

Deaftopia

Utopian Representations and Community Dreams by the Deaf

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Deaf Cultures

produce several types of cultural objects, signed and written.

Deaf Dreams

of an ideal world appear in some of the cultural productions of Deaf communities.

Deaftopias

are the shared dreams of a perfect place or situation for Sign Language Peoples.

Recurrent items are:

- Sign Language
- Deaf Culture
- Visual strengths
- Eliminating barriers: communication, status, Deaf representation.

This research examines a set of Deaf cultural objects. They are critically analyzed in terms of discourse and historical context to frame and outline what is Deaftopia.

- 1. Deaf Novel USA 1986**
Islay, a utopian novel by Deaf author Douglas Bullard.
- 2. Letters USA 1855-1858**
exchanged discussing the project of a *Deaf Commonwealth* in the *American Annals of the Deaf*.
- 3. Manifesto UK 1977**
Blueprints for the Future, National Union of the Deaf.
- 4. Short Film USA 2000**
Destination Eyeth by Arthur Luhn.
- 5. Deaf Film UK 2011**
Dystopian film *The End* by Ted Evans.
- 6. Activism USA 1988**
Deaf President Now! Gallaudet University, Washington D.C.
- 7. Inspirational Speech USA 1913**
George Veditz, *The Preservation of Sign Language*, National Association of the Deaf.
- 8. Deaf Town USA 2004**
Laurent, project by Marvin Miller, South Dakota.

9. Sign Language Villages in Deaf History

In these places, the majority of the population are/were signers (deaf & hearing).



Martha's Vineyard
USA, 18th – 20th century



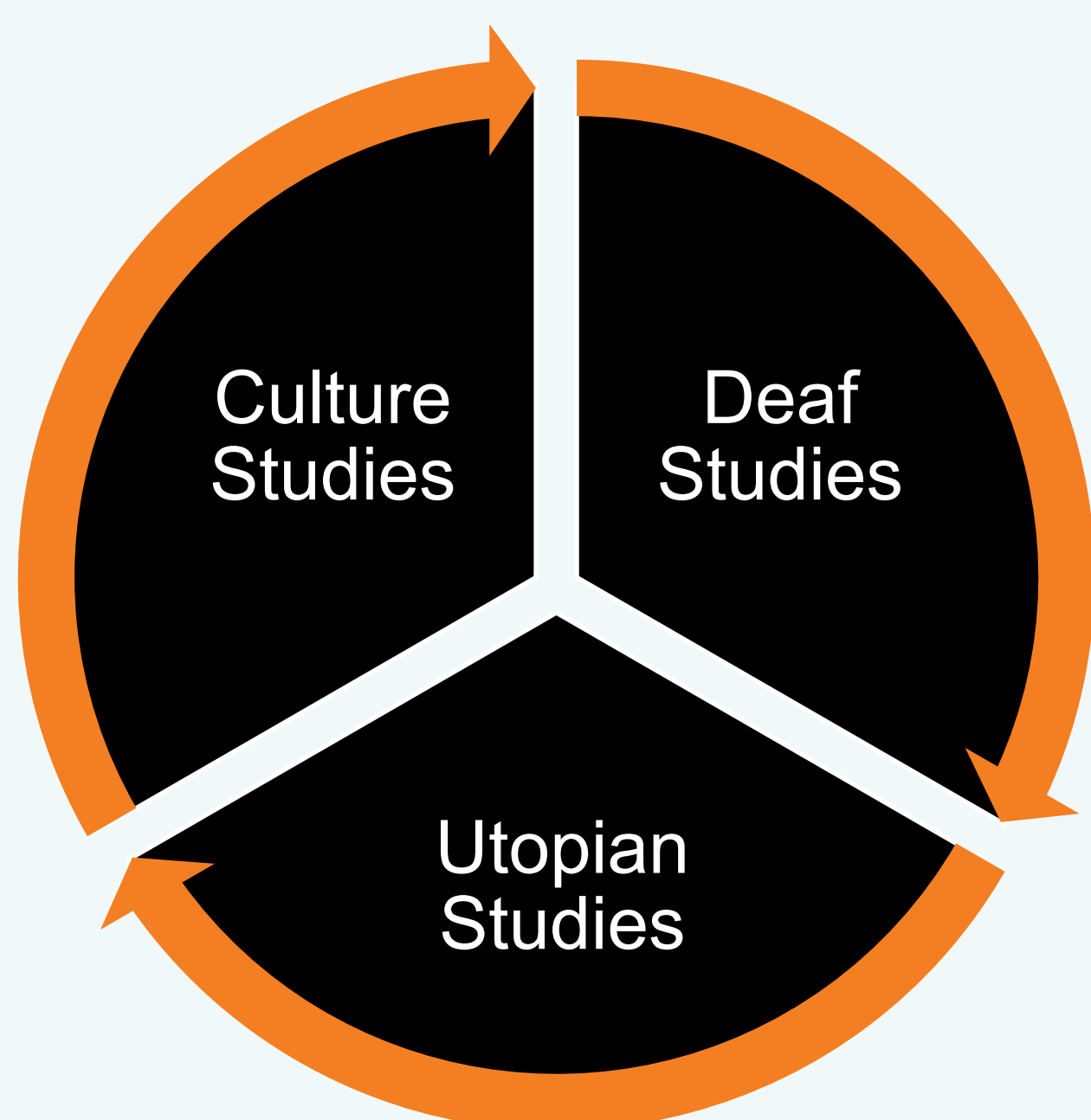
Bengkala, Bali,
Indonesia 1960-today



Adamorobe, Ghana
1773? – today

Defining Deaftopia can mean

- Identifying Deaf goals from a cultural standpoint.
- Working towards Deaf well-being and mental health.
- Empowering Sign Language Peoples.
- Enhancing knowledge production on Deaf Culture.
- Creating awareness on the richness of Deaf Cultures and Histories.



To be continued...

- Is there one Deaftopia or several Deaftopias in Deaf communities?
- Is Deaftopia a product of oppression?
- Do Deaftopias show integrationist or separatist discourses?
- Is it different throughout Deaf history?
- In what ways can Deaftopian spaces be achieved?

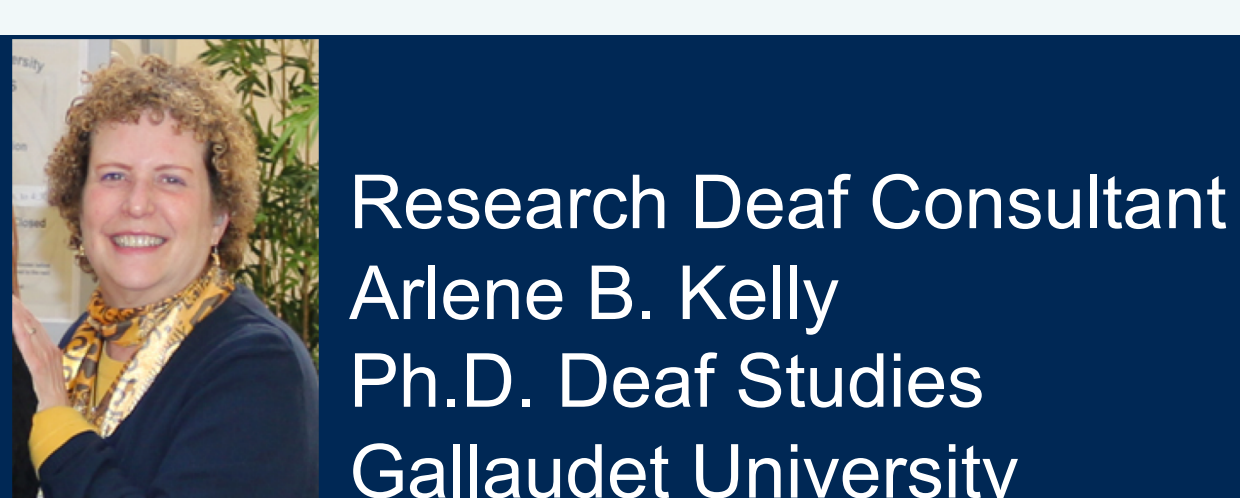
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What is YOUR perfect world for Deaf people?

Please leave your testimony HERE



(Thank you)



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