Authenticity in Cultural Studies

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The predicament of culture

Science is built on our cultural knowledge including our biases

This presents a problem of authenticity in our work

This is especially true in the academy (the world of scholarship, research, teaching, and learning)

In the academy, we are challenged by conventions and traditions of narrating, reporting, writing, and, in general, expressing of ideas.

What we think of as scholarship or science often exclude certain heuristics (ways of doing, being, reporting, and even thinking).

We are often most authentic when we resist and challenge dominant narratives.

Prior to the 1960s, authoritative accounts of deaf people's lives were fictions, constructions (of us, not us)

The history of science about deaf people is a history of misconceptions and harms

So, in my limited few minutes, I want to talk about challenges for the disciplines of Deaf Studies and Black Deaf Studies

The study of "us" is primary, yes, but the study of "not us" is also important

We need to know what the "deal" is with others so we can inform our own interactions with them

And cultural and language studies often reveal the "science" of us, the people/the folk and pushes convergence with the science of others

We have to create, borrow, judge, retain, and revise new narratives that contradict older ones

Important to create dynamic narratives, not freeze them, let no one own them

Giving voice to a new discipline as you are doing, is an act of resistance, of activism

We experience tension and emotion in doing this work

How will you manage activism, struggle with –isms, do it all (discover, research, publish), and stay cool?

One way: lead with scholarship. Focus on developing more authentic scientific explanations than those of past

It's exciting, so much to be learned, to reveal!

I look forward to the growth of this new discipline of Black Deaf Studies