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Producing Possible Hannahs: Theory and the Subject of Research

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This article presents and compares three analyses of qualitative data drawn from an ethnographic case study using distinctive theoretical approaches. The article shows the power of theoretical approaches to constitute the "subject" of a study and to constitute the character of the social world in which such a subject is situated. The three readings of the data produce different possible subjects located in differently constituted possible worlds. By putting theory at the center of analysis, the article shows how theoretical approaches radically influence what can be found in the data and how it can be found there.

This article contributes to a growing dialogue about multiple and divergent analytic approaches used by qualitative researchers (cf. Creswell, 1998; Green & Harker, 1988; Reid, Kamler, Simpson, & Maclean, 1996). Creswell (1998) compares five different traditions in qualitative research, showing how they vary in terms of theoretical and philosophical frameworks, data collection, data analysis, reporting and standards of quality, and verification. Our purpose is different and more specific: to show in high relief the constitutive force of theory within the analysis of qualitative materials. Accordingly, we examine a set of data, bringing to it three different readings from three different theoretical framings. In this way, "we seek ways of telling good stories that draw attention to themselves as stories" (Reid et al., 1996, p. 102). We

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reveal the different work that we do to make studenthood visible and analyzable by focusing on a 12-year-old girl we call "Hannah."

Our respective theories and methodologies are D/discourse theory, feminist poststructuralism, and ethnomethodology and conversation analysis. All three approaches are intensely interested in language. We do not propose that these approaches are commensurate. Rather, we want to show the different work that can be done with each of them, what each framing enables us to see in the data. We take the concept of "studenthood" as a *leit motif* for each of our readings to construct points of common reference in our respective sections of the article.

The corpus of data drawn on for this study was itself made up of myriad texts. It was collected by Michele Knobel as part of her doctoral research, a multiple ethnographic case study of four adolescents and their literacy practices at home and at school (Knobel, 1997, 1999). For the purposes of this article, Michele provided us with both primary and secondary data from her case study—audiotapes, transcripts of interviews and lessons, and the chapter on Hannah from the book that grew out of the doctoral thesis. We each read and discussed part of these data and then separated to write our different sections. Each section of the article produces a different understanding of either Hannah or the research process.

Our different ways of "seeing" through and by means of our respective theories are made manifest in the types of research questions we pose in response to what we see as "problem areas" or dimensions of classroom activity that warrant scrutiny and analysis. Michele's use of D/discourse theory generates questions such as "What Discourses constitute and coordinate Hannah's 'studenthood' and the ways in which she enacts being a student?" Eileen Honan and Bronwyn Davies' feminist poststructuralist framing enables them to construct questions such as "How do we see the dual processes of being subjected and of becoming an agentic subject playing themselves out in the episodes of Hannah's life that Michele has made available to us?" Carolyn Baker's use of ethnomethodology and conversation analysis enables her to ask questions such as "How is Hannah found to be a 'good student' through people's witnessing of classroom scenes in which she is present?" Each of these sets of questions is grounded in different assumptions about discourse, about individual subjects, and about how these are identified and analyzed.

We aim to speak across and through our differences by showing how diverse frameworks can produce quite different "clicks of recognition" (Lather, 1991, p. 69). Each framework generates a different way of reading the data, a sense of what can be found in it.

D/DISCOURSE COORDINATIONS AND “BEING A STUDENT” (Michele’s reading)

Introducing Hannah

Hannah’s slight build and brown shoulder-length hair, worn mostly in two neat plaits, tend to make her look younger than she is (12 years). Hannah has an open face, an impish smile, and a quirky sense of humor. Hannah lives at home with her mother and father; her older brother, Craig (15 years); and her younger sister, Laura (7 years). Hannah’s family seems to be a close and loving one.

Hannah’s school has a large student population drawn from predominantly working-class and underclass families. Hannah is in a “double” class comprising 54 students and two teachers, Mrs. Evans (known as “Mrs. E”) and Mr. Brunner. Like the school, the class is culturally and linguistically diverse and has a high rate of transience, and the bulk of the students in the class seem to be very worldly wise and street-smart. Hannah has a small group of close friends at school that includes her longtime best friend, Virginia. This group is completed by another two girls, Phaney and Tran, who are from Cambodia and Vietnam, respectively. Virginia, however, appears to be the only friend with whom Hannah socializes regularly outside school.

D/discourse Theory

In analyzing the data collected during time spent with Hannah, her teachers and classmates, and her mother and sister, I looked for (among other things) patterns of what Gee (1992) calls “Discourse memberships,” that is, particular patterns of “ways of talking [i.e., discourses], acting, valuing, and believing, as well as the spaces and material ‘props’ [that a] group uses to carry out its social practices” and that are recognized as constructing opportunities for people to “be,” and to display being, particular types of persons (p. 107). For everyone, these displays of social identity and Discourse membership are multiple and always under negotiation in the contexts, practices, and politics of everyday life. In addition, membership in a Discourse may come “free” by being born into it (what Gee, 1992, calls one’s “primary Discourse,” e.g., being born Catholic), or it may come by default by means of one’s dealings in and with certain social institutions (e.g., being a student and the many social forms [i.e., sub-Discourses] this can take). Moreover, it is possible for a person to be a member of what might be seen as socially conflicting or seemingly contradictory Discourses; that is,

Each of us is a member of many Discourses, and each Discourse represents one of our ever-multiple identities. These Discourses need not, and often do not, represent consistent and compatible values. There are conflicts among them, and each of us lives and breathes these conflicts as we act out our various Discourses. (Gee, 1996, p. ix)

The jostlings and flows of Discourses, our memberships in (or not in) them, and the choices we make constitute and coordinate our selves and our everyday lives. It is Hannah's identities as a student and the Discourses and discourses (i.e., the language bits of Discourses [Gee, 1992-1993, p. 14]) that both coordinate her displays of self and enable her to display them in which I am most interested here. What I present does Hannah an injustice, as her everyday life is far more complex than it will appear in what follows.

The Construction of Studenthood in Hannah's Classroom

The teachers in Hannah's classroom worked to establish students as independent, self-motivated learners who would be able to "survive" in terms of language abilities and social skills outside school. Most students within this class, apart from Hannah, did not seem to enact or aim for these values and goals. Hannah, however, certainly appeared to embody her teachers' aspirations for their students. Indeed, in startling contrast to most of her classmates, Hannah was what could be called a "model" student. She was rated as an "above average" student, and her teachers repeatedly commented on her ability to apply herself to her schoolwork.

Hannah's "ways of being a student," which necessarily include a number of other identities, are explored here via a "snapshot" of a classroom event.

SNAPSHOT 1: GETTING DOWN TO THE TASK AT HAND

(Monday, November 28, 11:10 a.m., Day 6 of Observations)

EVENT: LANGUAGE LESSON (Immediately after Morning Tea)

SUBEVENT 1: Silent Reading

The students move into the classroom and find their seats or mill about talking to each other. Hannah sits at her desk without speaking to anyone and takes out her book, *The Door in the Wall*. Mrs. E and Mr. Brunner wait for everyone to be seated and then set about identifying which students are yet to hand in their novel assignment. Hannah seems engrossed in her book while this is happening.

Jethro, who sits beside Hannah, leans over and takes a pair of scissors from Hannah's desk. She appears to ignore him. Jethro sits and trims the green fuzz from a tennis ball with the scissors and then gently jabs Hannah in the arm with them before putting the scissors back on her desk.

Hannah continues to read.

[11:15 a.m.] Mrs. E informs the class that they have 5 minutes of silent reading left before moving into their reading groups. Students around Hannah are variously engaged in reading novels, magazines, novelty books, chatting, or simply sitting with their heads on their desks. Jethro shifts around in his seat, bounces the tennis ball on his desk a few times, and yawns loudly. Two students from

another class come to the door and ask who would like to play softball for Friday sport. Hannah looks up briefly and then returns to her reading.

SUBEVENT 2: Introducing the Next Section of the Lesson

[11:22 a.m.] Mr. Brunner tells his student group to come and sit in the large space in the center of the room. Hannah puts her book away and sits on the floor, somewhat on her own. Virginia sits with another girl. Mr. Brunner explains that the task he is about to give the students is part of their final assessment for their current unit on Greek mythology. Hannah appears to listen carefully, regularly raises her hand in response to Mr. Brunner's questions, and is called on to provide answers. The students are sent back to their desks with worksheets, and Hannah begins working immediately.

[11:31 a.m.] After some time, Hannah raises her hand, but Mr. Brunner is engaged in redirecting a student who is in the wrong group. Hannah lowers her hand and then fetches a dictionary from the bookshelves and appears to look up a word. A group of students discuss with Mr. Brunner where the Achilles' tendon is located. One student loudly suggests that it is "in my bum." Hannah continues working.

Classroom events and practices such as the ones presented here were repeated over and over again during the 2 weeks I spent in this classroom. Indeed, I found that most of my field notes were more about other students than about Hannah. Once I had described the task in which she was involved, there often was very little else to write about her for long periods of time. Hannah never was reprimanded by her teachers, but neither did she seem to be teased by her classmates for behaving in ways that some might have regarded in others as being a "goody-goody" or a "teacher's pet" (and therefore generally unacceptable).

Being a (Model) Student and a "Nice Girl"

To begin with, I found myself somewhat at a loss in trying to interpret the Discourses that might have been constituting and coordinating Hannah as a model student. It would have been easy to claim that Hannah was fully and unquestioningly complying with the student sub-Discourse championed by her teachers. Or, equally, it would be possible to say that Hannah was coordinated by Discourses that require young girls to act in nice, respectful, and dutiful ways. In one sense, these types of interpretations are confirmed by Hannah herself. During the familiarization visit, for example, Hannah described how in class she sits next to Jethro, whom (despite his reputation with her teachers) she finds very funny. In her words, "I try not to talk to him, but sometimes *I just have to risk it*" (my emphases). Jethro is 12 years old but is approximately 175 centimeters (5 feet 9 inches) tall and weighs about 70 kilograms (154 pounds). He has a volatile temper, and few students deliberately cross him. Remarkably, however, he appears to get on well with Hannah. Numerous times, too, I overheard Hannah telling someone not to talk to her during class work times. Thus, it seems that examples such as these signal

Hannah's membership in, use of, and coordination by a particular student sub-Discourse and/or, for want of a better term, what could be called a "nice girl" Discourse.

I was convinced, however, that these Discourses were not the only ones coordinating Hannah's identities and subjectivities as a particular type of student. To begin with, Hannah demonstrated a remarkable self-sufficiency both at school and at home. Hannah worked independently in class and often solved any difficulties she encountered in her schoolwork on her own (see, e.g., Snapshot 1 presented earlier). This is confirmed in her semester school reports. For example, her report for the first semester of that year described Hannah as "a friendly, courteous class member who works quietly on tasks with minimal supervision."

At home, Hannah also appeared to be encouraged to be self-sufficient by her parents and particularly by her mother, Julia. For example, during the afternoon of the 2nd day of school-based observations, Hannah asked whether I would mind not sitting with her group of friends at lunchtime anymore because her friends "can't be themselves when you're around." Later, Julia explained to me that this had been a dilemma for Hannah and that Hannah had wanted her mother to approach me about not conducting lunchtime observations. Hannah, however, was told that it was her responsibility to ask me.

At the risk of overinterpreting these and other similar observations, I propose that the self-sufficiency enacted by Hannah is not explored satisfyingly by means of nice girl Discourses alone, which in the main tend to emphasize dependency and acquiescence (cf. Gilbert & Taylor, 1991). In addition, however, and as indicated earlier, I propose that Hannah was being coordinated as well by the sets of values, beliefs, and practices that characterized her primary Discourse and, in particular, her relationship with her mother.

Julia often included the word "cope" in her talk about her everyday life and, for a number of reasons, has had to find ways of dealing with the everyday demands of raising a family successfully in an area where she felt she didn't belong. At times, I had the distinct impression that Hannah was trying to protect or help her mother by, among other things, behaving impeccably at home and at school (unlike her brother, Craig). Once again, this is only a hunch and cannot be substantiated with material evidence from field notes or interviews. Nevertheless, I am convinced that her mother's values, beliefs, actions, practices, and so forth directly coordinated much of Hannah's primary Discourse and, hence, the ways in which Hannah claimed and acted out certain identities in class and at home.

Acting Up

In stark contrast to her in-class identity, Hannah usually spent her lunch hours devising elaborate and humorous skits and dance routines with the

help of her three friends: Virginia, Phaney, and Tran. These skits were mostly spoofs on popular culture and often included messages about class differences. These skits were developed largely by Hannah and Virginia, and the skits spoke to their vivid imaginations and keen senses of humor. This love of performing constitutes the subject matter of a second snapshot.

SNAPSHOT 2: ACTING UP

(Thursday, December 1, 1:00 p.m., Day 9 of Observations)

EVENT: HANNAH AND HER FRIENDS PERFORMING SKITS

SUBEVENT: The Second Skit

The entire class is seated in one half of the large classroom, with the dividing curtains pulled across to form the wings of a makeshift stage. Hannah primes the audience as to what lies ahead, explaining that Virginia is a model who is trying to draw attention to herself. Virginia's hair is tied into myriad small pigtailed, held in place with strips of brightly colored cloth. Each girl has a long strip of cloth and uses it as a feather boa.

They strut down the "catwalk," swinging their hips, pouting, shimmying their shoulders, and singing "We're models on the catwalk, I wave my tush on the catwalk" in a direct and hilarious parody of the popular song, *I'm too Sexy*. Hannah and Virginia make a second run down the catwalk, and when they reach a certain point, Virginia breaks into a frenzy, pushing Hannah out of the way and singing at the top of her voice, "I'm too sexy for my socks, too sexy for my undies," and so forth.

Their classmates and teachers are shrieking with laughter by now. Hannah grabs Virginia, gives her a good shake, and asks her what she's doing. Virginia explains that she does, indeed, want more attention than Hannah. Hannah stamps her foot and says that they'll have to do it all over again. They try two more times, threading their way out into the audience, seductively dragging and draping their strips of cloth over everybody as they sing. Twice more, Virginia reaches a certain point and explodes into unrestrained singing about how sexy she is. Eventually, Virginia agrees to behave, and they finally manage to complete their song about models on the catwalk. Just as they are about to leave the "stage," however, Virginia runs close to the audience and sings her own version of the song at double-speed, before being chased off by Hannah. Their classmates and teachers cheer and clap.

It's Easier Without the Script

For Hannah, it seems that devising and practicing dance routines and humorous skits is an important part of her life. When asked how they went about devising each skit, Hannah responded, "We just do. It's too hard to explain." I also asked whether they wrote scripts or plot descriptions for each skit, and Hannah explained, "No, we just remember the words. It's easier without the scripts." Another time, Hannah explained that the main aim of each play was to make other people laugh. Therefore, the principal criterion for initially judging the quality of a skit was whether or not it made them all laugh while they were devising it. Hannah later declared that if people didn't laugh at their plays, then she felt silly. Perhaps, too, this might help to explain

why she presents a synopsis of each skit to her audience just prior to it being performed.

I was startled by the apparent incongruity between these girls' identities and practices during class and the identities and practices explored during lunch hours and occasionally performed for their peers and teachers. All of the skits I saw dramatized by this group were unrestrained in nature and often were sexually or socially daring, engaging Hannah and her three friends in a range of usually extroverted roles. Hannah and her friends' skits and self-devised dances constituted contexts for exploring and experimenting with a range of identities and subject positions other than those offered by their schooling or by their primary Discourses (cf. Neilsen, 1998). Although this group drew on television, magazines, and personal experiences in devising skits, this did not appear to be a simple matter of "writing themselves as girls" and perpetuating a patriarchal Discourse that very often scripts particular social identities and subject positions for girls at school (Gilbert, 1989, p. 263).

Even though their skits featured symbols, artifacts, and practices often associated with "being [a particular type of] female," these things were not always presented in terms of enacting "positions that rely upon a hierarchical construction of male-female relationships" (Gilbert, 1992, p. 130). The theme recurring most in Hannah's short plays was class difference rather than male-female relationships or nice girl identities. Accordingly, these plays were performed in ways that showed "poor" (or working-class) people to be resourceful and strong and "posh" (or middle-upper to upper class) people to be ineffectual and weak. This did not necessarily reflect the socioeconomic status of Hannah and her friends' families, but it certainly captured themes familiar within this school and its encompassing community.

To pick up on an event described earlier, Hannah's claim that her friends "couldn't be themselves" while I was watching them during their lunchtime rehearsals was intriguing, to say the least. It left me wondering which "self" they were enacting during their lunch hour; obviously, it was not the usual self in the classroom. These young women might have been constructing ways, no matter how seemingly inconsequential, of resisting identities and subjectivities that have been mapped for them by others and grounded in the community where they find themselves growing up (i.e., identities such as being mothers, being disadvantaged, and being powerless).

Negotiating Discourse Memberships

The preceding discussion of Hannah is, of course, far from complete, and it focuses primarily on an examination of some of Hannah's identities enacted in school contexts. Nevertheless, it usefully demonstrates my thesis that notions of D/discourse enable engaging insights into some of the complexi-

ties characterizing Hannah's studenthood at a given moment in time and space. I found in the course of the original study that interpreting Discourses requires both *knowledge of* and *professional distance from* a range of Discourses. In Hannah's case, I have to admit to difficulties encountered with respect to identifying—and knowing about—possible Discourses constituting and coordinating her social identities, due in large part to my limited experiences in and knowledge of the type of community in which Hannah lives.

Her model student behavior in class initially made interpretations about her possible Discourse memberships almost impossible. However, as indicated earlier, it seemed too easy to simply assert that Hannah thoroughly complied with nice girl and model student Discourses.

Thus, Hannah's Discourse memberships appeared to be complex. At least to me, her identity as a model student in class contrasted sharply with the images she projected and the identities she enacted in performing the skits she scripted with Virginia and her other friends. I also might have been party to a period in Hannah's life when she was shifting from being a full member of Discourses that valued childhood innocence and pursuits (e.g., Cabbage Patch dolls, fairies, letters from Santa, Enid Blyton books), coordinated by her primary Discourse, toward Discourses that value (among other things) modern music, contemporary dancing, authors such as R. L. Stine, and fashionable clothes (e.g., particular teen gal Discourses, professional theater Discourses). This was not to suggest that her primary Discourse would be abandoned but rather that it might have become more open to questions and negotiations by means of having access to other Discourses.

To me, Hannah herself seemed to be signaling a change when she talked about becoming "more interested" in certain things (e.g., music, dancing) than she had been in others (now identified as "silly things"). Perhaps, too, her skits were ways of commenting on differences between her primary Discourse and her coordination by other Discourses that are conceivably more adult seeming to her. Indeed, Gee's distinction between primary and secondary Discourses proved invaluable in interpreting Hannah's possible Discourse memberships, coordinations, and social identities.

TAKING UP POSITIONS: A POSTSTRUCTURALIST READING OF THE DATA (Eileen and Bronwyn's reading)

In contrast to Michele's initial reading of Hannah's activities as apparently anomalous, we begin with the assumption that subjects are contradictory because they are constituted through contradictory discourses. We don't find it surprising that a young girl can be a model student and also someone who produces brilliant bawdy scripts. We see Hannah as successfully drawing on different discursive practices to position herself in ways that others recognize as legitimate and even laudable. From a poststructuralist perspective, sub-

jects can take up only positions available to them. Hannah has drawn on the available positions of model female student, model daughter, and bawdy teen performer, and she has worked them to her own advantage.

Discursive Possibilities

The materials present Hannah in a number of situations—in class interacting with friends and with teacher, quietly working and at the same time being recorded by and interacting with Michele, interacting with her mother and with Michele, practicing and performing in a number of skits that parody aspects of modern life. We read these moments not as signals that reveal the “real Hannah” but rather as excerpts from Hannah’s life-in-process, her multilayered life unfolding. This reading of a life-in-process is fundamental to poststructural theory:

The subject of poststructuralism, unlike the humanist subject, then, is constantly in process; it only exists as process; it is revised and (re)presented through images, metaphors, storylines, and other features of language such as pronoun grammar; it is spoken and re-spoken, each speaking existing in a palimpsest with the others. . . . Poststructuralist discourse entails a move from the self as a noun (and thus stable and relatively fixed) to the self as a verb, always in process, taking its shape in and through the discursive possibilities through which selves are made. (Davies, 1997, pp. 274-275)

Our interest, then, is in the discursive possibilities made available to Hannah and how she works with them. The recognition by others of Hannah as legitimately and successfully taking up the position of bawdy teen performer probably is facilitated by the teacher’s perception of her as “a good girl”:

Mr. Brunner: I don’t believe Hannah will have a problem wherever she goes. She’s got that type of attitude and doesn’t let things around her bother her.

(transcript from interview)

Hannah visibly works at this positioning. This work is part of the work that she and other students do to collaborate and cooperate with teachers to construct the order of the classroom (Davies, 1983). In the following excerpt, Hannah has gone to another classroom to consult a book to be found there that will give her the spelling of the word she wishes to write. She comes back and begins to write it down, only to find that she is not absolutely sure whether her memory is serving her correctly. She seeks an intimate moment with Mr. Brunner during which together they work out a strategy for Hannah to achieve something that Mr. Brunner will read as perfect. At the same time, she achieves a participation on the part of Mr. Brunner in the construction of Hannah as wanting perfection. If she had silently written what she had found, then Mr. Brunner might have missed the pleasurable moment of read-

ing Hannah as working with him in his classroom to achieve perfection. Thus, she apparently gains pleasure for herself and provides pleasure for Mr. Brunner at the same time as she achieves a clear reading of herself as model student. She disrupts her invisibility in a way that is acceptable to Mr. Brunner and so can ensure that her virtue does not go unnoticed.

- Hannah: Mr. Brunner, can I just ask you something quickly?
 Mr. Brunner: Yes, Hannah.
 Hannah: Is this how you spell "Poseedan"—"Poseidon"? P-o-s-e-i-d-o-n?
 Mr. Brunner: Can I have a look at it? I need to look at it to see. ()
 Hannah: [Yeah, I don't know if the "e" and the "i" are the right thing.
 Mr. Brunner: ((Looks at the spelling in her book)) You just write it down the other way, that's the—that's the best way I do it (3.0). It wasn't in the mythology book?
 Hannah: Yeah, it was.
 Mr. Brunner: Which way was it spelled in the mythology book?
 Hannah: That's the way that I remember it spelled in there.
 Mr. Brunner: That looks—I think that looks right, "e-i-d."
 Hannah: Okay. ((Returns to her desk))
 (transcript from Taped Lesson 1)

Recognizability

Mr. Brunner also can call on Hannah to demonstrate to others in the class how to be a model student. In the following excerpt, Hannah is positioned as one who knows, in contrast to students in the class who are struggling to answer questions in an assessment of their work during the term. Hannah needs to do no more than nod her head to affirm to Mr. Brunner that she knows and that the knowledge Mr. Brunner wants the others to have is reasonable—that his teaching is both successful (in the case of Hannah) and reasonable. Hannah could not achieve so much with a simple nod if she did not also engage in the type of work she undertook in the prior transcript that establishes "who she is" in Mr. Brunner's eyes. She has made herself *recognizable* as a competent student, and in the following excerpt, Mr. Brunner signals to her that he *recognizes* her as a competent student. Being able to occupy the positioning of a competent student requires both of these. It is not enough to have the appropriate repertoire of skills or even to perform them; one must perform them in a way that makes them recognizable as such and be recognized in so doing. Hannah's performance, along with that of Dean and Bradley, is in contrast to the students whose answers suggest that they have not been listening.

- Mr. Brunner: This is your work, not anybody else's. If you don't know what Achilles is or where it is, don't ask anyone else (2.0). Because I'm

- sure there are probably a half a dozen or more people in here that do . . . know where it is. Would I be right, Daniel?
- Daniel: Yep.
- Mr. Brunner: Would I be right, Ali? Would I be right, Brett?
- Brett: Sir?
- Mr. Brunner: Do you know where it is?
- Student: I do.
- Mr. Brunner: Where your Achilles is . . . you don't know. You know, Kevin? You know, Ben?
- Ben: Yes, sir.
- Mr. Brunner: You know, Peter?
- Peter: Yeah. I think so.
- Mr. Brunner: You know?
- Student: Yes.
- Mr. Brunner: You know, Hannah? ((She nods)) Kurt?
- Kurt: Do I know what, sir?
- Mr. Brunner: You know where your Achilles is?
- Kurt: Yeah.
- Student: I do.
- Student: They're down about here, aren't they, sir?
- (transcript from Taped Lesson 1)

As Walkerdine (1990) shows, one of the dominant discourses surrounding the position of female primary school teacher is that of teacher as nurturer, as carer, as surrogate mother. Hannah is recognized by Mr. Brunner and the other students as a pseudo-teacher, as a person who is caring, helpful, and attentive to others. There are numerous examples of Hannah working with other students in the classroom, especially in the ongoing dialogue between Virginia and Hannah.

- Virginia: ((Moving over to Hannah's desk)) Look, Hannah, I am finished my second . . . thing. [()
- Hannah: [Ve:ry go:od.
- Virginia: And, a:nd (when I've done this work, then—)
- Hannah: Just put our thing there, and that—(and you can write that way)
- (transcript from Taped Lesson 1)

Here, Hannah actively takes up the position of teacher/tutor assisting in schoolwork. But she also actively collaborates with students such as Jethro in ways that facilitate their nonconforming behavior without disrupting Mr. Brunner's agenda. In Snapshot 1 (presented earlier), Michele refers to the interplay between Jethro and Hannah as Hannah quietly reads and Jethro gently jabs her and plays with a pair of scissors and a tennis ball. Here, we see the competency with which Hannah moves fluidly between seemingly contradictory positions. While she enacts the model student position, she also enjoys being a part of the unruly class of which she is a member. Consider her comments earlier to Michele about risking talking to Jethro and this excerpt:

When asked to respond in writing to a question I asked, "At the moment, the people I like to be with the most are . . ." Hannah first wrote "friends," then crossed it out and wrote "my class because we muck around and have lots of fun." (Knobel, 1999, p. 183)

At home, Hannah also appears to be a "model"—a good and dutiful daughter to her mother, for example, in her assistance in the construction of Julia as a storyteller. This assistance itself forms part of the construction of the model student-daughter position that Hannah takes up. Hannah "encourages" her mother and "elaborates" on Julia's storytelling, not only taking up the dutiful daughter position but also using her knowledge of teaching and classroom life and of how good students facilitate the performances of their teachers (Davies, 1983). Michele writes,

Narratives about Julia's childhood appear to be an important part of Hannah's interactions with her mother. As mentioned earlier, Hannah liked nothing more than to hear her mother and aunts swapping tales about growing up in northern New South Wales. Indeed, Hannah encouraged her mother to include me in these patterns of talk by telling Julia to recount to me particular events that Hannah obviously knew by heart but [that] still entertained her. For example, Hannah begged Julia to tell me the story "about the thistles and the cart and the electric fence" while we were sitting [and] having a cup of tea at the kitchen table. Julia told the tale, with elaborations and asides from Hannah. (Knobel, 1999, p. 176)

Extending Possibilities

What is fascinating to us is not so much how Hannah *is subjected to* the discourses surrounding the construction of the model female student and daughter but rather how she *actively takes up* these positions to her own advantage. In other words, Hannah takes the power through which she is shaped (and shapes herself) as good student and good daughter and uses that power to extend the possibilities available to her. This feature of power is elaborated by Butler (1997):

Power acts on the subject in at least two ways: first, as what makes the subject possible, the condition of its possibility and its formative occasion, and second, as what is taken up and reiterated in the subject's own acting. As a subject of power (where "of" connotes both "belonging to" and "wielding"), the subject eclipses the conditions of its own emergence; it eclipses power with power. . . . The subject emerges both as the *effect* of a prior power and as the *condition of possibility* for a radically conditioned form of agency. (p. 14, emphases in original)

In this analysis, the conditions that make possible Hannah's power, or agency, are precisely the willing take up of being subjected to the available discourses. One cannot become a subject without being subjected. The important insight Butler (1997) offers is that submitting to the power of others to achieve recognizability does not mean that you cannot take up the power so

achieved in gaining that recognizability to exceed, to go *beyond* what those who afforded you recognition had imagined possible:

Agency exceeds the power by which it is enabled. One might say that the purposes of power are not always the purposes of agency. . . . Agency is the assumption of a purpose unintended by power, one that could not have been derived logically or historically [and] that operates in relation of contingency and reversal to the power that makes it possible [and] to which it nevertheless belongs. (Butler, 1997, p. 15)

Our reading of Hannah as agentic is based on her take up of model student and her use of that position (with all its constraints) to generate possibilities for herself and others that move beyond what powerful others could have imagined. Because of Hannah's recognizability as model student, she can afford to take up with a great deal of energy the production of bawdy skits that Michele first found incongruous with her conception of a good girl. "Poststructuralism opens up the possibility of encompassing the apparently contradictory with ease—even, on occasion, with pleasure" (Davies, 1992, p. 59). Such multiplicity can be achieved by Hannah in her school without anybody noticing that she has "transgressed" any boundaries; having achieved recognizability as competent, the boundaries lying around what she can "successfully" do are interestingly broad. At the same time, Michele notes that Hannah is a severe critic of her own performances; they are successful from her point of view only if they produce the desired reactions from her audiences. Mr. Brunner, as teacher, talks of her performances in terms of "outlets" (presumably for creative energy), the extension of "genres" that she is able to achieve through this work, in terms of her "talent" and in terms of her engagement in "fantasy." He and Michele muse over the complexity of Hannah. She loves fantasy, she's very dramatic, she produces hilarious shows, she looks so quiet, and yet she has a fertile imagination. At the same time, she is a clever lady, a real little lady.

Mr. Brunner: It gives her another outlet. It gives her a different outlet, whereas before she may have only been able to write, like she's very—she's quite a talented writer. She can write in a number of genres very successfully. But this just enhanced her outlook in another way she could write if she wanted to. A bit of fant—it's almost like a bit of fantasy, I guess.

Michele: Yes, well, she loves fantasy. [She told me.]

Mr. Brunner: [Yeah, she does. She loves it. She does love fantasy. She's very dramatic, and that—fantasy really appeals to her. You can just see it when she, "Ooh" ((makes an excited face)) that—that—facial expression. They're funny, aren't they?

Michele: Oh, that was hilarious.

Mr. Brunner: Did you see the water skiing one? Ohh, it's a real belly laugh, I tell you, you just can't ((laughter)).

Michele: Tears in your eyes and things.

- Michele: Yeah. It's very, yeah, and who was I talking to? Was doing . . . was it you? Yeah, it was you, about how she's so—looks so quiet, [and then =
- Mr. Brunner: [Yeah, and then she's all of a sudden, yeah—
- Michele: = Comes out with these things. Yeah, she must have a fertile imagination, I supp—
- Mr. Brunner: Clever lady.
- Michele: Yeah, yeah.
- Mr. Brunner: She is a little lady.
- Michele: She is too, actually.
- (transcript from interview with Mr. Brunner)

Hannah undoubtedly is able to be read as being subservient, as a good girl who is “quiet [and] well behaved.” She can be read, at the same time, as one who is not restricted to the power through which she is shaped. She extends her agency beyond what the adults in her world could have intended for her. The repertoires of what it is possible to be in her world are extended by her in ways that adult onlookers find surprising, even puzzling, at the same time as they assent without demur to her status as “clever” and as a “little lady.”

ACCOMPLISHING HANNAH AS A RESEARCH SUBJECT (Carolyn's reading)

In this section, I draw on the resources of ethnomethodology and conversation analysis to study some of the texts that were generated in the study of Hannah. I describe how Hannah is accomplished as a research subject by looking at the ethnographic materials for evidence of “Hannah-producing” activity.

Hannah in the Classroom

A different approach that can be taken to the question of Hannah's accomplishment of studenthood is to situate Hannah within and against the classroom as a social and moral space. The point is how Hannah is found to be a good student through anyone's witnessing of classroom scenes in which she is present.

Hannah is reflexively constituted through her and others' actions within and against the backdrop of the classroom as an arena of social practice. As analysts, we do the same work as anyone else, using the same resources, to find Hannah as a particular type of character, in this instance a good student. Hannah emerges for the analyst/witness as a type of character only against an array of multiple other types of characters. These types of characters are themselves produced from within the scene itself by the participating mem-

bers. Analyzing members' work makes visible how the social and moral order of the classroom, in which we look for and find Hannah, is assembled.

Documentary Subjects

To proceed with this analysis, it is necessary to begin with the circumstances of the production of the available documentary evidence of Hannah in the classroom. The audiotapes are the primary evidence in this instance, and the transcript is an aid to analysis. There are two points to be made in particular regarding these materials.

First, the classroom was wired for sound in a very particular way for the recording of the events. Both the teacher and Hannah, and only the teacher and Hannah, are wearing microphones, identifying them to everyone as central characters in the scenes to be enacted and recorded. (Two other microphones were set on stands and placed around/in the classroom.) Hannah presumably is meant to be "representing herself" as a student during the period of the study. However, the teacher is organized as a research subject as much as is Hannah and, therefore, can be understood also to practice some form of self-representation as a teacher and for the record. Thus, both are "documentary" subjects; they document who they are as they speak and interact. However, as I will show, Hannah is produced as a good student in large part through what the teacher says, which for the most part is not about Hannah at all. The teacher's self-representation as teacher of Hannah's class is intricately part of the recording of the classroom scenes.

Second, the transcript is itself a theorization of the classroom events to be studied through it. It is an interpretive description of some of what is seen and heard. It is a textual representation of lived actuality and not the actuality itself (Smith, 1990, p. 151). It also is a particular depiction of the classroom and the characters in it: "Transcription assigns a social, political, or moral order to the scene being transcribed" (Baker, 1997b, p. 112). In the transcripts we use in this article, the transcriber already has partialled out some of Hannah's microphone talk into "asides" as distinct from the "main" lesson or action. The double columns work perfectly and powerfully for my argument that Hannah is produced only within and against the backdrop of the classroom. The textual device of two columns strongly invites us to read Hannah against this prior (left-hand column) background, which is organized largely by the teacher's talk. In this sense, Hannah is a good student that the recording, transcribing, and reading help to make happen.

These circumstances of production, therefore, have implications for analysis. Reading Hannah as a character in the classroom scene means reading the scene as well. What is undertaken, then, is a version of the "documentary method of interpretation" (Garfinkel, 1967) in which "particulars" are interpreted with reference to an "underlying pattern" and in which both the par-

particulars and the underlying pattern are open to revision in light of each other. In this case, we look for and interpret Hannah's particulars within and against the simultaneously transcribed "adjacent pattern" of the general classroom interaction. Furthermore, both the teacher and Hannah, wearing microphones, are documentary subjects in the sense that they speak and interact "as Hannah" and "as the teacher" in the classroom. They document for the researchers just who they are.

The Teacher's Talk

The beginning of the transcribed lesson shows Mr. Brunner organizing the class into his desired configuration, while "to the side," Hannah and her friend are talking quietly to each other. Mr. Brunner's voice is meant to carry across the classroom, whereas Hannah's is not. It seems that Hannah and her friend already are seated where they should be. This observation comes from noticing the teacher's talk. In his talk, Mr. Brunner not only commands the class to sit on the carpet but adds a description of a potential problem of some people not getting there fast enough. This description begins his identification of categories of students: those who don't move fast enough [and, by implication, those who do]. This talk appears to be directed at the "guys," but everyone can hear it.

MAIN LESSON

001 Mr. Brunner: Can I have the people working on mythology sitting on the carpet area, please?

002 Mrs. E: ((To her language group)) Can I have two lines at the door, please? We're going outside today.

((General preparation noise))

005 Mr. Brunner: Uhm, I'd like you on the floor now, thank you, not in 10 minutes. Denny C., where should you be?

006 Denny: ()

007 Mr. Brunner: Well, move your butt!

((General noise))

010 Mr. Brunner: All the chairs can be pushed in, thank you.

015 Mr. Brunner: You guys, I wouldn't even finish that—moving that stuff, please. (). Wayne and Matt . . . I do not want you

two to sit near each other . . . for obvious reasons.

ASIDES

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>003 Student 1: How come you're wearing a microphone?</p> <p>004 Hannah: 'Cause she's doin' it on me, don't have to whisper. You can talk to me ((with reference to the taping)).</p> <p>008 Virginia: ()</p> <p>009 Hannah: Mr. Brunner has got it.</p> | <p>011 Hannah: <u>Sallie</u>, you can talk to me, okay. You—</p> <p>012 Sallie: Why?</p> <p>013 Hannah: 'Cause you talk to Virginia like you talk to me.</p> <p>014 Sallie: O:kay. ((Smiles)) Okay.</p> <p>016 Sallie: (They can't sit together, ever).</p> |
|---|---|

In Turn 015, the teacher makes a very public announcement about two boys who should not sit together and intimates a known-in-common reason why they should not. Another category, students who mess around with each other, is implied in this talk. These announcements that carry with them indications of what might occur but should not (e.g., taking 10 minutes, messing around) begin to describe the moral order of the classroom. Those who are not singled out as recipients of this talk can hear themselves as behaving properly (for the moment, at least). The singling out of people and associated wrong behaviors supplies a type of moral map against which anyone can assess himself or herself. The production of instructions plus elaborating details (here, through "don't" statements) produces a moral landscape.

Imagine the teacher, then, not only as an organizer of the students' activities but also as a tour guide taking us, the overhearing audience, through the moral landscape of the classroom. Microphone in hand, he tells us to beware the valley of sloth over there and to avoid the rapids of rebellion over here. He might, on occasion, point out the island of peace (Hannah). Such a travelogue also might be produced under nonresearch conditions, but it clearly is produced here. The teacher documents his own intimate knowledge of the landscape by making these announcements.

The talk in the left-hand column is analyzable as the teacher's talk about himself as much as about the students and their practices. It can be heard as a running documentation of how alert, observant, and "on patrol" the teacher is, producing the teacher that ideally matches this class, the one who knows its landscape even in the dark (what could happen in the shadows as well as what is happening in the daylight).

It is in contrast to the other students who are not working properly as announced by Mr. Brunner that we find Hannah to be available to the teacher, to herself, and to the researcher as a good student. Mr. Brunner's travelogue, although never mentioning Hannah, provides the backdrop against which Hannah, the other students, and the researcher can locate Hannah this way. Thus, it is not just that Hannah accomplishes being a good student through

what she does but that the teacher, the transcriber, and the readers of the transcript accomplish her that way.

The classroom transcript works to organize our reading of the scene. By giving Hannah a whole column to herself and leaving it empty, for the most part, the text makes us “see” Hannah as other than, or apart from, the rest of the class as well as quiet and industrious when she does appear. Without the research interest in Hannah and the methods used to make her visible, casual observers of the classroom might not have noticed such a quiet and studious student because in the classroom transcripts there is so much other action surrounding the teacher and the boys.

Accomplishing Hannah in Interview

Interview talk can be seen as one of many interactive events in which people accomplish a sense of being particular types of persons. In the study from which these materials are drawn, the interviews can be seen as additional sites where Hannah, her teacher, and/or her mother accomplish versions of Hannah and, in so doing, accomplish versions of themselves speaking as teacher or mother. These, like most research interviews, are category based, and the talk that goes on within them may be viewed as work using the resources of membership categorization (Antaki & Widdicombe, 1998; Baker, 1997a). The interviewer inevitably is intimately engaged in the construction of these versions through the questions that are asked and through how she hears what is said (Baker, 1982, 1984).

To revisit the metaphor introduced earlier, Hannah and others here also are documenting themselves as subjects of the research. In interviews, they provide particulars about themselves that serve as clues to the researcher’s interest in the underlying pattern to which these particulars might point.

This can be shown using a segment of an interview conducted on the 1st day of observations:

- 111 Michele: Right, okay, okay. Uhm, and what about your friends, Phaney and Tran? Did they come here as refugees or they just moved over?
- 112 Hannah: N:o, I think they were actually born here. I’m not too sure. I think Phaney might have actually moved over here, and so did Tran. But I don’t know—I don’t know much, I just know that they—Tran’s come from Vietnam. Phaney’s come from Cambodia. That’s all I know.
- 113 Michele: Right. That’s all they’ve ever told you. Yeah, yeah. And sometimes it’s hard to ask people more.
- 114 Hannah: Well, I’ve never even really thought about it. ((Smiles))
- 115 Michele: Oh. ((Laughs)) No, no, I was just interested. Okay, and if you had three wishes in the whole world, what would you wish?

(transcript from Interview 4)

What we see in Turns 111 to 115 is a brief and fleeting interaction in which Hannah expresses her lack of knowledge of her friends' histories and in which the interviewer acknowledges that finding.

In asking the question in Turn 111, the interviewer has offered a description of Hannah by implying that she could know this information and possibly that she should know it. It is in this sense that no question is neutral in respect to the way in which it characterizes the person being interviewed; it is identity-implicative social activity. Hence, the identity work that emerges in the interview is a product of the questioning as much as of the answering.

Hannah's "lack of knowledge" just discovered is entirely a product of the question having been asked in the first place. Otherwise, it never would surface as a particular about Hannah. What is most compelling about the identity work in this fleeting segment, however, is the way in which the interviewer works with Hannah to account for her lack of knowledge and, thus, to recover her as a person who, on further reflection, might not be expected to know this information. The sequence involved in this "repair" work is quite elegant (Turns 113-115).

To extend these observations on the interactive documentation of Hannah, I discuss a segment that follows closely the segment just presented. (In the intervening turns, 116-118, Hannah offers a wish that pollution would go away. The interviewer accepts this in Turn 119 but continues as shown.)

- 119 Michele: Right. Uh-huh, what if you had three wishes just for yourself?
 120 Hannah: U:hmm . . . u:hmm . . . that my school—that all my friends and all the people in my class and friends and stuff, that—and that my school was, like, in out in the country—we lived out in the country. So we're, like, based out in the country, and I still have all my friends and the teachers.
- 121 Michele: Why's that?
 122 Hannah: 'Cause I'd like to live out there. Don't like living here.
 123 Michele: Why? How come you [do—
 124 Hannah: [Oh, I like—I like living here, but I like country better.
 125 Michele: Why's that?
 126 Hannah: Well, I haven't actually lived there, and I like—I like to, like, have fun and ().
- 127 Michele: Oh, is that right? What did you want to be when you leave school?
 128 Hannah: I have different ideas. Teacher, marinologist . . . stuff like that.
 129 Michele: Okay, why a marinologist?
 130 Hannah: 'Cause I like sea animals.
 131 Michele: Yeah, okay. Do you get to the beach much?
 132 Hannah: No.
 133 Michele: And did . . . have you always visited your grandma in Casino or when she was on the farm as well?
 134 Hannah: Uhm, n:o. They moved from the farm before I was born.

- 135 Michele: Oh, I see. Right. Yeah . . . I was going to ask you something else.
 . . . All right, so that's one wish that—for yourself, do you have
 any more?
 (transcript from Interview 4)

In Turn 120, Hannah shows some difficulty with finding candidate “wishes” to fill this category but settles on the idea that she would like it if her school and all of her friends and teachers could move to the country. This might or might not be an order of “wish” intended by the interviewer as a wish “just for herself.”

The interviewer's follow-up turns that seek explanations produce answers by Hannah in which she offers more particulars about herself: Turn 122, she does not like living in the city; Turn 124, she does like living in the city but prefers the country; Turn 126, she has not “actually” lived in the country. Hannah produces two self-corrections in this segment, each prompted by the interviewer's “why” question (Turns 124 and 126). It seems the interviewer is after some type of accounting for Hannah's wish. Hannah deflects the accounting in each case, once by withdrawing her prior assertion that she doesn't like living “here” (Turn 124) and once by correcting a claim inferable by the interviewer that she has lived in the country (Turn 126). She is revising the particulars of herself as a documentary subject in these turns.

In Turn 126, Hannah calls on another membership category as part of the production of herself at this moment in the interview. First, she offers the confession or concession that she has not “actually” lived in the country (which might be hearable as a weakening of the rationality of her wish). She follows this with an appeal to herself as someone who “likes to have fun.” This dramatically shifts who she is speaking as, from the “wish plus reason producer” organized by the interviewer to something like “just a kid.” This effectively stops the prior line of questioning, and with a new topic introduced by the interviewer in Turn 127, the identity work goes on.

The interviewer and Hannah both could take it that the point of having the interviews is to gain a sense of who Hannah is. I have suggested that it might be differently described as work that produces, for Michele and Hannah, a sense of who Hannah could be. I have shown the interactive work that has gone into the proposing and the management of particulars about Hannah, some of which are proposed and withdrawn, that is, deleted from the record. Others are let stand.

This analysis of interview talk shows how Hannah hears and deals with the identity implications in Michele's line of questioning. Previously, I showed the identity implications in the transcription of classroom interaction. In both sets of materials, the researcher is deeply implicated in accomplishing Hannah as a documentary subject. What Hannah does in the interview, and possibly also in class, is to participate in that accomplishment.

CONCLUSION

We have produced three very different readings of the materials and, consequently, three different versions of Hannah. These are three "possible Hannahs." They might be summarized, reading backward from the third to the first section of the article, as follows: (1) Hannah as a participating member of interactive research scenes (transcriptions of classroom events and interviews) who engages in the production of who she could possibly be taken to be; (2) Hannah as a subject of power who, through her positioning and recognizability, is able to surpass the limits of power assigned to her; and (3) Hannah as a practitioner of and negotiator of Discourses that also coordinate her activities and her identities and subjectivities in and out of school. Our interest definitely is not in which is right or better but rather in when each one could be useful and for what purpose.

This article is a demonstration of the idea that different analytic approaches radically influence what can be found in the materials. Many more readings could be produced from them. Each analytic approach works with a different vocabulary, and each vocabulary signals the different ways in which individuals and social practice are characterized within that approach. Each of the readings that we have produced calls on different orders of evidence for its claims to adequacy. Each presents a different proposal for how to read the materials and for making sense of them.

Furthermore, each reading has assigned to Hannah different "powers" as a participant/subject in social activity. The powers she is given in the first reading are the taken-for-granted powers anyone would have within the terms of each particular Discourse once they had been coordinated by that Discourse. In the second reading, she is seen to be a subject of power/discourse, as someone who cannot have power unless she is subjected but who, in being subjected, opens up the possibility of going beyond the terms of her subjection. Hannah's powers as a research subject are made explicit in the third reading and are implicit in the first two readings. "In theory" and "in analysis," we have given Hannah these attributions—of powers and of discursive resources. This might well reflect some of our feminist projects and imaginations. There probably is no type of social science that does not either give or withhold such attributions.

It seems a useful question to ask of any qualitative or quantitative work: What type of subject is being produced through theory and/or analysis? The descriptive and analytic texts that we produce are themselves documents revealing the constitutive effects of discourse. Equally, we need to look at the type of social world into which the subject of research is inserted and how she fits it or does not fit it. There also are very different versions of the social world proposed heuristically in our three readings. Put very simply, one is a world full of D/discourses, another is a world full of positionings, and a third is a world full of talk in interaction. The "subject of theory" has to be understood

as much more than, say, Hannah in this case. These are possible “Hannahs” located in possible worlds.

A corresponding question that arises as well is whether any reading is as much about Hannah as it is about the reader/analyst herself. Clearly in this article, we have exploited the research materials about and relating to Hannah to show the work we can do from different analytic positions. In this sense, we have written an article that is, in effect, not about Hannah at all. Our respective sections of the article have become the subjects of each other’s reading. The “subjects” of research are likely always wider than an individual, a case study, a setting, or a problem, and they probably always include writers and readers of analytic articles. The positive end point of this chain of reasoning is that studies of methods of inquiry are at least as informative as studies of documentary materials for showing the constitutive force of theory in qualitative data analysis.

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