



## Ethical Minefields

Interpreting in various settings requires an interpreter to navigate the minefield of ethics.

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**Introduction to:  
Sandra Hester**

Sandra Hester is a nationally certified interpreter (NIC/NAD IV) and has been a Lead Instructor in the Interpreter Training Technology Department at Hinds Community College, Raymond, MS since 2004. She has worked as an Educational Interpreter as well as doing private practice interpreting for over 30 years.




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## Part 1 of 6

Overview

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**Guidelines for the:**

- \* Classroom
- \* Community
- \* Church

- CPC (Code of Professional Conduct)
- Code of Ethics
- RID (Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf - established in 1964)
- EIPA (Educational Interpreters Performance Assessment)
- NAD (The National Association of the Deaf - founded in Cincinnati, Ohio in 1880 as a non-profit organization run by deaf people to advocate for deaf rights.)




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**NAD RID Ethics**

*Code Of Professional Conduct*

1. Interpreters adhere to standards of confidential communication.
2. Interpreters possess the professional skills and knowledge required for the specific interpreting situation.
3. Interpreters conduct themselves in a manner appropriate to the specific interpreting situation.
4. Interpreters demonstrate respect for consumers.
5. Interpreters demonstrate respect for colleagues, interns, and students of the profession.
6. Interpreters maintain ethical business practices.
7. Interpreters engage in professional development




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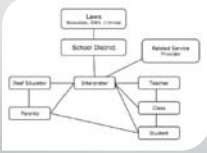

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**EIPA Guidelines**

*Professional Conduct For Educational Interpreters*


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**Rescores**

- Best Practices In Educational Interpreting
- Encounters With Reality



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**What Are Some Of The "Dangers" Of Interpreting**

- SEE (Signing Exact English)
- PSE (Pidgin Signed English)
- CASE (Conceptual Accuracy Signed English)
- ASL (America Sign Language)



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**Which Of The Interpreting Models To Use**

- Helper
- Robot/Machine
- Communication Facilitator
- Bi-Bi
- Ally



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## Part 2 of 6

Scenarios 1, 2, & 3

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### Scenario 1 – Classroom

*The Case Of The Positioned Interpreter*

- Miss Litten welcomed her sign language interpreter, gave her a desk space for her books and materials, a closet shelf for her personal belongings, and a seat in which she could interpret. Miss Robinson, the interpreter for this kindergarten class, was appreciative of the welcome but shared with Miss Litten that she may not need the chair, that she would "feel out" Miss Litten's movements within the classroom and position herself as appropriate for Kyle, the deaf child's best viewing. Miss Litten's response "I prefer you sit here"
- The first week of school made it clear to the interpreter that the seat in the front near the blackboard was not the accommodate place for her attempt Kyle was frequently on the floor with other students. Every time she attempted to move near the learning focus, Miss Litten asked her to please stay in her interpreting seat so that the children could learn who the interpreter was and who the teacher was. Can you say TENSION? What should Miss Robinson do?




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### Scenario 2 – Community

*The Case Of The Windows*

- Joe Smith, Deaf, has an appointment with his attorney for a deposition he must give. When you arrive, as his interpreter, you find that the room you will be interpreting in is a rectangle shaped room. Of the two long walls, one is glass which contains the door to enter the room and the other has large ceiling to floor windows which allow a good deal of sunlight into the room.
- The room has a large table in the middle and the attorney who will be doing the deposition (the DA) is seated with his back to the windows. The court reporter is seated with her equipment at the end of the table.
- After introductions, the DA returns to his seat and instructs you and Mr. Smith to have a seat. As the interpreter you know you need to be seated beside the DA yet you also know that the light streaming in the windows will cause problems for Mr. Smith. When you try to explain this to the DA and Mr. Smith's attorney, it is very obvious that the DA is offended and does not want to move.
- Now what do you do?




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### Scenario 3 – Church

#### The Case Where To Sit In Church

- You have been interpreting for your new Deaf people in your church for 3 weeks now. One of the Deaf, Mary, is very faithful and has been baptized. The others are more hit or miss in their attendance.
- As is considered normal, when the Deaf first started coming you placed a chair down front at the correct angle for the deaf to see you as well as whoever is in the pulpit. As far as you were concerned all is going well.
- However, on the 4<sup>th</sup> week, Sunday morning, Brother James, the Outreach Director, comes up to you just before service and instructs you to move the "deaf and dumb" people to the back of the church due to the fact that it is too distracting for you to be seated in the altar area. He explains that someone has complained.
- Now what?




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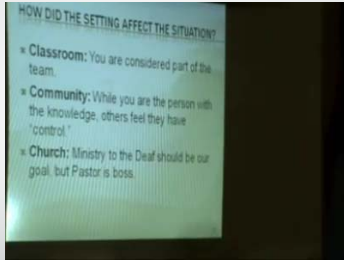
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### Summary

#### How Did The Settings Affect The Situation

- **Classroom:** You are considered part of the team
- **Community:** While you are the person with the knowledge, others feel they have "control"
- **Church:** Ministry to the Deaf should be our goal, but Pastor is boss




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## Part 3 of 6

Scenarios 4, 5, & 6

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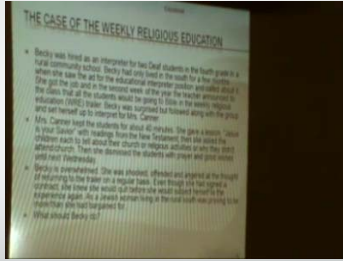
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### Scenario 4 – Classroom

#### The Case Of The Weekly Religious Education

- Becky was hired as an interpreter for two deaf students in the fourth grade in a rural community school. Becky had only lived in the south for a few months when she saw the ad for the educational interpreter position. She got the job and in the second week of the year the teacher announced to the class that all the students would be going to a weekly religious education (WRE) trailer. Becky was surprised but followed along with the group and set herself up to interpret for Mrs. Carner.
- Mrs. Carner kept the students for about 40 minutes. She gave a lesson "Jesus is your savior" with readings from the New Testament when she asked the children each to tell about their church or religious activities or why they didn't attend church. Then she dismissed the students with prayer and good wishes until next Wednesday.
- Becky is overwhelmed. She was shocked, offended and angered at the thought of returning to the trailer on a regular basis. Even though she had signed a contract, she knew she would quit before she would subject herself to the experience again. As a Jewish woman living in the role south was proving to be more than she had bargained for.
- What should Becky do?




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### Scenario 5 – Community

#### The Case Of The Terp VS The Speaker

- You have accepted to do a job in the community through an agency. You are told it is a community meeting, an informative session on \_\_\_\_\_ awareness.
- When you arrive, with your teammate, you discover that it is actually a meeting so that the community can come and voice their concerns and what they think the government should be doing about this.
- The room is full and it is soon apparent that the mood feeling is very pro \_\_\_\_\_. You, on the other hand have strong personal feelings against \_\_\_\_\_.
- Your teammate is neutral and is fine with an interrupting the assignment. You want to leave, but know if will hurt your reputation if you leave your teammate to do the meeting alone. But you are not sure you can interpret objectively in this setting.
- On top of it all, no Deaf here showed up.
- What do you do?




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### Scenario 6 – Church

#### The Case Of The Enthusiastic Evangelist

- After a powerful service, during the altar call you notice the preacher walking back and forth in front of a young deaf woman, watching her and you suspect he is wanting to pray for her to be healed of her deafness.
- Knowing Deaf culture like you do you don't know if the young woman would want to be prayed for in that manner. You do know that you feel he should not do it without at least asking permission.
- What do you do?




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**Part 4 of 6**  
Scenarios 7, 8, & 9

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**Scenario 7 – Classroom**

*The Case Of The Cheater*

- Dan was a new fifth-grade student in the school system. He had moved to the community from another state and his IEP called for an educational interpreter in his full inclusion placement. Steve enjoyed his first few weeks interpreting for Dan. Dan was very attentive and very interactive in the class. He was physically attractive to the girls, physically complete with the boys, and charming with his teacher. He had low tolerance for making errors, though, and appeared somewhat compulsive about getting A's on all his assignments. He frequently watched the other students and tried to outpace them. On one assignment Steven thought Dan's watching led to cheating. It appeared he changed an answer on the test. A few days later, Steven saw it again, Dan was cheating.
- What would Steven do?




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**Scenario 8 – Community**

*The Case Of The Lying Patient*

- You are interpreting for a male Deaf patient during the time the nurse is requesting medical history. She asks him if he is sexually active the Deaf patient replies he is not.
- You are startled. Just last week you were interpreting for a Deaf female who is being treated for STD's and she had listed this Deaf male as one of her many sexual partners.
- What do you do?




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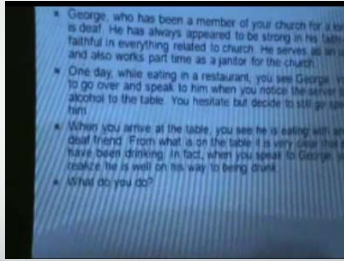
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### Scenario 9 – Church

#### The Case Of The Wayward Church Member

- George, who has been a member of your church for a long time is deaf. He has always appeared to be strong in his faith and faithful in everything related to church. He serves as an usher and also works part time as a janitor for the church.
- One day while eating in a restaurant, you see George. You decide to go over and speak to him when you notice the server is bringing alcohol to the table. You hesitate but decide to still go speak to him.
- When you arrive at the table, you see he is eating with another deaf friend. From what is on the table it is very clear that you realize he is well on his way to being drunk.
- What do you do?




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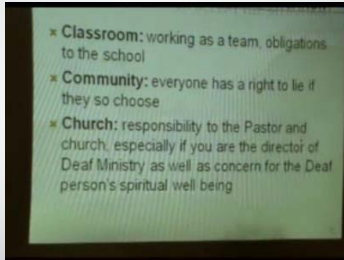
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### Summary

#### How Did The Settings Affect The Situation

- **Classroom:** working as a team, obligations to the school
- **Community:** everyone has a right to lie if they so choose
- **Church:** responsibility to the Pastor and church, especially if you are the director of Deaf Ministry as well as concern for the Deaf person's spiritual well being




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## Part 5 of 6

Scenarios 10, 11, & 12

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### Scenario 10 – Classroom

#### The Case Of The Grandmother

- Robert's grandmother called Ginger, Robert's interpreter the night before school started to tell her about Robert's trouble in the summer. It seems that Robert got involved with a kid named Jim who lives in the trailer park and the two of them stole some money out of the cash box at the local pool. The boys were arrested and had gone to court and Robert got 40 hours of community service while Jim got 80 hours. The judge told Robert to stay away from Jim, that if he goes near Jim again his grandmother was to call the sheriff.
- Ginger listened with many interruptions. "It sounds like you had a hard summer Mrs. Belmont but I don't think this is information that Robert would want me to know." Mrs. Belmont insisted that Robert knew she was calling Ginger because he had told him when they had an interpreter at the courthouse that she was going to tell Ginger to keep an eye on him when school started. "He lets to you Ginger and he won't listen to none of us around here" Ginger reminded Mrs. Belmont that Robert was able to communicate with Ginger because they both used sign language. But all that she, Ginger, can do and didn't have any right to give warnings or reprimands. Mrs. Belmont continued to insist that she needed to keep Robert away from Jim as she knew Ginger could...and the whole family had faith in her to keep Robert out of trouble.
- What does Ginger do now?




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### Scenario 11 – Community

#### The Case Of The Adult Child

- Betty is 28 years old, deaf and still lives at home. She always has her mother with her at her doctor appointments and you have done many assignments with her.
- This time Betty asks to talk to her doctor without her mother in the room. The doctor asks Betty's mom to give them a few moments as mom. As mom leaves, she looks at you and says, "you can tell me what they talk about later".
- Betty looks at you and wants to know what she said.
- What do you do?




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### Scenario 12 – Church

#### The Case Of The Arguing Couple

- A Deaf couple in your church are sitting on the front pew after service having a very visual argument. Even those who don't know sign language can tell something is wrong.
- Your pastor notices and comes over and asks if anything is wrong and can he help
- You have seen most of the argument and can tell it is of a very personal nature
- What do you do?




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## Part 6 of 6

# Comic Lessons

A Few Minutes In The Life Of A Sign Language Interpreter

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### A Few Minutes In The Life Of A Sign Language Interpreter

#### Biology Classroom



#### Problems

- The interpreter is a sign language teacher
- The student does not know English
- The interpreter will bring the student with her to help her
- He is confused about how the student would get to school
- He can't believe Deaf can drive
- Is worried if she wants to ask a question...how will he understand her?
- How will the Deaf student understand his lecture?
- Thinks the hand flapping in front of the class will be distracting and suggests the interpreter to listen to the hour lecture and tell the student after class what is said.
- Suggest to have the lecture recorded and listen to later on her own time
- Suggest she teach him a new sign everyday so he could sign at the end of the semester then asks how to sign "hello"?

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### A Few Minutes In The Life Of A Sign Language Interpreter

#### Problems

- Thinks she can talk about him before the "Deaf" applicant arrives
- Asks if he is a good candidate for the job?
- Is worried he will be late because he can't hear his alarm clock.
- Remembers seeing a "Deaf" person at the food court selling pencils and thinks it might be him although the job opening is for a computer programmer.
- Thinks all Deaf people know each other
- Thinks its easy for the interpreter to communicate with people in other countries, because sign language is a universal language
- Does not think there is much need for sign language interpreters
- Thinks the interpreter can call him on his phone to ask where he is?
- Thinks the interpreter is great at lip reading because he works with Deaf people

#### Community – Job Interview



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### A Few Minutes In The Life Of A Sign Language Interpreter

#### Community – Lawyer



#### Problems

- Thinks the interpreter can take notes and interpret so he can remember the discussion for the next meeting
- Thinks there are only a few Deaf people
- Thinks all Deaf should learn to read lips
- Thinks the interpreter should give advise on the court hearing
- Tries to "bribe" the interpreter to convince the client what to do in this case
- Asks the interpreter to check if the client is there
- Offers to give the interpreter information on the case

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### A Few Minutes In The Life Of A Sign Language Interpreter

#### Problems

- Sorry the interpreter came after the appointment had been cancelled less than 24 hours in advance and thinks she won't get paid
- Don't think he should pay for a service he did not use although he agreed to the terms of the service contract
- Thinks the interpreter charges too much \$175 per hr with a 2 hr min for a last min legal because he forgot to request an interpreter sooner
- Thinks a deposition is not that big of a deal to pay an interpreter because it's not IN court
- Thinks the cost of an interpreter is too much – like hiring a lawyer
- Does not understand there are less than 2,000 people in the US who are qualified to do what she does at the cognitive level. Not only does she have to know everything he knows but she has to be able to follow the legal system, he uses to keep himself out of trouble and then relay it into another language for his client. She is better at her job than he is at his job. She is a linguist genius!
- Thinks she is rich since she charges so much for her services
- When he learns she charges only \$75 per hour and she pays her own health, liability insurance, social security taxes and 401 k he wants to hire her directly to save money instead of paying the agency
- Thinks she should make deals herself instead of working with an agency, she should work for free instead of charging so much and thinks she should start her own agency and make more money

#### Community – Lawyer




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