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ABSTRACT Qualitative research in psychology has tended to draw on a relatively narrow range of research methods, and the recent shift towards the analysis of material involving 'naturally occurring talk' in some areas of psychology has reinforced this trend. This article discusses the implications of a preference for the analysis of 'naturally occurring talk' or 'naturalistic records' across the full range of qualitative psychology research. In particular, I focus on how researchers are positioned in debates over the advantages and limitations of analysing 'naturally occurring data' and research interviews. Drawing on examples from a current project concerned with the meanings of consumption for young people, I interrogate the assumptions associated with a preference for analysing 'naturalistic records' and consider some of the benefits as well as the problems involved in using research practices that involve a degree of direct engagement between the researcher and other participants. This article is therefore discussing the origins as well as the implications of the preference for analysing 'naturally occurring data'.

KEY WORDS: *consumption, interviews, naturally occurring talk, qualitative research, youth*

Introduction

Mainstream positivist psychology has a long-standing wariness of research methods that involve sustained interactions between researchers and other participants. This is especially relevant to those methods involving the kind of close engagement entailed in most research interviews and in ethnographic or observational research. This reluctance emerges from one of the key tenets of positivism, namely the attempt to operate as an objective and value-free scientist (Bryman, 2004). Positivist psychology has tended to constitute the researcher a distant, impersonal figure that is (and should be) uninvolved in the research process. This view has been challenged by the various 'new' versions of qualitative

psychology and sociology that have emerged over the past 40 years (Parker et al., 1999). Such 'new' psychologies have been characterized, in part, by an increased use of qualitative methods, especially what are commonly referred to as 'semi-structured' research interviews (Willig, 2001). Feminist psychology in particular has been characterized by the increased use of qualitative research methods that involve (and even encourage) direct engagement between the researcher and other participants (Wilkinson, 1986; Banister et al., 1994; Speer, 2002a).

My focus here is on the recent emergence of an argument in favour of the analysis of 'naturally occurring talk' (or 'naturalistic records') in preference to material derived from research interviews or ethnographic observation, and a related argument in favour of discursive psychology approaches (henceforth DP) derived from conversation analysis (henceforth CA) as the most suitable means of analysing the interactional aspects of talk. Initially, this preference for the analysis of 'naturally occurring talk' was generally advocated for (and by) researchers working *within* the fields of DP, CA and ethnomethodology (Hutchby and Wooffitt, 1998; Ashmore and Reed, 2000). More recently, however, attempts have been made to extend this practice outside the arena of CA and DP. For example, Jonathan Potter and Alexa Hepburn have argued that the analysis of 'naturalistic records' using a DP approach derived from CA should be the default method in *all* forms of qualitative research, regardless of the theoretical or philosophical perspective of the researcher (Potter and Hepburn, 2005). In a similar vein, Susan Speer has argued that in order to examine the interactional dimension of talk generated in focus groups or research interviews, feminist researchers with an interest in the processes of reflexivity need to adopt the analytic procedures of DP (Speer, 2002a).

This issue is certainly a 'hot topic' in social science journals: in writing this article, I have read through no fewer than five substantial debates of some relevance to this question. My motivation for continuing to grapple with this question arose from the sense that some of the assumptions underlying the preference for the analysis of 'naturalistic records' have unfortunate implications for those qualitative researchers in psychology (and in other disciplines) who do not share the philosophical, political or epistemological framework of DP or CA. What do all of these heated debates mean for those researchers who (still) wish to use methods involving forms of direct engagement with research participants, despite all the potential difficulties (and benefits) associated with such methods?

Passing the dead social scientist test: CA, DP and the preference for analysing 'naturalistic records'

How have the concepts of 'naturally occurring data', 'naturally occurring talk' and 'naturalistic records' been defined in texts concerned with the analysis of discourse? Stephanie Taylor (2001) argues that in ideal circumstances, 'naturally occurring data' refers to 'informal conversation which would have occurred even if it was not being observed or recorded, and which was unaffected by the presence of the observer and/or the recording equipment' (p. 27). 'Naturally

occurring talk' then, is usually taken to mean talk that is informal and outside the context of situations with a declared purpose and a particular venue. Ideally, the talk (though not, of course, the recording or the analysis of that talk) should not be influenced by the presence or the agenda of the observer/recorder/researcher. Some of the perceived benefits of 'naturally occurring data' (or 'naturalistic records') compared to research interviews are that the researcher cannot distort or influence the material to be collected for analysis, characterized by Ashmore and Reed (2000) as 'The Event' to distinguish this element of the research from the Tape, the Transcript, the Analysis and the Article.¹ The potentially 'contaminating' impact of the researcher's presence, their questions and their responses and contributions should ideally be absent from 'naturally-occurring data', since the aim is to collect material in which participants orient to issues that are relevant to themselves at any particular time (Hutchby and Wooffitt, 1998). Of course, the process of collecting, recording and analysing such 'naturally occurring data' is not straightforward. Researchers employing this approach devote considerable attention to the development of sophisticated means of recording and transcribing spoken, written and visual materials (Ashmore and Reed, 2000; Taylor, 2001).

No talk or other practice is 'natural' in the sense of being unmediated by the context of the occasion in which it is generated – as many CA and DP researchers have argued with considerable force (see Edwards and Potter, 1992). Other social scientists have also questioned the association between the concept of 'natural' phenomena and authenticity (Silverman, 1997). In 1997, Jonathan Potter defined 'naturally occurring talk' as 'spoken language that is produced entirely independently of the actions of the researcher' (1997: 148). He cautioned against assuming that this apparently straightforward definition implies a hierarchy from 'somewhat ephemeral interaction in the laboratory to more real interaction happening naturally out in the world' (p. 149). Potter went on to list various difficulties involved in 'working with interview talk', stating that 'discourse analysts are increasingly turning away from interviews to focus on materials less affected by the formulations and assumptions of the researcher' (1997: 150; Stainton Rogers, 2003).

In a more recent article, Potter and Hepburn go further than this, arguing that what they term 'naturalistic records' should replace research interviews as 'the default technique' for the analysis of social interactions in qualitative psychology research (Potter and Hepburn, 2005). Potter and Hepburn are not arguing that research interviews or other methods involving a degree of active engagement between the researcher and other participants no longer have a place in qualitative psychology, but they consider the potential benefits and limitations of research interviews and 'naturalistic records' from the specific perspective of DP. Potter and Hepburn argue that the aim of using such naturalistic records is to 'avoid active researcher involvement, even if the full realization of this ideal is often impossible' (2005: 48). Elsewhere, Potter has argued that research should be able to pass a (conceptual) 'dead social scientist test' (Potter, 1996: 135; cf. 2003). That is, one should ask the question 'would the data be the same, or be there at all, if the researcher got run over on the way to work?'

(Potter, 2003: 788; cf. Taylor, 2001). The aim here is to collect data that, ideally, have not been 'got up' by the researcher, and to analyse this material using the techniques and analytic procedures of DP. Ideally, the researcher would be absent from what Ashmore and Reed (2000) referred to as the Event. According to Potter's analogy the researcher would be more than absent: they would (or could) be dead. This configuration may make sense within the framework of CA and DP, but what of those many other traditions in psychology where researchers are characterized as active and engaged in encounters with other research participants, such as the action research orientation favoured by community psychologists (e.g. Nelson and Prilleltensky, 2005)?

Susan Speer has made a different set of arguments about the relationship between 'natural' and 'contrived' data in her discussion of the assumptions associated with these terms (Speer, 2002b). Speer questions the pervasive assumption amongst many CA and DP researchers that research interviews produce 'non-natural' or 'contrived' data in contrast to the superior 'naturally-occurring talk' preferred in CA and DP. She argues that much of the material that CA researchers present as 'natural' could equally be viewed as researcher-prompted, primarily as a consequence of the procedures involved in obtaining participants' informed consent. Speer points out that all forms of data can be viewed as 'natural' or 'contrived' depending on what one wants to do with them, and that material arising from research interviews can be equally valuable as a resource for CA and DP analysis compared to so-called 'natural' data. Speer is less concerned than Potter to expel all traces of researcher 'bias' from the Event: she would prefer to acknowledge, celebrate and investigate the active role played by researchers in interview talk (Speer, 2002b).

One of the core objections of CA and DP researchers to the widespread use of research interviews revolves around the distinction between 'emic' and 'etic' analyses. This has been characterized as the difference between 'using an imposed frame of reference' (etic), and 'working within the conceptual framework of those studied' (emic) (Silverman, 1993: 24; Taylor, 2001: 16). From a DP perspective, an 'emic' approach is preferable because it focuses on material that is assumed to emerge from the perspective of participants, rather than being 'got up' by the researcher, a product of the interactional context of the interview, and the interviewee's attempts to answer the questions posed by the interviewer (Potter, 2003). 'Naturalistic records' are frequently constituted as 'emic' in contrast to research interviews, which tend to be characterized as 'etic', and therefore as more problematic in analytic terms (Taylor, 2001). However, the distinction between the concepts of 'emic' and 'etic' research is by no means clear. Some texts differentiate between 'emic' and 'etic' *analyses* of discourse (see Taylor, 2001), whilst others imply that research interviews per se tend to produce materials that have 'etic' qualities, compared to the 'emic' data produced by 'naturalistic records' (e.g. Potter and Hepburn, 2005).

I wish to challenge the notion that research interviews inevitably and primarily produce material with 'etic' qualities, or material that is 'got up' by the researcher, which is produced solely or primarily for the consumption of the interviewer, and that such material is so ridden with methodological difficulties and

pitfalls that it is of questionable value for the purposes of meaningful discourse analysis. For example, in a recent study of the ways in which sex offenders manage blame and responsibility for their offences, Auburn and Lea (2003) contrast their discursive psychology analysis of 'naturally' occurring talk in recorded sessions (with no researchers present) from a prison-based sex offender treatment programme with 'those occasions when the talk is generated *by and solely* for the consumption of the researcher' (Auburn and Lea, 2003: 282, emphasis added).² Such a perspective gives the researcher and the research project overwhelming dominance over the research encounter, relegating other participants to relatively passive 'feeder' roles. In my experience of over 20 years' involvement in various research projects employing interview and ethnographic methods, this is far too simplistic a view of what interactions between researchers and participants can entail (see Griffin, 1989, 1991). Using extracts from one interview, I want to examine this view of research interviews in greater depth, but first I will briefly consider a number of approaches to social psychology research that present different models of the researcher's position than that of the 'dead social scientist' advocated by some discursive psychologists.

Being there: diverse approaches to positioning the researcher in qualitative social psychology

Social psychology has a long tradition of employing research methods that involve direct engagement with people 'in the field', whether via research interviews or observational methods. Such applied research is generally undertaken beyond the realms of the laboratory, outside the usual territory of many mainstream experimental psychology researchers. For example, the ground-breaking work of Paul Lazarsfeld, Marie Jahoda, Hans Zeisel and others on the psychological and social impacts of long-term male unemployment on a small community in Marienthal, Austria during the 1930s involved a range of research methods, including semi-structured interviews and systematic observation (Jahoda et al., 1972). This type of study emerged from a phenomenological strand in psychology and social science, operating from a realist perspective and a concern for social issues, especially the lives of subordinated and impoverished working-class people. The Marienthal study also has substantial parallels with forms of ethnographic observational research undertaken in social and cultural anthropology, operating from a strong ethical perspective. The legacy the Marienthal study can be discerned partly in subsequent experimental social psychology research on 'social issues', but especially in the qualitative studies of community and critical psychology (Stainton Rogers et al., 1995; Fox and Prilleltensky, 1997; Nelson and Prilleltensky, 2005).³

The Marienthal study is a classic early example of academic researchers in psychology trying to investigate 'social problems in the field' (Fryer, 1987). Marienthal had been totally dependent on the textile industry, which collapsed in 1929. In late 1931 the WF team, including Marie Jahoda, Paul Lazarsfeld,

Hans Zeisel and 11 others, began to collect all available material relating to the conditions of life among the inhabitants of the village (Lazarsfeld, 1932). This was a form of community study, referred to as a 'sociography' by the WF research team. It involved interviews, systematic participant observational methods as well as the collection of quantitative (or numerical) data. This combination of methods was chosen for ethical and empirical reasons. The researchers felt that asking the working-class population of Marienthal to produce 'psychological self-observations' would probably prove distressing, and so they aimed 'to find procedures which could combine the use of numerical data with immersion ("*sich einleben*") into the situation ... to gain such close contact with the population of Marienthal that we could learn the smallest details of their daily life' (Jahoda et al., 1972: 1). The WF researchers at Marienthal also made a principled decision to become involved in the daily life of the community they were studying to 'give something back', but also to improve the quality of their empirical work. For example, free medical consultations were provided each week by a female paediatrician and an obstetrician, and research field-notes were kept on consulting room conversations, in order to combine research benefits for the WF team with medical benefits for the community (Fryer, 1987). The WF team felt that 'no researcher should act as "a mere reporter or outside observer"' (Jahoda et al., 1972: 5), and the team spent a total of 120 working days in Marienthal. Marie Jahoda's later study of the operation of Subsistence Production Society (SPS) workshops in a Monmouthshire valley in the late 1930s was run along similar lines, when she worked in SPS workshops and lived in the homes of nine different SPS members.⁴

The Marienthal study confounds neat categorization in terms of distinctions between qualitative and quantitative research, between psychology and sociology, between the analysis of 'naturally occurring data' and 'researcher-inspired interactions', or between unobtrusive observation and participant ethnography. Data were collected from disparate sources in order to produce a detailed and in-depth account of people's lives. As Marie Jahoda put it many years later: 'our concern was the unemployed manual labourer in a particular industry, in a particular village, at a particular time of year' (Jahoda et al., 1972: 3). The words of the inhabitants of Marienthal are not subjected to the in-depth analysis of recorded talk that one might find in contemporary DP research, and there is no prolonged discussion of the ways in which the presence of the WF research team and their research agenda might have shaped the accounts or actions of the Marienthal inhabitants who participated in this study. However, the WF researchers did attempt to record what an ethnographer might view as 'naturally occurring talk' via a form of unobtrusive observation akin to that used in the British Mass Observation surveys (Calder and Sheridan, 1985).

The researchers classified participants into a number of categories intended to reflect their psychological and social responses to the long-term unemployment of adult men in the community. In Marienthal, some 70 percent of households were assigned to the category of 'resignation': involving an absence of plans or hopes for the future, although maintaining the household, care of the children and a feeling of relative well-being. In addition, some 2 percent

of households were categorized as 'in despair' and a further three percent as 'apathetic', or involving 'complete passivity and absence of effort' (Fryer, 1987: 84). The remaining 23 percent of families were characterized by maintenance of the household, care of children, subjective well-being, plans for the future and continued attempts to find employment. The Marienthal researchers made a clear connection between the 'broken' attitude of families in despair and apathy, and the level of household income. In 1930s Austria, the unemployment relief laws meant that after a specified period, unemployment payments were replaced by emergency relief, which eventually ran out altogether. Some families in Marienthal therefore had no income whatsoever, and their experience of unemployment was particularly psychologically destructive as a consequence of this.

Following the 'critical turn' in social research during the 1980s, researchers raised questions about the wisdom or the possibility of interpreting people's social practices or psychological states from information gathered via research interviews, ethnography and other similar methods (Clifford and Marcus, 1986; Griffin, 2000). Severe funding cuts in the social sciences meant that qualitative social research, including ethnography, was in decline during the mid-1980s, just as the 'new' critical and discursive psychologies were emerging in Britain and elsewhere. Moreover, the arguments of postmodernism and post-structuralism which combined with feminism to mobilize these 'new' critical voices in and about psychology (e.g. Henriques et al., 1984) also presented a profound critique of the key assumptions and practices of ethnographic and applied social research. These criticisms challenged the tendency towards naive realism in ethnographic research, the uncritical imposition of the researchers' authorial analyses over the voices of its respondents, and the relatively simplistic opposition between self and society on which most such research relied at that time (see Griffin, 1993 for a review of this process in British and US youth research). Combined with the growth of narrowly experimental cognitivism in psychology, this meant that the sort of applied studies 'in the field' employing ethnographic and other more 'engaged' forms of research methods as exemplified by the Marienthal project have become increasingly uncommon in psychological research.

However, some qualitative social psychologists have managed to bridge the gap between the legacy exemplified by the Marienthal study and the more recent emergence of CA and DP research. Michael Billig's study of *Banal Nationalism* examines a pressing social issue through the investigation of everyday practices such as flag-waving and a detailed textual analysis of tabloid and broadsheet newspaper reports (Billig, 1995). Billig argues that: 'in the established nations, there is continual "flagging", or reminding, of nationhood' (1995: 8). *Banal Nationalism*, like much of Billig's work, is not a CA study, and nor is it an ethnographic study, but it owes a debt to both areas of research practice. Billig uses neither research interviews nor the analysis of 'naturally occurring talk' to achieve this aim, and his approach appears to involve no direct engagement between the researcher and the research context under investigation. Part of his analysis involves an illustrative case study examining British daily newspapers on one particular day, focusing on the ways in which such texts 'flag'

the national homeland as the home of their readers. Billig also considers the many ways and places in which nationhood is 'flagged', especially through such everyday practices as the daily pledge of allegiance made by US schoolchildren to 'their' national flag. Whenever national flags are waved in this way, argues Billig, nationalism, the nation-state, specific national identities, and nationhood itself are all invoked.

By paying careful attention to 'the little words – mostly overlooked' in British daily newspapers and to other mundane and taken-for-granted practices of everyday life, Billig encourages his readers to consider these 'as banal rehearsals for the extraordinary times of crisis, when the state calls on its citizenry, and especially its male citizenry, to make ultimate sacrifices in the cause of nationhood' (1995: 11).⁵ This attention to 'the little words' in a detailed analysis of selected texts is characteristic of DP researchers, although the latter would be unlikely to link their analysis to a consideration of the implications of everyday cultural practices such as flag-waving.

Banal Nationalism is a powerful example of an analysis in which the research materials do not appear at first glance to be affected by the presence of the researcher. There is no direct (i.e. face-to-face) interaction between the researcher and his 'data' at the point of data collection, and Billig's research materials could be defined as 'naturally occurring data' (a term he does not use). However, there is no sense in which the researcher was not implicated or affected by the topic of the research, even before the research process itself began. As Billig argues:

by extending the concept of nationalism, the analyst is not safely removed from the scope of investigation. We might imagine that we possess a cosmopolitan broadness of spirit. But, if nationalism is a wider ideology, whose familiar commonplaces catch us unawares, then this is too reassuring. We will not remain unaffected. If the thesis is correct, then nationalism has seeped into the corners of our consciousness; it is present in the very words we might try to use for analysis. It is naïve to think that a text of exposure can attempt to escape from the times and place of its formulation. (1995: 12)

Many CA and DP researchers constitute themselves as analytic technicians of the research process, as they look, listen and pick over the details of recorded interactions in which they have taken no active part. They develop their analysis through interactions with the Tape and the Transcript, but (preferably) not the Event itself. In *Banal Nationalism*, Billig also has no direct contact with the Events that he analyses, but the whole tenor of his argument is one of unsettling if unavoidable contact with the issue under scrutiny. His analysis does not rest on any form of distancing device, and he refuses to place himself beyond or outside of the research process. If (some) CA and DP researchers appear determined to avoid 'contaminating the field' with their messy presences, they also pay minimal attention to the ways in which 'the field' might affect their analytic work or the rest of their everyday lives. Billig knows that all researchers are implicated in the processes of their investigations, perhaps more deeply and personally than many realize or would wish to acknowledge. Most researchers with a preference for the analysis of 'naturally occurring data' would not dispute this point, but

few have located themselves so centrally within the research process as Michael Billig, Marie Jahoda or the rest of the WF team.

Sharing hand cream and waving the flag: interacting agendas and the importance of observation in the analysis of cultural practices

I want to turn now to consider the issues raised by the debates over the use of 'naturalistic records', research interviews and observational methods discussed earlier with reference to my own recent work as part of a study on the meanings of consumption for young people: the 'Young Consumers' study.⁶ My argument here revolves around two episodes that took place in the course of one research interview, which I refer to below as the 'hand cream moment' and the 'flag-waving episode'. I will not be attempting to present an analysis that addresses the core research questions of the project, and there is far more 'going on' in these episodes than I am able to consider in this article (see Croghan et al., 2005, 2006; Griffin et al., 2005, 2006; Phoenix, 2005 for more detailed analyses of the Young Consumers study results). I am not engaged in doing a full discourse analysis of these two episodes here, which are employed as examples of situations in which my research agenda interacted with practices that I argue were initiated (at least in part) by the young women. My intention is to examine some of the assumptions underlying arguments in favour of a preference for the analysis of 'naturalistic records' over research interviews in qualitative psychology research, in particular the constitution of interview data as primarily 'got up' by the researcher, as distinct from material generated from the participants' own perspective. My analysis is not carried out from within the framework of CA or DP, so many of the conventions I use to present my arguments and the interview transcript itself differ from the usual practice in DP. My point is that it is not essential to mobilize the analytic terminology, the ideological baggage nor even the transcription conventions of CA or DP approaches in order to consider these issues.

The encounter quoted below formed part of a series of research interviews carried out during 2001 and 2002 in state secondary schools in Birmingham as part of the Young Consumers study. I will begin by providing some contextual information about the study, the research methods involved, the young women participating in the research interview discussed below, the conditions in which the interview took place, and the transcription process used in this project. I recognize that conventions regarding how much and what type of contextual information is provided by researchers varies depending on their disciplinary field, and the conventions within different epistemological and analytical perspectives. Such 'contextual' information is inevitably selected by the researcher, and even the relative absence of this type of material that is common in DP analyses carries its own messages (Hammersley, 2003). In the case of the 'flag-waving episode', I also discuss the wider social, political and cultural context of an England–Brazil World Cup football match that preceded the research interview.

My inclusion of this information reflects my interest in both the interactional processes at work in the interview, and the wider political, social, ideological and cultural conditions that might be relevant at a given historical moment.

The Young Consumers study employed a range of research methods, including self-completion questionnaires from 1354 young people on the meanings associated with consuming certain products; informal interviews with 335 individuals in 60 small groups of young people in schools; interviews with 16 young people and 20 of their parents concerning negotiations over household resources; and 11 case study observations with young people involved in cultural activities related to consumption. These were all young people aged 12–13 and 16–17 from a range of social class and ethnic groups recruited from 23 secondary schools around the English Midlands in Birmingham, Oxford and Milton Keynes.

The interview I will discuss here involved five young women aged 12 and 13, all of whom were in Year 8 of a state secondary school in which the first five years intake were single sex (girls only), with a relatively small co-educational sixth form. ‘Hartfield school’ (a pseudonym) is located in an outer suburb of Birmingham, with a primarily working-class student population of diverse ethnicities, including white, South Asian and African Caribbean groups. In this group, two of the girls identified themselves as ‘Asian’ (Zaby and Reena), one as ‘mixed parentage’ (Karen), and two as ‘white’ (Gemma and Becky).

I would characterize this interview as a ‘researcher-inspired conversation’, in that the young women were recruited through a process that involved describing the study in a letter to the head teacher and a consent form sent to parents prior to asking their permission to approach the students. All four members of the research team had a pre-arranged set of questions that we asked in all research interviews, according to a schedule that allowed for a degree of flexibility. In the two episodes I examine below, I consider the ways in which my agenda as researcher interacted with the young women’s agenda, set in the dynamic context of the interview encounter.

This research interview was tape-recorded with the young women’s permission, using an audiotape recorder and an omni-directional microphone placed in the centre of the group in full view of all participants. My description of the study in the various consent forms and at the start of each interview as being ‘about what young people buy and why’, constituted myself and the other researchers involved in the study as ‘wanting to find out what young people think about this’, with an interest in young people’s distinctive perspective on this issue.⁷ This had particular implications for the research encounter. As a researcher, I appeared to be trying to find out something about their lives, from their perspective, which implied that the latter was (or may have been) different from the perspective of parents, teachers or other adults. It also constitutes these young people as ‘respondents’ who know that they are expected to engage in what Antaki et al. (2002) describe as ‘the discursive business of “giving views”’ (p. 14).

Whilst we were all aware that we were engaged, in part, in producing an Object (the interview tape) that would be used as research material, it seems

reasonable to assume that the young women probably had rather different ideas about what that research process might involve than I did. All of the scheduled interview questions were couched in general rather than personal or individual terms. That is, we asked young people to talk about 'people your age' and 'their parents', or 'people in your school' (lines 431–2), rather than directly about themselves. Despite the 'general' nature of the terms used, such questions invite young people to tell stories about negotiations over money and commodities in their own or others' families and in their friendship groups, or to present their 'views' on such issues. There is no discursively or ideologically 'neutral' way to ask such questions (or indeed any question), but I would not accept that all such questions ever produce is solely a reflection of the nature of the questions posed. In the first instance, some participants refused to answer some of our questions; others did tell stories about family negotiations over money; others entered somewhat desultory general discussions or more animated debates.

During the interview referred to below, the group sat in the corner of an empty classroom around a school table. As in many interviews with young people, especially friendship groups interviewed in school, the young women often talked at the same time, interrupting each other and me in a rapid-fire repartee that was extremely difficult to transcribe.⁸ My intention here is not to analyse interactions at the detailed level employed by CA or DP researchers. I have employed a transcription convention that is commonly used in some forms of discourse analysis, although this is somewhat 'lighter' than the system described by Potter and Hepburn (2005) as 'Jefferson lite'.⁹ Even using this relatively crude form of transcription, it has proved extremely difficult to transcribe this interview: but the interaction is still worthy of analysis in my view because of what these two episodes might tell us about the benefits and limitations of 'researcher-inspired interactions' and the assumptions associated with the preference for analysing 'naturally occurring data'.

A) THE 'HAND CREAM MOMENT'

The first episode occurred towards the end of the interview, when Zaby pulled out a small bottle of Nivea hand cream and offered some to everyone in the group (first referred to verbally in line 437). As the other girls began to avail themselves of her offer, some continued answering my questions. I then explicitly referred to the 'break for hand cream' (line 457), before returning to my list of interview questions. At this point, Gemma took out a small white plastic bottle containing hand cream with no brand name, to the dismay and derision of some of the other girls, especially Zaby (line 474). I present a lengthy transcript of this section of the interview below, which I have divided before and after my comment about the 'break for hand cream':

- 431 CG: D'you think in your school or people your age there's a big range in the amount of money people have got to spend?
- 433 Reena: Yeah (1) yeah
- 434 Becky: Yeah

- 435 Karen: Yeah (1) mm-mm
 436 CG: Even in your school?
 437 Zaby: Here y'are man (1) you need to cream your hands
 438 CG: Have some people got a lot more?
 439 Karen: Many (1) huh
 440 Zaby: Here y'are (1) I'll give you some cream [inaudible] (laughter)
 441 Reena: Go on then (laughs) You wanted some more [basis?] so I'll get it
 442 CG: Some have got a lot more money than others?
 443 Reena: They look a bit crusty
 444 Karen: Yeah they have and they show it
 445 Zaby: But there's nothing wrong with having money people just think there is but it's not (1) it's just cos your parents work more harder than some peoples
 447 Karen: It's not even working harder it just depends on what job you've got
 448 Reena: Yeah
 449 Becky: Some people might not have much money but they've got their favourite job, they've got the job that they always wanted and I don't think
 451 Gemma: (loud) Like (1) did you see Airport yesterday and that man who was always working?
 453 Reena: Yeah, I watched it
 454 Becky: I watched it
 455 Gemma: He's worked there for 20 years, and it's not even an expensive job it's just his dream
 457 CG: Break for hand cream (laughs)

What I have termed the 'hand cream moment' commenced immediately after I had asked a question about the range in the amount of money young people had to spend. In this long extract, I am asking (or attempting to ask) questions from my interview schedule (lines 431–2, 436 and 442), conducting the formal business of the interaction, and (some of) the young women carry on replying. Meanwhile a sub-plot begins as Zaby takes out the bottle of hand cream from her school bag and tells the girls sitting next to her 'you need to cream your hands' (line 437). This is not couched in the form of a request (i.e. 'do you want to cream your hands?'), but an exhortation. Gemma's interventions could be interpreted as an attempt to disrupt my agenda and challenge my authority as an adult and teacher/parent figure. Whatever the possible interpretations of this action, Zaby's general offer of hand cream served to interrupt the 'proper' business of the interview. I showed no apparent disapproval of the sharing of hand cream, although I did ensure that the interview 'proper' continued by carrying on asking the questions on my interview schedule. Zaby's offer of hand cream to me was made non-verbally as was my refusal. I mouthed my thanks to her whilst the other young women were talking (lines 440–1). This information is recorded in my research field-notes, and was not discernable on the audiotape of the interview. Only a video-recording or the use of research field-notes would have been able to record this aspect of the interaction. The silent mouthing of my refusal to share Zaby's hand cream reflects my attempt not to interrupt the

recording of the interview 'proper', also 'managing' the potentially disruptive aspects of Zaby's intervention. This reinforced a distinction between those aspects of the interaction relating to my questions, and those elements revolving around the sharing of hand cream. The young women and myself were involved in both aspects of the interchange at this point. My interjection 'break for hand cream' (line 457), with accompanying laugh to indicate a moment of troubled interaction, indicates a shift in my positioning in relation to the hand cream activity. By drawing attention to the sharing of hand cream instigated by Zaby and enthusiastically engaged in by (most) of the other young women, I enable the sub-plot about hand cream to move to the forefront of the interaction. My relatively powerful position as adult and as interviewer is reflected in this act of sanctioning such a shift: it is unlikely that any of the young women were in a position to bring about such a move.

My question about whether some [people] have got a lot more money than others takes me two attempts to complete (lines 438 and 442). At this point the interaction between the girls 'takes off'. They all speak at once, and in lines 444 to 449, Zaby, Karen and Becky enter an impassioned debate about the existence of economic differentials between young people (and between their parents). This debate revolves around two contrasting propositions: that there is something objectionable about 'some people' having 'a lot more money than others', and that there is 'nothing wrong' with 'having money'. The former position is not stated explicitly: it is reflected in Karen's reply 'yeah they have and they show it' to my question in line 442, and in Zaby's response 'but there is nothing wrong with having money' (line 445). The shadow of the possibility of objecting to these arguments is reflected here in Zaby's use of the term 'but', and her use of the phrase 'people just think there is [something wrong with having money]' in line 445. Zaby justifies such financial differentials by attributing them to the fact that 'your parents work harder than some peoples' (line 445).

Karen counters Zaby's implication that higher income will necessarily result from 'working harder', arguing that it is possible to work extremely hard for low pay, and challenging the equation between hard work and high(er) pay. Becky then attempts to restore the dignity of low-income workers who might be in 'their favourite job', 'the job they always wanted' as a sort of compensation for having little money. Once again, the term 'some people' keeps this group safely at a distance. Gemma then enters the conversation (line 451) talking loudly about a reality TV programme (*Airport*) concerning people working for the budget airline Easyjet. Gemma presents this interjection as an example of a man 'who was always working', not (even) in 'an expensive job', but in his 'dream' job (line 455). Gemma makes her point by talking loudly, gaining the attention of the group (especially Reena and Karen) by asking if they had watched the TV programme *Airport* the previous night.

Throughout this section of the interview (lines 443–54), Zaby, Karen and Reena were sharing Zaby's hand cream, and I wanted to ensure that this interaction was noted on the tape, as well as reflecting on the activity in the context of the interview encounter itself. So my interjection 'break for hand cream' (line 457) was directed in part towards the tape recorder. I would characterize my

comment here as a moment of multiple reflexivity, in which I formally recognized the sharing of hand cream as a part of the interaction, both to the young women and to the tape recorder, with the latter serving as a representative of the research process. I also made this interjection in the hope that it might encourage the young women to move into a discussion of the sharing of hand cream, which is what happened in the next section of the interview:

- 457 CG: Break for hand cream (laughs)
 458 Zaby: Yeah (1) I have to have cream in my bag (1) and deodorant
 459 Reena: She's always [inaudible]
 460 Karen: Don't be horrible
 461 Zaby: You have to have cream and deodorant in your bag
 462 Reena: Zaby is a bit [inaudible]
 463 Karen: Yep (laughs)
 464 CG: Are there particular things that (1) say if you want to keep your style up and you haven't got enough money (1) what do you do?
 466 Zaby: Beg
 467 Gemma: Ask my dad
 468 Karen: Ask mum (1) if she says no I go to my dad but I don't do it often cos it causes arguments
 470 Reena: What I do (1) is just like (1) I wait (2) I'll get it eventually
 471 Karen: Or I just mix some different clothes (1) or just look at it
 472 Zaby: And think OK I'll just put different clothes together
 473 Gemma: (loud, interrupts) I want to cut some too short jeans to make some shorts
 474 Zaby: You need to get some proper cream
 475 Gemma: That is proper cream (indignant)
 476 Zaby: No it's not
 477 Karen: It's Nivea cream that you need
 478 (All talk at once)
 479 Karen: You need a proper bottle
 480 Gemma: I've got a proper bottle
 481 Zaby: You need proper (1) like Nivea (1) that's like cheap your make
 482 Reena: I've got Nivea
 483 Karen: Yeah (1) but shopping (1) it's the shops you go in you see
 484 Gemma: I don't like shopping (1) it wears me out
 485 Becky: Sorry Miss (2) shhhh [to other girls]
 486 Zaby: I can't stand people that go to one shop and then
 487 Gemma: [inaudible]
 488 Zaby: I suppose they know what they want to get (1) but

Here Zaby indicates in line 461 (to me and the rest of the group) that 'you have to have cream and deodorant in your bag', constituting these items as necessities rather than as luxury items. In line 464 I return to my interview questions, asking about how the young women might 'keep your style up' if money is limited. They respond with a range of different possible strategies familiar from other interviews in this study (Griffin et al., 2005). Once again Gemma interrupts loudly (at line 473), with a statement about wanting to cut down a pair of jeans to make shorts. By this time, Gemma had brought out her

own bottle of hand cream in an unmarked and unbranded white plastic bottle. Zaby then dismisses this with the order that Gemma needs to 'get some proper cream' (line 474), thereby constituting Gemma's unbranded hand cream as less than 'proper'. Gemma forcefully disputes this in line 480 ('I've got a proper bottle'), but she is in a minority of one, and the other girls all support Zaby. When Reena moves in to support Zaby as another user of 'proper' (i.e. branded, specifically Nivea) hand cream (line 482), Gemma shifts into defensive mode (line 484), trying to explain (away) her use of an unbranded hand cream with reference to her dislike of shopping: 'I don't like shopping (1) it wears me out'. This is not a strong point to make in your defence faced with a united group of young female consumers, and another girl (Becky in line 485) begins to close off the discussion. She apologizes to me, telling the others to 'ssh' and calling them to order. Zaby closes the episode with the statement that 'I can't stand people that go to one shop and then', which is followed by an inaudible word from Gemma, and the dismissive 'I suppose they know what they want to get but' from Zaby (line 488). Zaby's statements here carry an unspoken implication that the people she 'can't stand' are not engaged in desirable or suitable shopping practices and/or do not constitute good shoppers.

Elsewhere, we have noted the importance for young women of displaying one's purchases of branded goods (or even branded carrier bags from specific shops) as evidence of one's status as a consuming subject (Griffin et al., 2006). In addition, this interaction could be viewed as a dispute between the young women about how to 'do' contemporary youthful femininity, and as an example of none too subtle peer pressure regarding the appropriate feminine consumption practices. For the purposes of this article, however, I am more interested in the implication of this encounter for the arguments discussed above concerning the potential benefits and difficulties associated with research interviews compared with 'naturalistic records'.

Some elements of this interaction might be characterized as 'etic' or as shaped by my research questions and by the demands of the interview process: for example, the young women's interchanges in response to my interview questions. Other elements might be characterized as 'emic', or working from the young women's perspective. Zaby's offer of hand cream is such an example of a piece of discursive 'business' (or a shared cultural practice, depending on one's analytic and theoretical perspective) that emerged from the agenda of (some of) the young women participating in this interview. From my perspective, it is the continual interactions between my research agenda and the agendas of the young women participating in the interview discussed in this article that form an important focus for the analysis. If the research agenda is reflected (at least in part) by my interview questions and young women's various responses in relation to those questions, then the sharing of hand cream might be viewed as reflecting the perspective of (some of) the young women. My statement 'break for hand cream' acknowledges the meeting point of these agendas, and what follows as an intermingling of what could be viewed as 'etic' and 'emic' elements of the interaction. However, even this is a somewhat crude and unhelpful distinction, and I would not want to constitute the 'hand cream moment' as 'natural'

in contrast to more 'artificial' interchanges around my research questions, nor to view the young women's responses to my questions as reflecting their 'real' views about consumption and money.

For me, one of the potential benefits of research interviews is that the researcher is present, and this allows for the possibility of a meeting between the perspectives and agendas of the interviewer (and hence of the assumptions around which the research process is constructed), and those of the interviewees. The analytic process would ideally aim to reflect and focus on those points at which the agendas and perspectives of interviewers and interviewees interact. I would argue that both the interactions relating to my research questions and the 'hand cream moment' can tell us something about the research process, about my position as an interviewer, and about the role of consumption and branding in young women's positioning through the distinctively feminine cultural practice of sharing hand cream. The 'hand cream moment' played out an interaction between the young women (and between the young women and me) in which questions of status and power were paramount (Milner, 2004). This was closely related to the branding of commodities, and illustrated the way in which commodities, branding, identity, status and power can be played out in everyday 'researcher-inspired' interactions (Elliott and Wattanasuwan, 1998).

Although there is insufficient space here for even a partial analysis of this process, the fact that such an episode occurred in a 'research-inspired interaction' of this kind does not necessarily invalidate the value of the insights such material can provide for researchers with an interest in discourse analysis. Whilst it would be a mistake to discount my presence as having no impact on the girls' actions in the research encounter, it would be equally foolish to view them as *solely* produced for my benefit, and then to dismiss them as unworthy of consideration in analytic terms. The analytic focus of the Young Consumers study is on the discourses the young people (and the research team) draw on to discuss these issues, and how they (and their parents, teachers and friends) are positioned in such discursive formations. The key point here is that *both* those aspects of the interview encounter that appeared to be dominated by my research agenda, *and* those sections that reflected the young women's agenda can provide a valuable focus for discourse analysis.

B) 'WAVING THE FLAG'

A later section of this interview involved the visual display of signs and symbols reflected in the young women's clothing and in other objects that indicated a significance beyond the immediate context of the research encounter. What I have referred to as the 'flag-waving episode' could not strictly be defined as an episode, since it ran throughout the course of the same interview, but the extract quoted later was the only time the relevance of the flag was mentioned explicitly.

This interview took place on 26 June in the middle of the 2002 World Cup, which was held for the first time in South Korea and Japan. England had lost a significant match against Brazil on 21 June (score 1–2), putting England out of the World Cup. This also deprived England of a possible final against Germany,

which would have been a replay of the iconic World Cup final in 1966, which England won. Brazil went on to win the 2002 World Cup, beating Germany 2–0. For those with any knowledge of the relationship between national identity, racism, ethnicity and football, this was a tense and significant moment that still had resonances over two years later. In a newspaper column discussing the pressures on the England team manager Sven Göran Eriksson and captain David Beckham prior to the World Cup qualifying match against Poland in September 2004, a sports journalist in *The Independent* newspaper described the England–Brazil World Cup quarter-final in June 2002 as follows: ‘one of the most important games in the nation’s football history’ (Lawton, 2004: 56).

Throughout the interview, Zaby was twirling a small (approximately 1” by 0.5”) hand-made Brazil flag between her fingers on the table in front of her. The flag, constructed of coloured paper attached to a matchstick, was directly opposite me across the table, and the only other object on the table apart from my tape recorder and microphone. Sitting on my immediate right, and two seats to the left of Zaby, Gemma was wearing a T-shirt bearing a large printed version of the England flag (i.e. a red cross on a white ground) that entirely covered the front of the garment, including the sleeves. The World Cup quarter-final match between England and Brazil was therefore present in a very obvious way throughout the course of the interview, but only at a visual level. It only entered the verbal realm of the interaction at the end of the interview, when I purposely asked a question about young people’s interest in the tournament that was not on my interview schedule (line 498).

I asked this question in recognition of Zaby twirling her hand-made Brazil flag, Gemma’s England T-shirt, and my own awareness of the potential significance of the England–Brazil match a few days previously. In other words, the potential significance of nationalism, ethnicity and national identity in relation to football were all ‘flagged’ by young women’s actions *within* the context of the research interview and *outside* of it in the national press, on TV, and elsewhere. It would therefore be a mistake to view my question about the World Cup as an example of an etic approach. I present a brief extract from this discussion below:

- 498 CG: Has everybody (1) um been into the World Cup?
 499 Zaby: Yeah definitely (emphatic)
 500 (all talk at once)
 501 Karen: Even my mom’s watching it
 502 Gemma: We watched the match
 503 Zaby: Brazil, Brazil (chanting in background)
 504 Karen: I need to watch my man Ronaldo
 505 Gemma: We scored the first goal (loud)
 506 Zaby: Yeah but who scored two?
 507 Karen: Who lost (1) who lost (jumbled talking)

My question ‘has everyone been into the World Cup?’ is initially treated as a direct question, but the young women swiftly moved into references to ‘the match’, and a declaration of allegiances. The response from the young women was immediate and intense: they all spoke at once and this next section was extremely difficult to transcribe. ‘Everybody’ is responded to with a forceful ‘yeah’,

followed by references to 'even my mom' (line 501), as epitomizing the least likely person to be a follower of the World Cup. This is followed by immediate references to watching 'the match', though who constitutes 'we' for Gemma here is unspecified (line 502). No-one needs to explain to me that this match refers to the England–Brazil game, and Zaby takes up a 'Brazil, Brazil' chant to emphasize her allegiance in this contest (line 503). By line 504, Karen is aligning herself not just with the Brazil team, but with 'my man Ronaldo', a prominent Brazil player. Gemma counters this by almost shouting 'we scored the first goal' (line 505), a reference to England's first (and only) goal in the match. Here Gemma's reference to the English 'we' could be seen to include the England team, England supporters, and possibly the 'English' nation (line 509).

Later in the interview, the girls refer to the different groups of pupils supporting the England and Brazil teams:

- 523 Gemma: (loud) England is the best. ENGL-A-A-ND (shouts)
 524 Zaby: If they're so good then how come they've only won the World Cup once and they're out?
 526 Gemma: Because injuries we've always had [all talk at once] all our people have had (inaudible)
 528 Zaby: Ssh
 529 CG: In the class as a whole though?
 530 Karen: Most people the majority support England [inaudible]
 531 Zaby: Most of the like most of the black girls in the school support er Brazil
 532 Reena: Brazil
 533 Zaby: All these lot reckon just cos you live in England you should support them

Gemma shouts a pro-England football chant that cuts into the conversation about the England team's loss of the crucial match against Brazil (line 523). This is challenged by Zaby's rhetorical question about England's subsequent exit from the tournament and the team's generally poor performance in previous World Cup contests (line 524), which Gemma attempts to excuse. My question (line 529) refers back to my earlier query (on line 498 earlier), but again Becky takes it as a question about which team most pupils support (line 530). Zaby and Karen then racialize the pupils' support for Brazil (and therefore England) by stating that the allegiance of 'most of the black girls in the school' lies with Brazil (lines 531–2). Zaby's disparaging reference to the views of 'this lot', presumably referring to Gemma and the other (white) England supporters in the school, echoes Norman Tebbit's statement about the allegiance of Black Britons to cricket teams from India, Pakistan or the West Indies rather than England. Zaby rejects the notion that she should support the England team just because she lives in the country.

Very few, if any, of the black students at this school are likely to have parents from Brazil or South America: their stated allegiance to the Brazil team and Zaby's waving of her hand-made Brazil flag cannot therefore be attributed to a common cultural heritage or ethnic origin. It might be viewed as a matter of racialized allegiance to the primary football team from the Southern hemisphere

that is capable of beating teams from the affluent North on a regular basis, not only in relation to the England–Brazil game, but throughout the 2002 World Cup as a whole. The England team of 2002 included a substantial proportion of Black players, unlike the iconic (and all white) team that won the World Cup in 1966. However, this is clearly not sufficient to attract the allegiance of ‘most of the black girls in the school’. The England and Brazil flags displayed by Gemma and Zaby throughout the course of the interview encounter therefore have considerable significance for the young women in terms of the constitution of their national, cultural and racial identities. This does not necessarily imply that Zaby and Karen and the other black girls in the school do not identify as British, but they do refuse to align themselves as England supporters under the cross of St George. Given the appropriation of the England flag in recent years by far right racist groups, this is hardly surprising.

The flag-waving episode is a clear example of the mundane way in which nationhood and national identity is ‘flagged’ in everyday encounters, as Billig argued in *Banal Nationalism* (1995). The association of such practices with consumption is more marked in 2002 than it was in 1966. Football is now an increasingly lucrative global business, a focus for the commodification and branding of specific players (Ronaldo and Beckham are now internationally recognized ‘brands’) and teams. British Asian girls in Birmingham can have a meaningful allegiance to the Brazil team, just as many young people in South East Asia are fervent supporters of Manchester United: and all these groups provide a profitable market for expensive football strips.

Concluding comments

In summary, then, I have used these two examples from one research interview to illustrate my argument that some of the assumptions about the inherent limitations of research interviews made by CA and DP researchers are either overly simplistic or only relevant when viewed from the distinctive perspective of CA and DP. In both the ‘hand cream moment’ and the ‘flag-waving episode’, the interactions involved practices that did not apparently emerge directly in response to my interview questions, although the issues at stake were sometimes closely related to the topic under investigation. In both cases, I was aware that ‘something else’ was going on in addition to those parts of the interaction related to the research interview. In both instances, I made sure that these ‘other events’ were reflected in the tape-recorded talk that would become the material transcribed for use in subsequent data analysis – and so did the young women. My aim in this article is first to counter the tendency in CA and DP to assess all qualitative research in psychology according to the logic of the CA/DP approach to research. Second, I have used examples from the Young Consumers study to make the case for the creative potential of the researcher’s presence as an active part of the research encounter and the value offered by a reflexive analysis of such interactions.

So what might be the significance of the hand cream moment and the flag-waving incident for the young women involved in the research interview?

I would argue that they represent the sort of everyday cultural practices through which the meanings of consumption and branding, nationhood and identity are inscribed for young people. It would be a mistake to dismiss the young women's talk in relation to the hand cream moment or the flag-waving episode as of questionable value for research analysis. I am not arguing here that the hand cream moment is an example of 'naturalistic' interaction as distinct from the rest of the research interview: far from it. I view all of this interaction as part of 'everyday life', but produced in a specific context, and inspired by the agenda of the Young Consumers research project. However, although my interview questions and my research agenda form a part of this context: they do not determine the whole interaction. Part of that context relates to the conditions of the immediate local interaction, issues of positioning, stake and interest associated with the study are of obvious relevance here. However, the broader ideological and discursive context also plays a part, related to pervasive discourses about consumption, youth, femininity, status and money, and to the constitution of nationhood and ethnicity in the flag-waving incident.

In both of these episodes my research agenda intertwined with the young women's interests and practices. It would be a mistake to view *all* aspects of this interaction as 'got up' solely for my benefit, or as of questionable value for research analysis regardless of one's perspective or research agenda. From the perspective of my own work, research interviews including an element of systematic observation in which the researcher engages as an active and reflexive participant have been preferable to the analysis of material in which the researcher aims to have minimal involvement. As a researcher, I want to 'be there', to engage with participants and to record and witness what happens (however imperfectly) when my agenda meets theirs.

In Ian Hacking's discussion of 'intervening' and 'representing' as two key topics central to the philosophy of science, he considers the debates contrasting the value of experimentation (or intervention) and conceptual speculation as routes to knowledge (Hacking, 1983). Hacking contrasts the Aristotelian preference for deduction from first principles with Francis Bacon's revolutionary argument during the 17th century that in order to know the world we must also 'twist the lion's tail, that is, manipulate our world in order to learn its secrets' (p. 149). The debate about the role of interpretation in the relationship between theory (viewed as an armchair-based activity) and experiment (viewed as an active intervention in the world) is not equivalent to the positions taken by Potter and Hepburn or Hammersley (or myself) on the value of research interviews compared to the analysis of naturalistic records. However, there are some useful parallels.

Both debates are concerned with an important topic in the philosophy and practice of science and research: namely, the role of the researcher in relation to the world we wish to learn more about, and the nature of interpretation, representation and intervention. In many ways these issues are intractable: there are no correct answers to be found. However, researchers must adopt a position in relation to such questions if they wish to engage in research of any kind. Whilst this article examines a series of debates in the field of qualitative, critical and

discursive psychology, these issues are certainly not restricted to this area alone (Clifford and Marcus, 1986; Hammersley, 2003). My principal argument here is not to advocate the benefits of research interviews over the collection and analysis of naturalistic records. Rather, I have questioned the prevailing assumption in some areas of discursive psychology that naturalistic records should form the primary and default approach to qualitative research in psychology, and especially the notion that researchers should adopt a particular position in relation to the world they wish to learn more about: that of the 'dead social scientist'.

There are powerful reasons to (attempt to) adopt such a position in particular instances, especially when using certain conceptual and analytic approaches associated with CA and DP. However, it would be a great mistake to view all qualitative research through this lens. I hope that qualitative research in psychology will always have a central place for those social researchers who set out to engage with (though not overtly manipulate) the world in order to learn more about it, who acknowledge that their presence might 'shake things up' to some extent, and who ask awkward questions on occasion: in other words, those social researchers who aim to 'be there' rather than to be 'dead'. It would be a great shame if the activities of those 'engaged' researchers discussed in this article were marginalized to the fringes of qualitative psychology research as a consequence of being judged according to criteria that are more appropriate for those adopting the 'dead social scientist' approach.

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NOTES

1. I am referring here to Ashmore and Reed's useful schematic distinction between 'the Event, the Tape, the Transcript, the Analysis and the Article' (2000: 3). Although Ashmore and Reed present this distinction as part of their 'insider critique of CA' (p. 18), it is useful for my purposes when referring to a wider range of qualitative research in psychology.
2. In this study it is unclear whether any of the participants had given consent for their talk to be used as part of a research project, although consent had been obtained from gatekeepers in the relevant institutions.
3. Not all qualitative psychology research involving research interviews and/or systematic observation necessarily operates from a realist perspective. Some such studies locate themselves within a 'critical psychology' or 'critical realist' framework (e.g. Parker et al., 1999; Willig, 2001); whilst others are shaped by feminist and post-structuralist perspectives (e.g. Wilkinson and Kitzinger, 1995; Walkerdine, 1996) and/or psychoanalytic theory (e.g. Hollway and Jefferson, 2001; Frosh et al., 2002). Other approaches have been shaped by forms of liberation psychology, with its emphasis on working towards social and political change, but also adopting a critical perspective on the prevailing assumptions embedded in such perspectives (e.g. Christlieb, 2003; Montero, 2003).


4. As with many of the WF research team, the political situation in Austria intervened in Marie Jahoda's life following her involvement in the Marienthal study. During the late 1930s she was arrested and interrogated by the fascist Austrian State police, and only released into exile after appeals at the highest level. Marie Jahoda eventually entered the UK as a stateless refugee, or what would now be referred to as an 'asylum seeker' (Fryer, 1987).
5. Billig was writing during the 'Gulf War' of 1991, when US and other forces invaded Iraq following Saddam Hussein's invasion of nearby Kuwait. In 2003, US, British and other forces invaded Iraq again, this time without the agreement of the United Nations. By September 2005, about 1000 American service personnel and many more Iraqis had died in what Tony Blair referred to as 'the second Iraq War'.
6. The Young Consumers study was funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (award no. R000239287).
7. The study was described to the young women in a written consent form that was handed out immediately prior to the interview. It is not possible to assume that all of the young people we interviewed – or their parents – necessarily read this material, but we did repeat this basic description of the study verbally to all participants at the start of each interview.
8. The process of transcription involved an initial transcription by Pat Evans, the main transcriber of the Birmingham interviews, a second attempt at a more detailed transcription by JH, followed by my repeated attempts at a fuller transcription.
9. We have kept the transcripts as simple as possible, following the conventions used in Frosh et al. (2002). Throughout, the interviewer is referred to as CG. Short pauses are given as (1), while pauses of more than a second are given as (2) for two-second pause, and so on. Utterances that are emphasized in the talk are underlined, and those spoken at higher volume are written in upper case.

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