

When Language Becomes

Injustice

Forensic Assessment of Deaf
Individuals

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WHO?

Who is assessing the Deaf person?

Psychiatrists • Psychologists • Forensic Experts • Physicians

**Professional expertise ≠ Deaf
expertise**

WHAT?

What are we really assessing?

- Mental health
- Cognition
- Communication
- Criminal responsibility

Communication
≠
cognition

WHEN?

When can assessment become injustice?

When language is misunderstood

When communication is treated as pathology

When tools are not appropriate

When the person is blamed for the barrier

A diagnostic error can become a judicial error.

WHERE?

Where do communication barriers matter?

MENTAL HEALTH

COURTROOM

POLICE

PRISON

Accessibility is more than interpreting.

WHY?

Why must the system change?

- Deaf Studies
- Professional training
- Qualified legal interpreters
- Accessible mental healthcare
- Quality standards

Health and justice systems need Deaf competence.

JUSTICE

Justice begins with understanding.

Language is not an accessory to justice.

It is one of its conditions.

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