both the dilemmas that Deaf people face and the possible solutions that they propose. This article argues that identities are constructed not just within Deaf communities but within the social contexts in which Deaf communities are embedded.

This article discusses how Deaf people's identities are constructed and the type of consciousness that is created in this process in view of recent issues of identity discourse among Deaf people and in public space that has been heated and sometimes confusing. It is our thesis that the processes of identity construction and the recent discourse of Deaf identity are not unique phenomena at all but echo the experiences of other embedded cultural groups around the world, particularly those that are stressed by the assertion of hegemony over them by others. Most deaf people in the United States are the children of parents who hear, and these hearing parents, legally, "own" their children. However, these deaf children from hearing parents may, and frequently do, "migrate" to Deaf communities (via schooling or some other means) and become acculturated in a signing community with which they identify more closely. Some Deaf children are born into Deaf families and are defined by the experience of living in a community of Deaf people. Regardless of parentage, living embedded in a hearing society dominated by others that insist on defining deaf people differently from the way that Deaf people define themselves creates pressure and tension that puts the identity of the group and individuals within it into question.

We recognize the experience of Deaf people in struggling to understand and, equally important, to express identity as an experience like that of other groups that have been "owned" by others, for example, African Americans who were a captured people, displaced and literally owned, bought and sold, as commodities. Also, different Latin American populations have experienced the capture of their land, their language, and their culture by Europeans and were for many years under the control of others. It is possible to shed light on the present state of identity discourse among Deaf people through the eyes of others who have theorized about their own groups' struggle for identity after having been dominated by others for extended periods of time. In the United States, this domination has existed for hundreds of years and continues in the present time to some extent.

We will turn to two particular theorists to help us understand both the dilemmas and the solutions that their theories propose. Our goal is not to "solve" ongoing arguments about Deaf identity that occupy the discourse of Deaf communities in the United States and elsewhere in the world at the present moment but

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to offer a sense of what is going on in this discourse. What are we doing as a culture of Deaf people when we engage in the identity arguments that have recently reached into all parts of Deaf society? Indeed, this debate is not an elitist debate; it involves Deaf people of all classes, ethnicities, and race (this will be touched on later in this article). Why are we engaging in this discourse?

José Martí and W. E. B. DuBois were writers and political activists during a time of remodeling in their nations. In their works, they attempted to offer insight into the problem of a group finding its identity after it had been oppressed for so long. In Martí's 1891 text, "Our America," a short manifesto-like essay, he advised native Latin Americans to search for an identity separate from the colonial culture they had been steeped in, calling for self-realization and the resurgence of a culture that was distinctly native in origin (Marti, 1977). In facing similar issues with African American identity, DuBois' *The Souls of Black Folk* was a deep discourse on the problem of double consciousness—the distinct two-ness of every Black person's soul (DuBois, 1997). In each case, among Martí's Cuban and Latin American contemporaries and DuBois' Black Americans, constant oppression caused problems in truly defining who they were. Though these problems were similar, the approach each author takes to their solution is different. Each has important contributions to make to an understanding of their people's and, we argue, Deaf people's own struggle with the "problem" of identity.

We believe these two theorists and humanists help us understand the effects of a similar hegemony by others over the lives of Deaf people and the solutions that are available to Deaf people (for better or worse). Historically speaking, the language and culture of Deaf people in the United States were deemed nonexistent until the 1960s. Like African Americans and some Latin American communities, the lives of American Deaf people were controlled via economic, linguistic, and social oppression. African Americans found their bodies to be salable merchandise; Latin Americans were also enslaved in some places and their property and rights taken from them. Deaf Americans have experienced similar paternalistic controlling treatment in the hands of others.

We think it is timely to turn to DuBois and Martí in terms of where Deaf people find themselves at this moment in history because of the nature of the current discourse over "who is Deaf." Both of these theorists struggled with the problem of overcoming and escaping the clutches of powerful others. Deaf people are looking for ways to live differently from in the past; looking for ways to shake off a history of domination of ideas about themselves. In recent decades, there has been a heated, sometimes confused, and highly contested debate about Deaf identities. It began in the 1970s with the emergence of new science about signed language (Padden & Humphries, 1988). At this time, Deaf people began an extended period of questioning of their identity as a people (and as individuals) that continues today (Humphries, 2008).

Initially, the questioning evolved around who is "DEAF" (here, all caps denote a sign from American Sign Language [ASL], which poorly translates into English as "deaf"). DEAF (the sign) is the name in ASL for Deaf people and is what they call themselves. It is not the same as the English word "deaf," which refers to a physical condition of being without hearing. DEAF is the way Deaf people identify themselves to one another. It is the meaning of DEAF that has been the subject of public discourse since the 1970s. The ASL question, "Who is DEAF?" or its ASL counterparts, "Is he/she DEAF?" and "Am I DEAF?" have simmered and erupted periodically over the decades since then.

The most recent eruption occurred in 2006 at Gallaudet University in Washington, DC (a university for deaf/Deaf students), when there was an uprising against the selection of a person for president of the university who was unpopular with some employees and constituencies of the university. The protests were prolonged and extended into the national Deaf community. It ultimately resulted in the closing of the university and the dismissal of the newly hired president (Bauman, 2009; Christiansen, 2009). The events of 2006 were complicated by a highly public argument, in both the Deaf community and the national media, discourse about whether or not the president-select was herself "Deaf enough" to be president of a university of Deaf students (Kinzie & Ruane, 2006). The president-select would qualify as "deaf" as defined

in English; she does not hear to a significant degree. But that was not the question. The question was "Is she DEAF enough?" There is a possible subset of questions that can be asked that tend to accompany such a question. For example, Is she fluent enough in ASL? Does she act DEAF? Did she grow up among DEAF people? Did she attend a school for the DEAF? Does she think of herself as DEAF? Does she think DEAF? The question was not about hearing level but whether or not she appropriately fit in the model of "DEAF" as DEAF people understand it.

Both sides disagree about who first brought up this concept of "Deaf enough" in the war of words, but the media loved it. Subsequent media reports rarely failed to mention that the protesters were protesting against a president-select who was "not Deaf enough." Denials that this was the key issue with her hiring did not seem to help; the national media believed that it was a possible reason for the protest and, besides, it was catchy. It is not the aim of this article to decide if "not Deaf enough" was a reason for the protest but to recognize that the question, when raised, hit a nerve. It evoked recent years of questioning among Deaf people about what it means to be DEAF. That question has never been adequately resolved, which may be why it keeps emerging in contentious public discourse. In all possibility, it may never be solved. It could cease to matter at some future time, but the nature of the historical construction of DEAF will not allow a clear boundary to be drawn around who is and who is not. The nature of culture and how cultural processes work suggest that identities are always in construction.

Arising out of this very public discussion, yet again, of Deaf identity are two generally acknowledged ideas. On the one hand, there is a belief that there is a state of being DEAF that is true, yet not definable. You just are it. (Or you are not it, as it may be.). On the other hand, you may be various degrees removed from DEAF and the point at which you become DEAF is not definable. Because many people who do not hear never reach this point even while trying, it is clear that becoming DEAF is a process and people are at various points in this process. Many people who hear have some level of exposure to a signing Deaf community and over time become more and more fluent in ASL and more and more immersed in this community. But this process can be long and a function of the extent of the immersion. Some people who do not hear do not quite become fluent in ASL and do not quite manage the near total immersion it takes to eventually begin to sign, act, and think like a DEAF person. And often, this is noticeable and marks one as someone who is in the process of becoming but is not yet DEAF. Where is the point when this immersion process results in a person being able to "pass" as DEAF? Where is the point when an immigrant from Germany to the United States can pass as an American? It will certainly vary depending on levels of immersion, language fluency, and on what you consider to be American. Declaring yourself American does not really help. There are models of American-ness that define who is American and who is not. This is true of becoming DEAF as well.

Putting these two ideas together with protesters' desire for a university for Deaf people to be run by a DEAF person was fuel for a very big fire. First of all, is the university a DEAF university or a university for people who do not hear (DEAF or not)? And second, is the president-select DEAF or not? The second question became the arena for playing out the struggle over the first question. If Gallaudet is to be a DEAF university, then in the eyes of many it is justifiable that the president of this university is to be DEAF. If it did not matter if it were a DEAF university, it would not matter if the president was DEAF. This is the way that the events of 2006 at Gallaudet played out despite the protesters' insistence that it was about a desire to have the university run by someone who was more competent or a better leader. The discourse turned acrimonious when it became about identity. (It should be mentioned that this president-select went on to become vice president of academic affairs/provost at a larger university, so while the question of competence may have been raised at Gallaudet, it apparently was not an issue elsewhere.)

Who started the "not-Deaf-enough talk" may matter to some but why it was brought up in the first place is more important. It is not at all surprising that it was introduced into such a contentious environment in which there were DEAF supporters of the president-select as well as Deaf opponents of her selection. And people who hear fell into both camps as well. At the

end, the overwhelming show of protest against her won the day and led to the ouster of the president-select. The protesters may ultimately have convinced some that they were within their rights to protest but it convinced others that it was an ugly show of identity politics. In the aftermath, there is still ire that "not Deaf enough" is mentioned as a reason for the protest.

There is no doubt that the key constituencies of the Deaf community believe strongly that Gallaudet should be a DEAF university and also that there is a specific, sustainable, stable set of attributes that make one DEAF. Others believe that there are "many ways to be deaf/DEAF" (Shultz & Fernandes, 2009). In effect, many people are DEAF in differing ways and in differing bodies and there is no true/pure way to be DEAF. These ideas may not be as incompatible as they seem. It may be possible for both to be true in terms of how we talk about identity. Yes, there are centrally acting cultural processes that define us, contributing to a core of attributes, if you will. But, yes, there is ongoing construction in various stages of creation of these central attributes because of the activity of culture. Cultural activity and processes are always acting on identity. There is no immutable state in culture, but there is an ever-changing center, so to speak. Individuals are co-constructors in the sense that they form their identities in culture and their identities are formed by culture at the same time.

That identities are always under construction is not the problem of Deaf identity. The problem of Deaf identity is how do you think about it and how do you talk about it. What words do you use to describe it and what do you mean by these words? Because you can adopt different ways of representing what it is in your interest to present, if you choose to adopt a posture of strictly defining who is DEAF using a limited and fixed set of attributes, you may fall into the trap of essentialism, of using a language of purity that does not include most of the people who might qualify as DEAF. Or, you could fall into the trap of a call for inclusiveness that does not acknowledge that there is a line that exists that distinguishes Deaf people from others. Both of these traps were engaged in the events of 2006 at Gallaudet and in Deaf communities across the country. Here, Martí and DuBois help us understand these key concepts.

Martí's solution to the Latin American problem recommends that natives find power in their identity as people true to their heritage, to discover the "natural man" (p. 87) free of taint from the European colonizers. However, for centuries, the domination of European culture made it unclear who is who. *Mestizos* (people of mixed Spanish and Portuguese descent in Latin America) and *criollos* (considered the lower caste people often descendants of natives) blurred the line between who could be considered a native to the countries of Latin America (Marti, 1977).

To Martí, the European style of ruling has entirely failed the natives—there is no way that Europeans could understand what native people needed. However, Martí never fully defines who is native. He describes native or natural man as strong and indignant, a real man, as opposed to the effeminate view he holds of the Europeans (p. 88). This is not very enlightening about what is the native. He himself was born of Spanish parents but raised in Latin America. It is clear that he considers himself a native of Latin America (Cuba), but it is less clear what differentiates himself from Europeans. It is possible that this distinction rises solely from self-identification as a native. Throughout his essay, Martí seems to group himself with the natives who must rise up and embrace their identity, saying that "with the rosary as their guide, their heads white and their bodies mottled, both Indian and Creole, they fearlessly entered the world of nations" (p. 88). From this perspective, the native identity is not solely based on heritage but on acceptance of Latin American culture over that of Europe. This line of reasoning makes it possible to include *criollos* like Martí in the group of the natives, as well as exiling those who abandoned their Latin American roots for the European style of government. Martí could be talking about Deaf people with their various ways of becoming Deaf, from birth into Deaf families to acculturation as adults.

Though issues of self-identification in the face of an oppressor are similar between Martí and DuBois, the color line described by DuBois assumes a different set of circumstances than Martí. This color line caused, as DuBois puts it, "whites and blacks [to] commonly see the worst of each other" (DuBois, 1997, p. 135). This being the case, the two groups

constantly reinforced the least appetizing view of the other. In light of this, DuBois describes the issue of self-identification as it applies to African Americans—a concept called "double consciousness" that depends heavily on the breakdown of what he calls the color line. Each Black person has "two souls, two thoughts, two un-reconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body" (p. 38) as he puts it. These two bodies inside each Black person are the ideals they have inherited from White people and the ideals they have maintained as African Americans. This is not unlike what many Deaf people experience; the two contradictory ways of defining Deaf people, one by Deaf people (people of language and culture) and the other by non-Deaf people (defective people without hearing), that are internalized within each Deaf person (Humphries, 1996).

In order to advance, Martí calls for Latin Americans to entirely renounce what Europeans have to teach in favor of their own knowledge, saying that "the European university must bow to the American university" (p. 88). (Martí commonly uses "American" to mean Latin Americans.) However, DuBois sees a different solution. He finds that the "sons of Emancipation" should have "the ideal of fostering and developing the traits and talents of the Negro, not in opposition to or contempt of other races, but rather in large conformity to the greater ideals of the American Republic" (p. 43). DuBois' solution to the problem of Black identity and expression is uniting with his White counterparts toward a shared goal of a better America. From there, the Black man can be both a Negro and an American.

In expressing their ideas about identities, both Martí and DuBois address how much of a role education must play. DuBois finds more merit in the European university than Martí, recognizing that the Black man feels the weight of his ignorance—not simply of letters, but of life, of business, of the humanities. DuBois himself, educated at Harvard, was very deeply invested in the European way of logic, and used this education to work to empower African Americans. *The Souls of Black Folk* is a deep analysis that required a real knowledge of the art of reason—which he would likely not have had were it not for this education. DuBois sees that with the power of knowledge, the newly freed Blacks could gain standing in the South. Given the words and knowledge to express the self-consciousness they felt but could not describe, DuBois believes Black people could raise their status in the eyes of White people to the point where they could be teachers instead of constantly being pupils. DuBois would have them gain an education and, perhaps following the ways of the White man, to advance. The path out of their identities as owned people, as oppressed people, was to attain the learning and the power that comes with the university, as he had done himself.

Martí takes a different stance on this issue. He feels that native people already have the knowledge necessary to govern themselves but that this knowledge has been smothered by different European teachings. Martí believes that the knowledge is already present and that "the history of America, from the Incas to the present must be taught in clear detail and to the letter, even if the archons of Greece are overlooked" (p. 88). He rejects what the European systems have to offer, disdaining the governments of Europe. By deeming what Europe has to offer as naturally incompatible due to its origin far from Latin America, Martí differs from DuBois. DuBois recognizes that more knowledge—no matter if it comes from Europe, or even from the Whites who had enslaved them in the past—is better. According to DuBois, knowledge in "work, culture, liberty" should be taken "not singly but together, not successively but together, each growing and aiding each, and all striving toward that vaster ideal" (p. 43). It may be presumptuous to say that there can be nothing good taken from European knowledge, but alternatively, is it better to take DuBois' approach and merge the best aspects of multiple perspectives? This seemed to be the question that Deaf people were struggling to answer in defining a DEAF university that reflects a DEAF identity.

European domination in South America and White domination in the North draw both José Martí and W. E. B. DuBois to suggest solutions. Martí takes a separatist stance against European identity and education, viewing them as obstacles preventing native real men from flourishing. The conflict of Martí's country, one of unique and violent character, is not

between civilization and barbarity but between false erudition and Nature. To Martí, it is not combination of the colonial and native perspectives that is the solution but assembly and empowerment of one single culture, in the face of inappropriate oppression by another.

DuBois' solution differs in that he promotes synthesis of multiple ideals. DuBois argues against fragmentation—of the soul, of the races, of education, or of ideals. The child of emancipation must use the knowledge of his fellow free men to create better social standing for himself, while he finds a way to identify himself without, as he says, having the doors of opportunity closed roughly in his face. His identity has been broken apart by the forces of racism on both sides of the color line. He wishes to resolve the two contradictory ideals within him, to turn fragments into a whole. DuBois advises that this can be done through education and conviction that the Black spirit can contribute to the American way. DuBois' solution is marked in its ability to recognize that exclusion is counteractive. But what of the color line? His solution crucially depends on a better dynamic between races than has been achievable in many places.

Martí's solution also begs the question of how to account for the social and economic lives of people steeped in a culture under ownership by others: Is the history of centuries living among/under others of no use? In discarding every part of European culture because it is the culture of the oppressor, Martí loses any benefits it has to offer, which could arguably move us backward instead of forward. Both of these solutions, Martí's and DuBois', are not without inherent flaws of reasoning. Both are similar to the solutions that Deaf people envision and dispute within their community and that have emerged in public discourse at times. Perhaps different social histories require different solutions. What may be a possible solution for Martí may not be so for DuBois, and vice versa. But both may contribute understanding of the past and the present that works for others. It certainly seems that both have things to say to the current discourse on identity among Deaf people in the United States and elsewhere.

To begin to talk about the cultural histories of people who are Deaf, it is essential to recognize that Deaf people exist in many countries all over the world who are signed language users and who consider themselves to be separate cultural groups from each other and from the societies of hearing spoken language users among whom they inevitably live. It is a truism among Deaf people that wherever you find Deaf people, you find sign languages (Veditz, 1913). This may not be literally true, but where you find sign languages you find different cultures. But Deaf people's identities are constructed as they interact with each other and with others (non-Deaf people in whose social worlds Deaf people are always embedded).

The construction of Deaf identities in each of these Deaf cultures around the world is interesting in itself, but it requires careful scrutiny to trace the historical development of these identities (whether they are national or more local identities). Often, historical events and movements have created interesting and complicated challenges to identity formation of groups of Deaf people with the result that the margins of cultural identity are in play and culture is at work at all times in defining and redefining identity (who we are and who we are not; Padden & Humphries, 1988). These identities are developed within the specific contexts of the historical events and ideas and geographical space in which Deaf people live. Martí lived in Cuba and experienced colonialism. DuBois lived in the United States with its legacy of slavery. Deaf people in different part of the world also live in the same types of sociohistorical contexts.

It is not surprising that out of England, we have a discourse of "colonialization" to describe the oppression of Deaf people there and throughout the British Empire. In this discourse, the forces that oppress Deaf people are likened to the forces that oppress the peoples of the various colonies that are so much a part of the British legacy. In this discourse, Deaf people are represented as oppressed in several ways: Deaf children were dispersed and forced into educational systems where British Sign Language is not allowed. Both this language and the culture of Deaf people in Britain were not recognized as legitimate. Deaf people were undereducated, underemployed, and underutilized, kept down by a social construction of them that saw them as defective and incapable. Their language

was not recognized until the 1970s and is still struggling for acceptance in some places. Being Deaf is still considered an undesirable state of being. To be successful in British society, one needs to be less "Deaf" and more like people who hear, they need to hear (Ladd, 2003).

In the United States where Deaf people have had a different history, the theme of colonialization has not resonated as strongly. Instead, recent discourse has been dominated by "audism," an invented word that evokes images of racism and sexism. Again, this is not surprising given the racial and gender oppression to which many Americans relate in one way or another. The strong focus in the United States since World War II on race and gender is a social context that has become a means for how American Deaf people choose to represent themselves. "Audism" is defined as a belief in the superiority of the state of being hearing (Humphries, 1977) and fits into a discourse in American Deaf life about the same forces that oppress British Deaf people—education, language, and cultural disparity with hearing people. It is not the nature of the oppression that is different but the representation of this oppression. Both colonialization and audism have crossed the ocean in both directions, and even as this is written, each type of discourse appears to be influencing the other.

Both Martí's and DuBois' analyses and solutions are instructive but there are important complications, particularly for Martí's analysis, due to the fact that Deaf communities are sometimes diverse entities. In the United States, for example, to be Deaf and an ASL user, and also to interact and use English well in the hearing society, is to be bicultural and bilingual. To be a Deaf signed language user and African American, Latino, Asian/Pacific Islander, or Native American in the United States is to be multicultural and sometimes multilingual. DuBois' notion of double consciousness is a particularly useful concept in addressing not just the fact that Deaf people have within themselves both a view that is their own and the view that is engrained in them as a result of being embedded among people who hear. There is also the fact that Deaf people of color are embedded within the social world of White Deaf people.

During the Gallaudet protests, even as the discourse raged about a DEAF university, a strong undercurrent came from people of color who challenged what is DEAF. Although most White Deaf people talked as if there were a single DEAF way of being, nothing could be further from the truth for Deaf African Americans, Deaf Latinos, Deaf Asian Americans, and others. The discourse around DEAF often makes no acknowledgment that DEAF represents a history other than that of White Deaf people. In the United States, social segregation between races extended to the Deaf community and still does (Padden & Humphries, 2005). So, discourses of DEAF are potentially problematic in light of social histories of places. Color lines exist in Deaf communities. People may represent their own group's social history accurately, that is, American White Deaf people use a discourse of audism and occasionally stray into arguments about "Deaf enough?" as a result of their varied paths to becoming Deaf. But it is only accurate to a point. Such representations of identity overlook that Deaf identities are being manufactured simultaneously by others, that is, Deaf African Americans, and that these two models of DEAF are not interchangeable. Nor are they interchangeable with the British model of DEAF.

All this is to point out not only do Deaf people in different countries have different social histories that shape identity but within countries, there are social histories that shape and challenge discourse about identity. African American Deaf people repeatedly assert to me that music is a strong part of their social and cultural lives. And there are equally strong assertions from White Deaf people that music is not a part of their lives. In arguing that the lives of Deaf people and the lives of people who hear are equivalent, it can be demonstrated that music does not make the lives of hearing people better than Deaf people's because what music represents to hearing people is not absent from Deaf people's lives. When music is deconstructed into what makes it music—harmony, melody, beat, tone, point and counterpoint, and so forth—it is easy to find these elements present in and available to Deaf people in sign and visual media. ASL poetry, for example, contains most if not all of these elements (Padden & Humphries, 1988). This may be true but, in contrast, it may also be specific to the identity of White Deaf

people only. There may be a natural Deaf state of being, but there also is a color line that calls into question such essentialism.

The social histories that have formed Deaf identities in different places are still at work. This is evident upon examination of discourses around modern technology as it is introduced (or not introduced) into different Deaf cultures. Cochlear implants have become commonplace in the United States, in Europe, and in other affluent nations around the world. Unlike hearing aids, which are external to the body, cochlear implants require intervention by doctors and hospitals and insertion inside the body. They are hearing aids, nevertheless.

Since the introduction of cochlear implants into the United States, tens of thousands of implantations have occurred across the country and it is growing more evident that the number of deaf children with implants will increase as well. Already, in some countries, nearly all deaf children are implanted shortly after birth. It is close to becoming the norm, whereas 20 years ago, fitting the deaf child with an external hearing aid was the norm. In the context of an emergent Deaf culture, new technology and altered bodies, Deaf identities become stressed yet again. Cochlear implants alter the body, and often, identity is called into question.

At various times in American history, Deaf people have been openly concerned about threats to their existence (Baynton, 1996; Padden, 1990, 1999; Padden & Humphries, 1988, 2005). The "threat" of cochlear implants is often discussed among Deaf people as if it were the most serious threat in the history of Deaf people. It is hardly that. It may be so in some places, but there are places where Deaf people are not being implanted and they do not talk about implants much at all. Vast numbers of Deaf people in Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, and Asia are not as concerned about their existence due to these implants. So, the notion that Deaf people and their identities are threatened by implants is not a given. It is culture specific. Technologies are viewed differently in different places. And as Deaf people in the United States struggle to define their relationship to cochlear implants, their identity is inevitably called into question.

As recently as the 1990s, many Deaf people rejected the idea of cochlear implants and either shunned or threatened to shun any Deaf person who dared to have one. To have an implant risked not being thought of as Deaf person in the same way as before. Because many Deaf adults did obtain them, the discourse within the community has had to explain what it means for a DEAF person to choose to get a cochlear implant. However, views of implanting young deaf children remain very charged. There is a process at work to mediate this "threat" to Deaf identities. As evidence, as this goes to press, it seems that adults who choose to get an implant … well, it is their business. After all, cochlear implants are not much different from an external hearing aid, which has become compatible with a Deaf identity. The concern is still there, even fear of what the future holds due to cochlear implants, but already there is an emerging cultural defining of the deaf body that has an implant. Is it or is it not a DEAF body? Where will that go?

How will Deaf people reconcile the potentially harmful nature of cochlear implants (the risks of surgery and long-term effects on the body) with the fact that many deaf people choose to get them? To be accurate, it is not the devices themselves that are seen as harmful. They are just devices. What is seen as harmful is the interventions into deaf children's lives that accompany the implants (Padden & Humphries, 2005). Often, doctors and educators strongly discourage signing with children who are implanted. For Deaf people who see signing as correlating strongly with deaf children's development, this is considered very harmful (Chamberlain & Mayberry, 2008; Padden & Ramsey, 1998; Prinz & Strong, 1998). There is this tension, on the one hand, between what Deaf people see as the historical effort of people who hear to totally eradicate them though whatever means, and on the other hand, Deaf people's knowledge of themselves as a linguistic and cultural community that it would be genocidal to eradicate. This tension drives identity worry and, perhaps, leads them to react, sometimes strongly, as they did at Gallaudet in 2006. A part of the public discourse at that time specifically expressed concern about the future of Deaf people and the importance of a DEAF university run by

a DEAF president as a way to protect and advocate for a future as it is envisioned by DEAF people and not by a "watering down" of Deaf identity like Martí's *mestizos*.

As deaf children who have had implants grow up and graduate from high school, many of them are confronted with a choice, sometimes in the form of a decision to go to a "hearing" college or to go to a "Deaf" college (such as Gallaudet University, California State University, Northridge [CSUN], or the National Technical Institute for the Deaf [NTID], a college of Rochester Institute of Technology [RIT]). Do they want to seek out immersion among Deaf people more than they have had in their previous lives, thus becoming "more Deaf," or do they want to remain as they are, adding sign language fluency but not necessarily "becoming" something else? Many of them see themselves (and others see them) as a new kind of Deaf person (ASL fluent with strong roots in both hearing and Deaf societies, crossing boundaries with ease, and interested in the popular culture of the "hearing world").

In this time of focus on the cochlea, the historical outcome of which we do not yet know, there is a dance between Martí's "natural man" and DuBois' management of a "double consciousness." This dance is represented in the discourse of "Deafhood." It seems that among many Deaf people, the threat posed by a new generation of deaf children who have grown up and want something different provokes an opposing response. It is a desire to close ranks around an identity that is being referred to in public talk among Deaf people in the United States (and presumably the UK where it originated) as Deafhood (Ladd, 2003). One sign that has been invented to represent it is a combination of the ASL signs for DEAF and INTUITION or GUT. The sense of being DEAF is itself intuitive, "in the gut," and comes from the lived experience of being DEAF.

Although it is not yet clear exactly what meaning will likely be represented by Deafhood, it may be similar to Martí's characterization of the need to reclaim new identity, to focus on a real (or an imagined) nature of a people. In the end, any such purity is vulnerable to accusations of romanticism. But even if imagined, it is a useful exercise to try to define Deafhood, even while arguments rage. It is the process, the working on identity, that is ceaseless within culture. Both Martí and DuBois would have, however, rejected wielding of the notion of Deafhood as a vehicle to exclude. They would have been concerned about where the point is when someone *becomes*, that is, when is one "Deaf enough"? As discussed earlier, Martí recognized the mixed-ness of races created by oppression and that those of mixed races could not be excluded. Martí wrote at times of the multidimensional nature of the true/pure ideal of native people. DuBois saw the problem of knowing between races and his solution was a closer connection rather than a distancing. Will Deafhood eventually be an inclusive concept? Can it be?

The term 'Deafhood' spread quite rapidly during the 2006 protests at Gallaudet, showing that it appealed to the sentiment that there is an essential nature that is DEAF. It was an alternative to "not Deaf enough." But it carried the message that there is a way to be Deaf. We know what it is. People who are deaf in other ways do not speak for us who know. Many took it as an exclusiveness in a time of inclusion in the academy. Others argued that it was an assertion of an instinct by a group of people to protect boundaries they maintain were threatened by the new intrusion of cochlear implants.

But the concern about cochlear implants among Deaf people fearful that their way of life is coming to an end is in some ways a choice. Implants are described as the instrument of oralism, the historical oppression of signing allows Deaf people the comfort of an old enemy. They see implanting deaf children and not exposing them to sign language as just more oralism. Cochlear implants are easy to identify and fight against. Discourse about cochlear implants is prominent in Deaf people's worry about the future. In fact, to listen to the discourse, it sometimes seems to be the single thing that threatens the future. Are there other possible threats to the future of life as Deaf people know it? Yes, there are others, but it is cochlear implants that Deaf people choose to focus upon in private and public discourse. There is little focus, for example, on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 (a landmark legislation that expanded the rights of Deaf people to access services such as interpreting) as a threat. Yet, it is possible to argue that it, and earlier laws such as

PL94-142 enacted in 1975 (which required public schools to provide interpreting services), has led to many deaf children and young adults "mainstreaming" and abandoning some Deaf community involvement that was valued by older generations of Deaf people.

Previous generations of Deaf people had little opportunity to associate with people who hear in the university, in the workplace, and could not participate in many of the systems of everyday life of people who hear. Until the ADA, most Deaf people had a choice of only a handful of colleges in the United States such as Gallaudet, CSUN, and NTID at RIT. Many professions were not open to them because businesses and institutions would not provide accommodations that would allow them to participate. The ADA made it possible for Deaf people to attend virtually any university and work in a wider range of professions, though not all, but certainly more. The ADA and other legislative acts made possible greater access to TV via closed captioning and greater access to telecommunication via relay services. Within the past 20 years, lives of Deaf people have undergone many changes and for a time, Deaf people saw the most prominent threat to their way of life as being these new technologies. They blamed the disappearance of a large network of clubs for the Deaf across the United States on technology (Padden, 2007; Padden & Humphries, 2005). People could stay home and watch TV with closed captions. Deaf people could make telephone calls to each other and to people outside their communities with the new technologies. They did not need to go to clubs anymore to have interesting and rich social lives. This is the narrative that existed just 15 years ago before cochlear implants emerged as a larger threat. The point here is that the process of identity formation in groups seems to need to define what *is* as well as what *is not*, leading to explanations for why one is not Deaf or is not "Deaf enough" as a way of understanding and continuing to define what is. We know what is Deaf by the work we do trying to define what DEAF is not.

In short, identities are constructed from the materials and resources of the people in the places and spaces where they exist. Although within the local world of Deaf people, construction of identities is constantly in progress, others who live around Deaf people are also at work constructing "Deaf people." Deaf people, of course, construct their own model of themselves. This complicates the work of identity formation and reformulation as cultures circle each other, as cultures move through each other, changed from one instant to the next (Urban, 2001). Martí and DuBois offer us insights, not perfect ones, but useful ones. The expression of identity, not the formation of it, but how we talk about it and the public stance we take in relation to certain expressions of identity are constant sources of internal and eternal conflict. Deaf people, a dominated people, are historically left with a legacy where they do not have the luxury of uncontested identity.

Conflicts of Interest

No conflicts of interest were reported.

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