Research from a Deaf cultural perspective:

**Deafhood** – positive ways of Deaf ‘being-in-the-world’ (Ladd, 2003), a linguistic & cultural minority with its own collective identity and culture mediated by sign language *not* deafness - an impairment of hearing, discourses of treatment, educational intervention, assimilation into majority society, welfare and charity

Research Aims

- to consider the place and meaning of religion and public worship in Deaf community life
- to examine the role of religion in building Deafhood; both in the development of Deaf identity by individuals through the life-course, and how it contributes to the way Deaf communities conceptualise their existence and its meaning
- to explore Deaf use of religion as a resource for resistance against discourses of oppression

Key Findings

- use of religious belief and biblical imagery by both individuals and communities to forge authentic Deaf identity
- importance of Deaf Elders transmitting cultural knowledge and values to the next generation
- new perspectives on Deaf funeral rites (Meller, 2010)
- directions for future development of Deaf appropriate worship and church structures

References:
Goodall, H L (2000) *Writing the New Ethnography* Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press