



Teachers and secondary school bullying: a postmodern discourse analysis

Alexa Hepburn

STAFFORDSHIRE UNIVERSITY

ABSTRACT. This paper analyses a set of accounts from within a postmodern discursive framework. Interviews were conducted with secondary school teachers and were semi-structured, focusing on school bullying. The aim of analysis was to tackle the problem of bullying at a discursive level. This marks a shift away from seeing bullying as something situated within the interpersonal relations of pupils, or explained in terms of fixed personality traits. This paper argues that in order to understand a social problem such as bullying, we have to be aware of the discursive limits employed in the way that the problem is constructed. It was found that teachers draw upon modernist discourses of individual responsibility and fixed personality traits, and that bullying strategies are maintained by these modernist individualist discourses. This paper goes on to provide recommendations for tackling bullying at a discursive level.

KEY WORDS: Derrida, discourse analysis, Foucault, school bullying, teachers

This paper analyses a set of accounts from within a postmodern discursive theoretical framework. These accounts were collected from semi-structured interviews with secondary school teachers; the broad focus of the interviews was school bullying. The goal in analysing these accounts is to reveal the particular ways in which 'being human' is constructed and used as an explanation for problem behaviour such as bullying. It is argued that these patterns of accounting for being human are an important feature of the reproduction of bullying strategies. It is therefore crucial that we gain a deeper understanding of the ways in which such accounts are constructed and maintained.

To begin with it is necessary to be clear about the phenomenon of bullying. Peter Smith (1991) of Sheffield University, who has headed the Department for Education's 'Sheffield Project', comprising a team of psychologists and other professionals, defines bullying as something which causes unprovoked physical or psychological hurt; a repeated action in which the bully comes across as more powerful. Hence what sets bullying apart from other aggressive and abusive attacks is its 'repeated' nature, fuelled by the silence and powerlessness of the victim, and/or a lack of in-

DISCOURSE & SOCIETY Copyright © 1997 SAGE Publications (London, Thousand Oaks, CA and New Delhi), VOL. 8(1): 27-48. [0957-9265 (199701) 8: 1; 1-3]

tervention by onlookers or adults involved with the child. There is little doubt that bullying is a problem in schools in the UK—Smith and Sharp (1994) provide extensive documentation of this. Hale et al. (1995) also report the “alarming rates of physical violence, bully–victim encounters and gang-related problems in classrooms across the U.S.” (p. 408).

An incident of bullying reported in a ‘Kidscape’ newsletter told the story of Mark who had been systematically bullied by the same person for the past 7 years.

Over the years Mark has been beaten with a cricket bat, hit over the head with an umbrella, and had a leather football kicked at his head while he was bending to tie his shoelace—putting him in hospital for two days with concussion. He has had his money stolen, all his gym kit tied into tiny knots. . . . On one occasion a heavy drawer was dropped on his head. His headmaster has . . . [said] ‘He’s going to come out of this a better person.’ (John Harding, 1993)

A great deal of consciousness-raising has been achieved by organizations such as Kidscape, not least by their publication of accounts of bullying like the one above, which have been constructed to invoke incredulity—given this account most people would find the claim that Mark will emerge ‘a better person’ incredible. However it is not hard to imagine contexts in which this kind of reported violence might be constructed as ‘character building’, e.g. in other institutional regimes such as the armed forces or prisons.

Much has also been achieved by the Sheffield Project in raising both teachers’ and pupils’ awareness of bullying as an unacceptable feature of school life. However a possible criticism of the Sheffield Project is that the problem of bullying is situated solely within the interpersonal relationships of pupils. Smith and Sharp (1994) report that much of their knowledge of bullying was drawn from two types of study: “studies asking teachers their views on the nature and incidence of the bullying problems in schools; and direct studies of children who bully others and who are bullied, their personalities, background, attitudes and family influences” (p. 4). This resulted in the identification of a number of specific characteristics of bully and victim, and the development of a catalogue of different types of bully and victim. For example, Smith and Sharp (1994) highlight “. . . the need to distinguish provocative victims or bully–victims from both bullies and ordinary victims” (p. 9); they also see future research into bullying in terms of the further development of “. . . a more detailed taxonomy of different kinds of bullying or victim behaviour . . . which may well have implications for help and treatment directed at individual pupils or particular families” (ibid. p. 9).

This approach is not unique to Britain’s research into school bullying. Dan Olweus (1978, 1980, 1993) has been working on the problem of bullying in Norway since the 1970s, and he too focuses on individual pupils’ ‘temperaments’ as part of the bully–victim problem: he describes bullying children as having ‘impulsive’ and ‘aggressive’ temperaments, and children who are victims as having ‘shy or weak’ temperaments. Tackling the problem of school bullying for these researchers means describing and cat-

egorizing different types of bully or victim behaviour in as much detail as possible. These categorizations then provide part of the explanation for why bullying is taking place—she is bullied *because* she is a ‘provocative victim’ type—essentially employing circular logic—‘she is a victim because she is a victim’.

I argue that this circularity lies at the heart of the humanist endeavour in psychology, as the focus on individuals as the source of their problem behaviour entails that we explain what they *do* in terms of who or what they *are*. This circularity prevents us from gaining further insights and understanding of social problems such as bullying, and as the following analysis of teachers’ talk will show, this individualistic focus in the psychological literature is mirrored by the teachers’ constructions. Teachers will probably find these psychological studies quite valuable in allowing them to ‘diagnose’ the reason for bullying as something which is ‘caused’ by the personality types of the pupils involved.

Hence the argument that this paper develops is that the limitations of humanist discourses and ideologies are apparent not only in teachers’ discursive constructions, but also in traditional psychological literature, which takes the fixed personality traits of individuals as part of the solution to problem behaviour. The analysis in this paper focuses on discourses rather than on personalities. This also shifts the focus away from seeing bullying as something which is simply situated within the relationships of pupils. Instead it relates to the wider issue of the ways in which we construct what it is to be human, and the effects that these constructions can have on the way we relate to others.

DISCOURSE AND POSTMODERNISM

In line with the discursive, rhetorical and social constructionist approaches in social psychology (e.g. Billig, 1987; Potter and Wetherell, 1987; Burman and Parker, 1993; Shotter, 1993; Gergen, 1994), I suggest that we shift the emphasis away from fixed personality traits of individuals to the ways of accounting that we have available to us in society. This involves an investigation and analysis of shared ways of making sense of particular issues. In this paper this involves a detailed examination of sequences of talk taken from conversational interviews with teachers. One of the concerns is with the ways in which the issue of bullying is discursively organized, and also with tracing the possible consequences of organizing and understanding the issue in this way. One of the aims is therefore to focus on “social power, power abuse, dominance and inequality . . . as they are enacted, sustained, legitimated or challenged by text and talk”, as called for by Van Dijk (1994). However this paper suggests that it is *also* important, as Deborah Lupton (1995) has pointed out, to incorporate into a critical discourse analysis, insights into power relations and subjectivity that have been gained through postmodern and post-structuralist accounts. The incorporation of post-modern theory into discourse analysis is a major concern of this paper.

Burman and Parker (1993) have identified “32 problems with discourse analysis”. As has been argued elsewhere (Hepburn, 1995) these problems, which various discourse practitioners have encountered, stem mainly from an inconsistent application of key aspects of the postmodern theory which has informed the discourse approach. For example, the issue of political commitment crops up in various forms, and is perhaps one of Burman and Parker’s key concerns about the discourse approach. What they seek is “motivated, partisan political orientation” (p. 167), which requires a privileging of one account over another, something which they feel a post-modern ‘relativist’ account is unable to deliver. However the charge of relativism, and its associated problems, is only a viable charge if one is arguing from a realist position. If one ceases to be concerned about the truth/reality of the person or event, then rather than adopting a nihilistic stance, the ‘relativist’ is able to recognize the flexibility of a position in which discourses can be drawn upon strategically, to achieve particular ends in particular contexts: perhaps for the construction of identities, or for opposition to political ideologies and institutions.

This paper is therefore an attempt to get ‘back to basics’ with the post-modern theory informing the discursive approach in psychology, through a consideration of some key aspects of the work of Foucault and Derrida. These insights are then employed in the subsequent analysis of teachers’ talk. First, the work of Foucault is considered.

Foucault, power and subjectivity

One of the prime effects of power [is] that certain bodies, certain gestures, certain discourses, certain desires come to be identified and constituted as individuals. (Foucault, 1979: 98)

In his use of genealogies Foucault studied aspects of human beings which we normally assume to be fixed, but that a historical study shows to be changeable. In any society there are tacitly understood norms and accepted practices, and we form our identities by conforming ourselves over time to these norms and practices. We then tend to think of ourselves in terms of *being* a particular type of person who possesses particular universal human attributes—the free-willed self-knowing subject.

Foucault would want to show that these ideas, which are often taken to be fundamental facts about being human, are themselves discursively organized. As Sampson (1988) has pointed out, anthropologists and historians have shown that these ideas of self-actualizing individualism are peculiar to a western culture. Through a study of Foucault’s work we become sensitized to the ways in which we can be tied to our identities, for example “identities around which ethnic, national and racial conflicts are fought” (Simons, 1995: 1)—identities which also form a salient feature of bullying relationships. We are bound to these identities by what Foucault calls *subjectification*, which can be clarified by a consideration of Foucault’s understanding of power.

Power is an important feature of Foucault’s work. Our common-sense

understanding of power is that it implies domination and constraint. Foucault highlights a more positive sense of power as *constituting* subjects and identities, even though the forms of subjectivity themselves may be undesirable. It is this more positive sense of power that relates to the process of subjectification, and it relates to the way we become tied to particular ways of being by drawing upon particular discursive constructions.

To clarify this further, in Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* we learn that techniques of the penal system produce a 'delinquent' who possesses an identity, such that what they do can be explained by their character, their upbringing, and who they are, as part of their being. This sustains the vicious circle of police–prison–delinquent (1977: 251–87). The recidivist is then one of the 'successes' of our penal system. For this analysis, and also in Foucault's work (1977: 306), schools can be identified as similar 'carceral' institutions. Foucault suggests that the modernist and humanist focus on the individual is instrumental in maintaining the status quo and obscuring existing power relations. The basic insight taken from Foucault's work is that the limits which are present in the discourses which we have available to us entail that we construct a self upon which we place corresponding limits: we become tied to our identities, defined according to the 'truths' of the human sciences, and this insight is corroborated and elaborated upon by the analysis in this paper.

Foucault and humanism

Humanism conceals its costs and presents its history as one of gradual liberation. . . . Myths of humanisation obscure the motivations for reform and occlude their costs. (Simons, 1995: 46)

Foucault cannot trust humanism's theme of liberation, because it assumes "... that there does exist a nature or human foundation which ... found itself concealed, alienated or imprisoned in and by some repressive mechanism" (1988: 2). So discourses which assume some real person which must be liberated from some social facade are actually subtly constructing that 'real person' in a particular way: if nothing else the person is constructed as split between a real and social self, with a real self which must endlessly seek freedom. Foucault puts this more succinctly: "The man [sic] described for us, who we are invited to free, is already in himself the effect of a subjection more profound than himself" (1977: 30). The way out of this is not to accept our subjection by accepting what we think we 'are'. Instead we must reconceptualize taken-for-granted aspects of our 'self', such as our social identity, our free-will, as something that we *do*, rather than something that we *have*, or something that we *are*.

Humanistic psychology can be seen, and is often hailed, as a response to behaviourism and the logical positivist philosophy which informs it (e.g. Henriques et al., 1984). As Kvale (1992) points out, both the humanistic self and the behaviourist subject in the laboratory are 'ahistorical and asocial': "The self-actualising person must be self-contained, true to his or her own nature, ruled by the laws of his or her own character rather than by the

rules of society” (Kvale, 1992: 43). However, many humanist discourses in psychology have been employed for the *emancipation* of a subject left out of behaviourist equations. Although Simons (1995) suggests that humanism “obscures the motivations for reform and occludes their costs”, can we say that the same thing applies in psychology? If the Foucauldian paradigm is rejected, then questions like ‘who is exerting power over who?’ become the primary focus. Foucault would argue that this deflects us from the areas where power operates: for psychology power operates through the taken-for-granted ‘truths’ about what it is to be human, which are manifest in discourses of ‘personality’, ‘attitude’ and ‘abnormality’. By understanding ourselves in terms of such discourses we are enrolled in our own subjection. The taken-for-granted nature of such constructions entail that the costs are hidden, and the focus on the individual entails that motivations for reform are misplaced.

Henriques et al. (1984) see problems arising from the humanism–anti-humanism debate through the “theoretical difficulty of escaping explanations which privilege *either* the subject *or* the structure” (p. 95, emphasis added). The tendency to conceptualize issues in term of binary oppositions, employing what Derrida would term ‘binary logic’ is symptomatic of western theorizing for Derrida. He suggests that such binary oppositions require *deconstruction*, a term which is explained further in the following section.

Derrida, deconstruction and logocentrism

Deconstruction is a hybrid term, incorporating destruction and construction, not, as is often implied, merely destruction or critique. Central to Derrida’s philosophy is the notion of dualities which can be given positive and negative values, which organize our understanding of ourselves and others, e.g. free-will–determinism, realism–relativism. We are given the means to subvert this order via deconstruction. An excluded term, one which is assigned a negative value, can nevertheless shape the dominant concepts and ideas in a text: deconstruction seeks to recover this excluded term, and in doing so can diffuse the fixed ‘sides’ between which dialectic becomes lodged. To take an example, the realism–relativism debate, which was highlighted earlier in the discussion of Burman’s and Parker’s work, is organized such that any understanding of relativism (and its negative evaluation) relies on a realist perspective (with its positive evaluation). If we operate with ‘either/or’ binary logic then we find it difficult to escape the discursive limits of the binary opposition. The way out of this is to perform a deconstruction, which involves initially prioritizing the marginalized ‘half’ of the duality, e.g. the ‘relativist’ account. So many social constructionists are happy to be labelled ‘relativists’, e.g. Edwards et al. (1995).

The next ‘step’ in the deconstruction is more complex, involving the introduction of ‘undecideables’ such as *différance*, or the pharmakon. Binary logic can then be replaced by a ‘logic of supplementarity’ (Derrida, 1976) which has a ‘both/and’ construction. Hence the pharmakon is *both* poison

and cure, *différance* refers to the possibility of *both* conceptuality and non-conceptuality. Rather than taking either one 'side' or another, e.g. either individual or society, and thereby essentializing and reifying both, we are given a sense of the mutual dependence of any 'individual' on their 'social' context. Foucault makes a similar point, by warning us to beware of simply asserting that which has been repressed. There is therefore a sense in which (individual) subjectivities are constructed at a very subtle level, within the (socially shared) oppositions and dialectics which are drawn upon in their construction.

In order to gain a greater understanding of a social problem such as bullying we need to understand more fully the socially shared, often largely unnoticed, and essentially modernist humanist norms and practices which are part of our common-sense ways of making sense of ourselves and one another. One of these modernist 'ways of making sense', or discourses, which is of interest in this analysis draws upon what Derrida would term 'logocentrism'. Logocentrism describes the tendency to see the world as ordered by the operation of some centred reason or *logos*. Because this is centred on the person, the reified 'individual', it is conceptualized as something which one exudes from 'within'. It follows that if it can be shown that one individual has a greater access to this internal rational process, then, according to a modernist analysis, we have a criterion for accepting one individual as superior to another.

This concludes the section outlining some of the insights taken from post-modern philosophy, but how do these often complex and rarefied ideas translate into analysis?

POSTMODERNISM AND DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

This paper utilizes insights gained from Foucault and Derrida explicitly to highlight the main thesis, that in order to understand a social problem such as bullying we have to be aware of the discursive limits employed in the way that problem is constructed. This type of analysis was straightforward in the sense that it involved careful study of Derrida and Foucault, which then provided a new set of discourses with which to approach the analysis—e.g. 'subjectification', 'binary logic', 'logocentrism', and in a broader sense, a Foucauldian view of power, and the circularity of 'police-prison-delinquent'. It is not so straightforward, however, if one attempts to translate what was done into a series of 'how to do it' techniques. This problem of translating a skill into a technique is not new, and has been pointed out by discourse analysts from Potter and Wetherell (1987) onwards.

The analysis therefore involved the reading of interview transcripts with the aid of a new set of discourses. Insights gleaned from the study of Derrida and Foucault allowed for particular interpretations: the construction of facticity about what it is to be human; the ways in which binary logic can be employed to construct facticity about what it is to be human; the way logocentrism is employed in a persuasive account; the way that discursive

limitations place limitations on the construction of subjectivities; and the ways in which all these things can be employed to maintain power relations.

So for example, if we operate with a logocentric, Western metaphysical form of understanding, then, as Kenneth Gergen (1994) has said, criticizing another's views becomes an invalidation of some 'originary essence of self'. Logocentric (and, I would argue, humanist) discourses construct our identities such that we feel that what we say is a reflection of some important aspect of our self, so that a criticism of our ideas becomes a criticism of our 'self', something personal and upsetting. This means that argument becomes less an exchange of ideas and more a defence of identity.

This personally invested way of understanding ourselves and others is particularly prevalent in a bullying relationship, which, following Smith and Sharp (1994), can be defined very broadly as 'a systematic abuse of power'. However this definition conceptualizes power in the modernist sense, as something which it is possible for one individual to possess and exert over others. In a Foucauldian account this understanding of power as domination is only part of the definition, we also need to conceptualize power as *productive* of subjectivity. This means that we also exert power over ourselves by constructing ourselves in particular ways, e.g. as 'bully' or 'victim'.

A postmodern discourse analysis gives us the ability to identify some powerful discourses which operate to construct subjectivities. The discourses identified in this paper relate to humanism, logocentrism, and the Foucauldian 'vicious circle' of police-prison-delinquent. The aim of the subsequent analysis is to highlight the way these discourses are used in achieving the construction of bully, victim and deviant personalities. The aim is also to highlight how the young person 'becomes' a subject—preferably a passive conforming one, although often a troublesome or bullying one—through her interaction in a complicated set of discourses and educational practices. As Valerie Walkerdine (1988) says: "... all language, all signs, concepts and so forth are produced as and by relations in specific practices. These practices therefore produce and read children as 'the child'" (p. 204). These educational practices therefore enable systems of classification of this reified 'child' to emerge, in the same way that Smith and Sharp (1994) have produced classifications of different types of bully and victim. Walkerdine's interest is in the 'rational cognitivism' which is invested in young people, and the 'liberal order of choice and freedom' which had to be created by the invention of a 'natural childhood'. Similar concerns arise from the following analysis, and 'rational cognitivism' is related to logocentric discourses, 'choice and freedom' is related to humanist discourses.

A very important point for this paper is the Foucauldian view that the limits of discourses place limits on the construction of subjectivities. It must therefore be stressed that any criticisms developed here are not directed at individual psychologists or teachers, rather at the discursive constructions which are shaping the understanding of those psychologists and teachers.

METHOD

This paper is based on research conducted in two Dundee area secondary schools, which involved 3 months of participant observation of two first-year classes, followed by semi-structured conversational interviews with pupils and teachers. This paper focuses on interviews with teachers. Selection of teachers was on the basis of my asking them informally in the staff room if they would like to take part in interviews which focused on school bullying. Interviews were tape-recorded and subsequently transcribed. The interview schedule covered issues such as definitions of bullying, school discipline, male/female differences, and also offered pupils' views expressed in prior interviews for comment. Prior to each interview all participants were assured of total confidentiality and their right to withdraw from participation. I also responded to any questions they might have had both before and after the interviews.

Excerpts have been selected for their representation of particular types of discursive construction, and also because in any case they are easily recognizable as being in common everyday use.

Transcription

Transcription has stressed readability at the expense of detailed nuances of pronunciation, timing and so on. Excerpts are labelled with 'Chapelhill' or 'Springburn', pseudonyms for the two participating schools, and teachers are labelled 'teacher 1, teacher 2' from each school. Where the interviewer's comments have been minimal they are incorporated into the teacher's text in parentheses, e.g. (I: mm). Where talk has been omitted this is marked by '...' in the text. Words or parts of words italicized indicate emphasis, e.g. '*punishment*'. Pauses are indicated by commas or full stops. Abbreviations as follows I = Interviewer, T1 = Teacher 1, T2 = Teacher 2, etc.

UNDECONSTRUCTED DILEMMAS OF IDENTITY

As discussed earlier, one way of reproducing discursive limits in talk is through construction in terms of some binary opposition. In this next excerpt the way in which undeconstructed binary oppositions help to maintain the focus on individual pathology can be demonstrated:

Excerpt 1: Chapelhill

- T3: 1 ... but even *then*, you *do have* people, who for *whatever* reason know fine
 2 what's right and what's wrong, or who are people who have family and
 3 friends who care very much for them who ... for one reason or another
 4 become a bully, and so there is still, again people *still* have to understand
 5 that they are personally responsible for their own actions
 I: 6 yeah, so, it's not *just* about knowing what's right and wrong it's about
 7 also *believing* that you *are responsible* for, er *upholding* these sort of-

- T3: 8 *-absolutely, yes if people think, if people turn round and say ‘it’s not my*
 9 *fault because of this, this and this in my background’, OK, these things are*
 10 *factors in your background, (I: mm) but at the end of the day there are*
 11 *other people who’ve had the same background . . .*

This conversation occurred in the context of a discussion of Government proposals that children should be taught the difference between right and wrong. This teacher makes the point that many already “know fine what’s right and what’s wrong” (lines 1–2), and that what they are unable to do is take personal responsibility “for their own actions” (line 5). They must accept the blame for the things they do wrong, they must learn to police themselves, to turn the gaze of authority inwards. Hence the moral development of the young person involves a focus in on themselves as the source of bad behaviour. They *know* the difference between right and wrong, they have the logocentric tools for logical and rational decision-making inside their heads, they need to realize that they are responsible for their actions: they cannot blame their background for their bad behaviour. The discourse of personal responsibility creates a self which is focused in on itself.

This teacher is also puzzling over a fundamental dilemma—if background is so important in the formation of a person, why is it that some people who come from apparently caring homes commit wrong actions? How can it be that if you have two people with similar backgrounds, who both know the difference between right and wrong, one can persistently perform wrong actions while the other does not? This dilemma again does the work of blaming the individual, as it is giving us two options, *either* the individual (nature) *or* their background (nurture), and we can rule out background if other people with similar backgrounds have not ended up as bullies.

Hence the denial of ‘background’ as a causal factor (lines 10–11) achieves a blaming of the individual as the sole factor. What this talk is *doing* therefore is warranting the blaming and ultimately the punishment of individuals. The ‘either/or’ reasoning arises due to the conceptualization of the issue in terms of undeconstructed dualities of nature/nurture and individual/society. These allow a focus on ‘background’ as something homogenous and describable, and on individual identity as something fixed, reified and therefore blameworthy. Because a logocentric discourse is organizing this teacher’s understanding of the issue, we get a focus on the individual as the rational decision-maker, who must turn the gaze of authority inwards, and take responsibility for her actions, see her ‘self’ as the source of the problem. This also utilizes the undeconstructed binary of agency–determinism, as the claim is that young people cannot be determined by background, but must realize that their own bad behaviour arises from within themselves, from their own choices for which they alone are responsible.

This ‘individual as free-choosing decision-maker’ was a common way of constructing the young person when it came to justifications for dealing with problem behaviour, the next excerpt is a typical example:

Excerpt 2: Chapelhill

- I: 1 ... um the interesting aspect for *me* was that it was *often* the pupils that
 2 had been on the receiving *end* of a lot of, detention a lot of y'know
 3 *punishment* of that kind, were actually advocating *stronger* punishment, and
 4 I was wondering if, y'know just tryin'te get some, sort of attitudes of staff
 5 towards this, y'know that maybe there *is* a sort of *culture* of *punishment* that
 6 kind of replicates *itself*, I mean do you think that is the case or is that-
- T2: 7 -it's true that they would, er they do, bring in, er, a-and children in fact
 8 *like* a structure, and *like* a stable *atmosphere*, er, and certainly, I, *do* find
 9 now, that if I'm, exerting discipline, I think, for *me* the answer is to say to
 10 children it's your choice, *always* it's *your* choice (I: mm) and this *blaming*
 11 of factors around them, erm, I just don't even start *listening* to it
 12 ... (inaudible). As long as they have a *warning*, (I: mm) and I-most of them
 13 do *not look* to future consequences (I: no) it *is* just a reaction (I: mm,
 14 mhm) and *always* as a defence, I'll attack first ...

The teacher is presented with my interpretation from interviews with pupils, that pupils “on the receiving *end* of a lot of ... *punishment* ... were actually advocating *stronger* punishment” (lines 2–3). I suggest that this may point to the creation of a ‘punishment culture’ in which punishment is seen as the main answer to behavioural problems. The teacher’s response is to draw upon the ‘children like a structure’ discourse, which again warrants the imposition of punishment, or “discipline” (line 9). Once the structure is in place, then it becomes the pupil’s choice, if they overstep the boundaries they can expect to be punished, they only have themselves to blame, and cannot expect that ‘factors around them’ will let them off the hook. So as with Excerpt 1, we have children who know the difference between right and wrong, but have chosen wrong because ‘they do not look to future consequences’, i.e. punishment of some kind. The focus is then very much on the individual young person in determining the reason and suitable outcome related to problem behaviour.

It could be argued at this point that this paper is recreating the same logocentric relation that is being criticized throughout. However, as mentioned earlier, the aim is to identify what appear to be *discursive* limits, and to trace the effects of these limits on our understanding of what it is to be a teacher, pupil or whatever. The aim is **not** to blame individual teachers, or teachers as a group of people who are ‘getting it wrong’. By highlighting discursive limits, which are recognizable as part of everyday talk, it follows that we are *all* implicated in the reproduction of bullying strategies, especially if we do not understand the effects that particular discursive constructions can have, and so blindly reproduce them.

This paper is suggesting that it is this very focus on individuals as the source of problem behaviour which is *part* of that problem behaviour, in the same way that Foucault would point to the circular nature of the police–prison–delinquent scenario as part of the problem. This idea of circularity as problematic is taken up in the following section.

CATCH-22: CONSTRUCTING PROBLEM PERSONALITIES

Orr would be crazy to fly more missions and sane if he didn't, but if he was sane he had to fly them. If he flew them he was crazy and didn't have to; but if he didn't want to he was sane and had to. Yossarian was moved very deeply by the absolute simplicity of the clause of Catch-22 and let out a respectful whistle. (Heller, 1962: 46)

One of the fascinating features emerging from the analysis of the teachers' interviews was the identification of Catch-22 constructions, which occur with particular reference to personality and identity. This circularity occurs when the attribution of 'bully', 'victim' or simply 'disruptive' personalities re/creates problems associated with bullying, victimization and other troublesome behaviour in schools. The following is a typical example:

Excerpt 3: Springburn

T2: 1 ... she was just the sort of child that people *pick* on (I: mm) for one
 2 reason or another, she-she *allowed* herself to be bullied I-I don't know what
 3 it is that makes people become bullied (I: mm) but I mean they're *victims*,
 4 and she was *obviously* a victim, and we *happened* to have a very, *bullying*
 5 type, in the group that she was in (I: yeah) ... but when I asked the girl to
 6 *admit* it she never *would*, (I: mm) she would *not* admit to being bullied.

This excerpt demonstrates a fixity of understanding created by the bully/victim opposition, and an appeal to the 'type' of person as an explanatory factor, in the humanist sense of something that emanates from within rather than something discursively constructed in relations with others. The use of the word "*obviously*" (line 4) serves to enrol us in this particular view of reality, a reality imposed on the identity of another person ("*obviously* a victim"), a kind of name-calling (an aspect of bullying) which the pupil concerned refused to share. This enrolment also suggests that this teacher has a stake in the correct 'diagnosis' of the pupil, which relates to the wider systems and practices of education in which teacher and pupil are situated.

Excerpt 3 also highlights one of the Catch-22 dilemmas which can be identified throughout the teachers' interviews. These dilemmas can be related to the fixity of identity created by the humanist discourse. To admit to being bullied is to be bullied into 'being' a victim; to not admit to being bullied (assuming this teacher is correct in saying that this pupil was bullied) is to refuse help, to be silent, and hence continue being bullied. If speaking of one's oppression makes one into 'the type of person' who is oppressed, then one becomes silent in order to resist oppression, which paradoxically in this situation could contribute to one's continued oppression.

These Catch-22 scenarios also occur when the identity of 'troublemaker' is attributed to pupils, as teachers attempt to reconcile their repeated 'picking on' certain pupils with the fact that these pupils are habitually disruptive.

Excerpt 4: Chapelhill

- I: 1 some pupils felt that they were bullied by certain teachers as well, you
 2 know they kind of felt picked on-
- T9: 3 -picked on, yeah that's often the case as well they'll come to us [guidance]
 4 and say 'oh so and so's keeps *pickin'* on me' (I: mm) erm, I think
 5 if they're, sometimes it is a, you know it's a *Catch-22* you know that they're
 6 on a *daysheet* for example, so therefore they're identified, that they have to
 7 be better *behaved* if you like than everybody else (I: yeah) and the fact that
 8 they're on the *daysheet* and their next door neighbour might *not* be, and
 9 *they're* doing something wrong, *that's* written on their *daysheet*, other one
 10 doesn't *have* one, (I: mm) because there *is* a lot of- you know maybe that
 11 could be perceived as being *unjust* you know, 'he was *every* bit as bad as
 12 me', or '*she* was' ... and I *do* think that some teachers *do* pick on pupils you
 13 know, because you *can't* get on with *everybody* ...

Whereas before the *Catch-22* situation was identified due to attempts to label a pupil as a victim, here it arises due to a similar labelling as 'trouble-maker'. *Daysheets*, forms which pupils who are persistently in trouble must have signed by teachers from each class, can result in bad behaviour being reported for the pupil on the *daysheet*, while others involved who are not on *daysheets* 'get away with it'. Hence some pupils felt that they were being picked on—if they had been singled out for punishment in the past, they were more likely to be singled out for punishment in the future. What these *Catch-22* dilemmas have in common is the practice of seeing a person's actions as emanating from some inner core of being, so that bad behaviour means you are a bad person, or if you are victimized you are 'obviously a victim'. This kind of circularity is similar to that identified in the review of previous research into bullying, where typical characteristics and categorizations of bully and victim behaviour are invoked as a way of tackling the problem.

Implicit in the identification of either circular or oppositional reasoning in these accounts is a potential problem for the rhetorical psychologist's view that thinking must inevitably involve the process of arguing (e.g. Billig, 1987). While Billig et al. (1988) take ideological dilemmas as a universal aspect of normal human thinking, this paper identifies circular reasoning which, it is argued, occurs due to acceptance of taken-for-granted assumptions about what it is to be human, and which could also be identified as dilemmatic thinking. This means that it is possible that oppositional or argumentative thinking occurs due to the limits of modernist discourses, rather than as a result of its place as an inherent aspect of human thinking. This issue of thinking as argument is explored further in the following section.

POWER/KNOWLEDGE AND ARGUMENT

The construction of an internal struggle between two competing voices often occurred when teachers were attempting to portray their actions as rational and considered. The following is a typical example:

Excerpt 5: Springburn

- I: 1 The *other* thing that sort of emerged from the *pupil* interviews was that
 2 some pupils felt that they were kind of *picked* on by staff (T5: mhm), certain
 3 members of staff anyway, and they identified *this* as a, a form of-of bullying
 4 towards *them*
- T5: 5 ... *some* youngsters have thought *I've* been bullying (I: mm) but then
 6 again that might be used as a, you know, you're on their *back*, you're *always*
 7 at them, I mean *I've* actually heard myself saying '*you* think I'm picking on
 8 you', (I: mm) '*yes I do*', '*yes well I am*', because I'm *not* gonna let you sit
 9 there and do *nothing*, you're gonna *work*' (I: yeah) an-and i-it's through
 10 *frustration*, it's born through *frustration* (I: yeah) so again it's how you
 11 *perceive* it, is it bullying or is it just down to a last resort type teaching
 12 where you're trying to do your *utmost* and best for these youngsters ...

As the conversation analyst would point out, there is a reported accusation in lines 1–4, and it is this reported accusation which occasions the defensive account which follows. However this does not warrant the dismissal of this account, unless we are only interested in what the teacher 'really thinks' about all this. His response is interesting from the perspective of *how* that defence is conducted, and what assumptions are made in the process. This teacher gives us a window on his dilemmatic thinking, by recounting his internal dialogue with a 'youngster' who might have thought that he was picking on her/him. The construction is of a frustrated teacher who is only trying to do his job, and this justifies the use of intimidation, bullying tactics, in forcing a pupil to work.

The use of internal argument persuades us that this teacher has worked out the most rational solution to the problem of how to deal with pupils who do not want to 'work'. This essentially involves a blaming of the individual, as opposed to any social factors, who then needs to be 'picked on' in order to spur her or him into action. We are also given a sense of the frustration which drives this teacher to react in this way. The job of the teacher is to get as many pupils as possible up to a certain level in a certain amount of time. Knowledge is imparted from teacher to pupil, and the pupil must then be tested to determine whether the required amount of information has been absorbed. However, the teacher too is caught up in the technology of power/knowledge, as he is also under surveillance, and is responsible for the learning and good behaviour of his pupils.

Implicit in this excerpt is also the logocentric emphasis on rationality—the means by which we are justified in saying where each person stands in the hierarchy of surveillance involves this process of rational thought, and the 'taking in' of received wisdom. The end product of education is to 'become' one of these rational autonomous individuals, the way to get there is through education, whether the pupil wants it or not. This is the best thing that the teacher can give the pupil. If the pupil does not have it then s/he must be made to achieve it. I suggest that this kind of conceptualization of education leads to teacher–pupil relationships which revolve around the systematic abuse of power characteristic of a bullying relationship.

The logocentric discourse employed by this teacher enabled him to ex-

press some definite views on how pupils who do not want to learn should be treated:

Excerpt 6: Springburn

- T5: 1 these youngsters who are *not* willing to conform, ‘er, well I’m sorry,
 2 you’re not going to conform, you’re *out* then’ (I: mm) and they’re taken
 3 away from it all and they can, er *be* with the likes of themselves, (I: mm)
 4 and, you can alter their educational aspirations to *suit*, the type of
 5 youngsters that are *there* (I: yeah) rather than, *putting* them here and, an’
 6 they’re *in* classes and through *behavioural* problems or *academically* they’re
 7 not able to *achieve* what the lessons are setting ...

This extract clearly demonstrates the links between education and control (or the interdependence of power/knowledge for Foucault). Education is about conforming and accepting, not challenging established norms: “youngsters who are *not* willing to conform” (line 1) do not belong in a normal school. Their deviant behaviour is an indication of “the type of youngsters” (lines 4–5) that they ‘are’. Their problems are either behavioural or academic, which makes them incapable of achievement in a normal school environment. So the problem is focused on the individual pupil rather than, say, the school system or the teacher’s ways of interacting with pupils in that system.

To sum up so far, there are certain educational practices and undeconstructed ideological dilemmas which form the body of knowledge upon which teachers draw. The use of binary oppositions and binary logic, as conceived by Derrida (1976, 1982), may manifest as dilemmatic thinking, yet may also reproduce ideological fixity in the use of humanist and logocentric discourses which focus on the individual. Foucault (1979) would highlight the construction of subjectivities created by the socially constructed need to ‘confess’ our innermost secrets, whether we possess any or not, in order to appear ‘healthy’. He would also see the operation of modern disciplinary power as concealed by the requirement that we ‘police’ ourselves, take full ‘responsibility’ for our thoughts and actions (Foucault, 1977). We therefore begin to gain some insight into the construction of subjectivities, and the way in which young people can become caught in the circular logic of humanistic discourses—the assumption that what you do is evidence of what you are.

THE VARIABILITY OF TALK

Does the circularity inherent in humanist discourses necessarily mean that we are destined to be determined by them? The following excerpts go some way towards providing an answer:

Excerpt 7: Chapelhill

- I: 1 How do you perceive the issue of discipline in this school?
 T1: 2 with difficulty. The, *majority* of children are well-behaved. But there *are*
 3 always *some* children who are *not* beha- well-behaved, um, *I* blame, mainly
 4 the *parents* for it. (I: mm) the, *children* who are badly behaved are *usually*

- 5 the ones whose parents never turn up on *parent's* night (I: yeah) and you
 6 get the impression that the parents are not particularly *interested* in what
 7 their children are doing
 I: 8 yeah, mhm. So you feel it has a, a *bearing* on the child's ability to, sort of
 9 *behave* in school and, er,
 T1: 10 yeah there's *no* pressure from the parents to be well behaved or, to work
 11 well in school ...

In this excerpt the teacher places the blame for problem behaviour firmly upon the parents of the pupils. If a pupil behaves badly then it is nothing to do with the school, rather it is their home background and lack of encouragement from parents. This account therefore does the work of taking any blame for pupils' bad behaviour away from the school environment, and placing it on the home environment. A bit further on in the interview we got on to the topic of the different forms of discipline available to staff:

Excerpt 8: Chapelhill

- I: 1 Do you think it's possible to create a completely bullying-free environment
 2 *in* school?
 T1: 3 *no*. I, I think you'll always have, I-I can't see it ever being stamped out
 4 totally in any school (I: mhm) I think you'll *always* have the kind of
 5 people who'll tend to do it,
 I: 6 mm, do you think it's erm, sort of part of human *nature* or is it just the way,
 7 sort of kids are brought up?
 T1: 8 er, part of it's innate. *Some* kids are just, *wild* anyway.

In this excerpt we move away from parents and upbringing as the source of problem behaviour, and focus on the pupil herself or himself. In order to warrant his claim that bullying can never be eradicated, the teacher must construct an account in which bullying behaviour is located firmly within the personality, or some other 'innate' and therefore fixed feature of humanity. In my question I set up the terms of the nature/nurture binary—either it is innate or it is “just the way ... kids are brought up” (lines 6–7). He opts for the solution as partly innate—some kids are so 'wild' they must be born that way. A little later on we discuss the 'types' of person who are likely to bully or be bullied.

Excerpt 9: Chapelhill

- I: 1 Um, so, do you think, I mean why do you think it *is* that there are these
 2 particular *types*? Do you think it's all, sort of upbringing or, do you think
 3 they spark off one another or and-
 T1: 4 -to a *certain* extent they spark off one *another* (I: yeah) because I've
 5 noticed that here I mean they tend to pick on their *classmates* rather than
 6 the *teacher* which is, you know er, *suits me fine* ...

Now that we are talking about particular types of bully and victim we swing back to a more 'social' explanation—“they spark off one *another*” (line 4), which again was set up by the question (line 3). This 'social' explanation is also backed up by the observation that they tend to pick on one another rather than him as the teacher. This may have been a claim to the effect that 'I'm not the sort of teacher who gets picked on', or 'I'm not the sort of teacher who is bothered about being picked on', which in itself high-

lights what seemed to be a major concern of many of the teachers interviewed, namely classroom control. As control of the class is an indicator of competence, this may provide the investment in seeing some pupils as inevitably 'wild', as in Excerpt 8, line 8.

These (in no way unique) excerpts all by the same teacher and only minutes apart in the interview, demonstrate the way something like the 'either nature or nurture' binary can be used flexibly and strategically to achieve or warrant different claims at different times. This participant does not appear to have a coherent 'attitude' towards the nature/nurture issue, rather he does what Potter and Wetherell (1987) and many other discourse analysts predict: he draws flexibly upon available discourses in order to construct particular accounts. He is also thinking argumentatively, as rhetorical psychologists would predict, but again it needs to be pointed out that this argumentative thinking is lodged within the circularity of the nature/nurture binary.

Conversation analysts would also point out that the questions which the interviewer puts to participants shapes their subsequent responses. However, this does not mean that these responses are not worth paying attention to: this would only be the case if we were buying into the logocentric or humanist discourses, looking for what this teacher 'really' thought. Instead, what is interesting about these excerpts is the sense in which this participant is prepared to be guided by the interviewer's agenda, to negotiate his meanings with the interviewer. If this is an accurate interpretation of what is achieved in talk and text, then the traditional (modernist) psychological position that people have unified, measurable belief systems must be debunked.

This flexibility also answers the earlier question about whether the circularity inherent in humanist discourses necessarily means that we must be determined by them. Given that we do respond sensitively to those we are interacting with, then one good way of encouraging social change is to provide alternative discourses to the problematic modernist ones, for example by ceasing the counter-productive focus on the individual. In order to understand problem behaviour we need to turn our attention instead to what people are *achieving* through their talk, and to examine the way that discourses and ideologies shape our understanding of particular issues.

What we can also say about these excerpts in the light of a Foucauldian interpretation, is that in the very space which we have available to draw flexibly upon different discourses lies our 'productive' power, the power to negotiate, to manipulate accounts to suit ourselves, to disregard what humanist and logocentric ideologies tell us are fixed aspects of being human. In this space we can also develop resistance and social change, to challenge the status quo.

CONCLUSIONS—POSSIBILITIES FOR RESISTANCE AND CHANGE

... the claim that understanding the nature of mind is *not* simply a 'scientific' matter of 'discovering' its properties, but *is* a moral and a political problem, to do with how we *should* relate ourselves to one another, *is* a radically shocking claim and unassimilable to psychology in its current guise as a modern science. (Shotter, 1993: 87)

The aim in this paper is to highlight the possibility that particular taken-for-granted constructions of what it is to be human, which are employed by the teachers in this study, can actually *maintain* the problem of bullying. It is argued that these taken-for-granted constructions arise due to the limitations of humanist discourses: in particular that teachers construct and identify Catch-22 situations, symptomatic of circular reasoning, identified by Foucault as the 'vicious circle of police-prison-delinquent'. This circularity accompanies the construction of subjectivities organized by humanist and logocentric discourses.

Excerpts 1 and 2 gave us a sense in which operating with undeconstructed binaries reifies opposing aspects of personhood, e.g. nature/nurture, agency/determinism. This allows teachers to construct a young person's bad behaviour as emerging from some aspect of their 'nature' (because it can't be their background), and to construct that young person as a free-choosing individual who is therefore liable for punishment if she or he chooses the 'wrong' course of action.

In Excerpts 3 and 4 the circularity of this focus on the individual was more apparent; one teacher identified the Catch-22 dilemma involved in singling out one person as 'being' a 'troublemaker', as this meant that they were more often singled out as a troublemaker, even when others were involved. In Excerpts 5 and 6 we are given one teacher's account of his struggle to get some of his pupils to work, and this is presented as a struggle which legitimates the use of bullying strategies, the implication being that it is for the pupil's own good. If pupils do not want to conform then they have no place in mainstream education. Again the focus on the individual detracts from other possible contributors to problem behaviour, such as the teacher's position in the classroom regime, or power/knowledge and the technologies of power in education dedicated to producing delinquent and/or docile bodies.

This analysis draws upon the Foucauldian insight that power and resistance are interlinked—although "[t]o say that one can never be 'outside' power does not mean that one is trapped" (Foucault, 1980: 141–2). Foucault would say that resistance within a modernist humanist system merely serves to replicate that system. For example, Foucault talks of the "rule of the tactical polyvalence of discourses" (Foucault, 1978: 100), in which a discourse of power can be reversed into one of resistance, e.g. discourses constructing homosexuality as subspecies "allowed them to claim rights as a natural minority" (Simons, 1995: 83). However Foucault warns against affirming simply that which has been repressed, i.e. staying within the limits of humanist identity politics. This can be linked to the overall

position of this paper: that the focus on the subject of modernism leads to circularity in the way an issue is understood, which manifests itself in a number of circular Catch-22 types of dilemmatic construction in the analysis of teachers' talk.

Resistance merely reinforces our oppression, if it simply involves re-affirming that identity which has been constructed for us within the humanist-modernist metanarrative. It is then possible to see more clearly what Foucault meant by his highlighting of the futility of the police-prison-delinquent cycle of relationships.

The tendency of modernist discourses to invoke acceptance of fixity about what it is to be human also sounds a word of caution for rhetorical psychologists (e.g. Billig et al., 1988), who claim that thinking is fundamentally two-sided and argumentative. What this study has found is that thinking can be shaped by dialectics such as individual/society, nature/nurture and so on. Hence while it is apparent that thinking involves an argument between two 'sides', it may also reflect the limits of oppositional modernist discourses which are shaping understanding: if we stay trapped within modernist discourses then our thinking will be argumentative and two-sided.

Further, if dilemmatic thinking operates to reinforce the certainty of a binary opposition, and to replicate humanist discourses, then it does not facilitate social/personal—discursive—change. Excerpts 6–9 illustrated the way that the focus on the individual can be manipulated to achieve certain accounts, to warrant certain claims, and it is this variability and constructed nature of talk which holds the key to the possibility of change.

This paper provides evidence of teachers drawing upon discourses of individual responsibility and fixed personality traits, discourses which both teachers and pupils freely use to reinforce blaming, justifications and so on. From the teachers' perspective these discourses have an important role to play in the practical ecology of their daily routine, and again it must be stressed that the aim is not to identify the ways in which teachers as some isolated group are 'getting it wrong'. Rather this paper attempts to highlight the consequences of particular taken-for-granted discursive constructions, and to begin to see how these discursive limits affect the construction of subjectivities.

Among the salient aspects of bullying drawn upon by teachers are intimidation, name-calling and 'picking on' certain pupils. The implications of such a finding are that bully and victim fixed personality traits, and bullying strategies in general, are maintained by modernist constructions of the self and traditional individualistic discourses. What is needed then is to provide alternative discourses for understanding problem behaviour in schools; and the final section of this paper goes some way towards achieving this.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Unlike many criticisms of postmodernism (e.g. Baumann, 1992), the position of this paper is that it *is* possible to make positive recommendations

from within a postmodern account. Given that bullying is seen as symptomatic of a deeper problem situated within the discourses that we have available to us to construct ourselves, the recommendations will focus on this wider area of discursive construction.

First, if thought is constrained by conceptual limits, then without the ability to identify those limits, any resistance we want to engage in is blind. We need to develop a constant reflection on the limits on ourselves and our ways of understanding, because in this way we buy ourselves the only freedom from our taken-for-granted ways of thinking that is possible. To do this we need to stay in a 'provisional' frame of mind, embrace indeterminacy, without losing sight of why this is important—to facilitate *both* individual *and* social change—i.e. discursive change.

Our aim must therefore be to challenge limits of what we take to be a self, or the limits of what we take to be subjectivities which become tied to 'truths' of human sciences such as psychology. We must seek ways of existing as subjects which transgress the limits of the modernist discourses of humanism. Humanism fails because it takes humanity as the foundation, rather than the effect, of knowledge, in the same way that traditional approaches in psychology seek taxonomies of personality types, rather than seeing them as discursive constructions.

We also need to challenge dualistic constructions centred on individual–society, agency–determinism dialectics, which operate to construct and maintain existing hierarchical power relations. Further work needs to be done on the discursive production of subjectivities so that a greater understanding of the ways in which we limit our understanding of ourselves and those around us can be developed. There also needs to be a greater awareness of the self-perpetuating nature of the construction, blaming and punishment of 'troublemakers' which was a common feature of both schools in this study. Perhaps when teachers are made aware of the oppositional and intimidating nature of their own ways of interacting with pupils, they will be less inclined to blame and punish individual pupils for the oppositional and intimidating nature of their behaviour. Similarly we must be aware that just as the teacher sets the agenda or merely responds in kind to the pupils, so as psychologists we set the agenda for teachers and other professionals, so that if psychologists look to individual deviance as the source of behaviour problems, then teachers cannot be blamed for doing the same thing. These are problems at the level of discourse, not simply at the level of individual personalities or groups.

The focus on individual personalities as the source of the problem also brings with it a danger of seeing bullying behaviour out of context. This fragmentation seems to be a by-product of having academics come and do research into different aspects of aggressive and problem behaviour. The issue then becomes conceptualized in these narrow terms, e.g. 'she was bullied *because* she is black, or female', and one's understanding of bullying is similarly decontextualized.

In the larger body of work from which this paper is derived (Hepburn, 1995), I have highlighted the way that pupils who do not 'fit in' are treated

in schools, and found that they are labelled as troublemakers, administered with various kinds of punishment, and often continually heckled and intimidated. Given that schools are social systems in which pupils are learning, amongst other things, how to deal with those who do not fit in, how to decide what is acceptable behaviour and what is not, how to deal with differences of various kinds, I suggest that it is not surprising that bullying occurs between pupils. The patterns of conformity–exclusion, normality–abnormality, dominance–subordination evident in pupils’ bullying relationships, are also evident in the discourses drawn upon by teachers in this paper. Until the wider issue of how we tackle these problems at a discursive level is addressed it is unlikely that we will be able to address the more specific issue of school bullying.

ALEXA HEPBURN is Lecturer in Critical Psychology at Staffordshire University. She has recently completed her PhD entitled ‘Deconstructing Secondary School Bullying: A Postmodern Analysis of Power and Subjectivity’. Her interests are in postmodern philosophy, particularly Derrida, Foucault and Lyotard, and the implications of postmodernism for methodological innovation, and also for understanding issues such as oppression, gender, power and subjectivity. ADDRESS: Department of Psychology, Staffordshire University, College Road, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs ST4 2DE, UK. [email: a.hepburn@staffs.ac.uk]

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to thank Jonathan Potter for his very helpful review of an earlier version of this paper.

REFERENCES

- Baumann, Z. (1992) *Intimations of Postmodernity*. London: Routledge.
- Billig, M. (1987) *Arguing and Thinking: A Rhetorical Approach to Social Psychology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Billig, M., Condor, S., Edwards, D., Gane, M., Middleton, D. and Radley, R. (1988) *Ideological Dilemmas; a Social Psychology of Everyday Thinking*. London: Sage.
- Burman, E. and Parker, I. (1993) *Discourse Analytic Research: Repertoires and Readings of Texts in Action*. London: Routledge.
- Derrida, J. (1976) *Of Grammatology*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Derrida, J. (1982) *Margins of Philosophy*. Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf.
- Edwards, D., Ashmore, M. and Potter, J. (1995) ‘Death and Furniture: The Rhetoric, Politics and Theology of Bottom Line Arguments against Relativism’, *History of the Human Sciences* 8(2): 25–49.
- Foucault, M. (1977) *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. London: Penguin.

- Foucault, M. (1978) *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Foucault, M. (1979) *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1: An Introduction*. London: Allen Lane.
- Foucault, M. (1980) 'Power and Strategies', in C. Gordon (ed.) *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972–1977*. Brighton: Harvester.
- Foucault, M. (1982) 'The Subject and Power', afterword to H.L. Dreyfus and P. Rabinow (eds) *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*. Brighton: Harvester.
- Gergen, K.J. (1994) 'The Limits of Pure Critique', in H. Simons and M. Billig (eds) *After Postmodernism*. London: Sage.
- Hale, C.L., Tardy, R.W. and Farley-Lucas, B. (1995) 'Children's Talk about Conflict: An Exploration of the Voices and the Views of the "Experts"', *Discourse and Society* 6(3): 407–27.
- Harding, J. (1993) *Kidscape Newsletter*. London: Kidscape.
- Heller, J. (1961) *Catch 22*. London: Jonathan Cape.
- Henriques, J., Hollway, W., Urwin, C., Venn, C. and Walkerdine, V. (1984) *Changing the Subject*. London: Methuen.
- Hepburn, A. (1995) 'Deconstructing Secondary School Bullying: A Postmodern Analysis of Power and Subjectivity', unpublished PhD thesis, Glasgow Caledonian University.
- Kvale, S. (1992) 'Postmodern Psychology: A Contradiction in Terms?' in S. Kvale (ed.) *Psychology and Postmodernism*. London: Sage.
- Lupton, D. (1995) 'Postmodernism and Critical Discourse Analysis', *Discourse and Society* 6(2): 302–4.
- Lyotard, J-F. (1984) *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Olweus, D. (1978) *Aggression in the Schools: Bullies and Whipping Boys*. Washington, DC: Hemisphere.
- Olweus, D. (1980) 'Familial and Temperamental Determinants of Aggressive Behaviour in Adolescent Boys: A Causal Analysis', *Child Development* 16: 644–60.
- Olweus, D. (1993) 'Victimisation by Peers: Antecedents and Long-term Outcomes', in K.H. Rubin and J.B. Asendorf (eds) *Social Withdrawal, Inhibition, and Shyness in Childhood*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Potter, J. and Wetherell, M. (1987) *Discourse and Social Psychology: Beyond Attitudes and Behaviour*. London: Sage.
- Sampson, E.E. (1988) 'Indigenous Psychologies of the Individual and their Role in Personal and Social Functioning', *American Psychologist* 43: 15–22.
- Shotter, J. (1993) *Conversational Realities, Constructing Life Through Language*. London: Sage.
- Simons, J. (1995) *Foucault and the Political*. London: Routledge.
- Smith, P.K. (1991) 'The Silent Nightmare: Bullying and Victimisation in School Peer Groups', *The Psychologist* 4(6): 248.
- Smith, P.K. and Sharp, S. (1994) *School Bullying, Insights and Perspectives*. London: Routledge.
- Van Dijk, T.A. (1994) 'Critical Discourse Analysis', *Discourse and Society* 5(4): 435–6.
- Walkerdine, V. (1988) *The Mastery of Reason: Cognitive Development and the Production of Rationality*. London: Routledge.