

The Discursive Social-Psychology of Evidence: The Levin-Chambers Case

Salomon Rettig

Hunter College

Discursive social psychology is used here to study the reconstruction of an event, a homicide, by lay people. Fourteen propositions are outlined to guide discourse analysis, since the epistemological basis of such analysis is somewhat different from that of formal experimental inquiry. An actual discourse is then analyzed, with special emphasis on the evidence used to support the final conclusion of guilt.

The question addressed here is that of what makes everyday understanding of social reality possible. Inquiry into the perception of social reality is ever more urgent since much of the evidence on which it is based comes from unreliable sources, (e.g., mass media). What type of evidence do people actually use in their perceptions of everyday reality?

Linguistic studies of evidential reasoning have largely been confined to non-Western cultures. These studies have constructed a set of cognitive maps of evidential meaning for a variety of different languages (Anderson, 1986). Other studies have shown that the use of intention as a criterion of evidential reasoning seems to be culture-bound (DuBois, 1986). Social psychological studies of attributions have confined evidential reasoning to such causal factors as consensus, distinctiveness, and consistency. These factors are tested systematically in vignettes administered in human laboratories (Hansen and Donoghue, 1977; Ross, Green, and House, 1977). However, empirical studies of the actual usage of evidential indicators in ordinary discourse do not seem to be easily available. The epistemological base of discursive social psychology differs somewhat from other types of inquiry, both linguistic and experimental (Potter and Wetherell, 1987). Hence several conceptual guidelines for its study are proposed here.

According to Heider (1958) three components are embedded in all forms of social perception: (a) control over one's environment, (b) its evaluation, and (c) communion (communication) between persons. Discursive communications embody all three. However Farr and Moscovici (1984), going beyond Heider, argue that social psychology is concerned with the conversion of the unstructured into the structured, of transmuting "the base metal of our ideas into the gold of our reality . . . of concepts into objects, or into people . . . which is the true purpose of our science as distinct from other sciences" (p. 19). Perhaps it is the discursive process which evaluates and transforms perceptions and cognitions into *organs* of reality by constructing symbolic forms which become the objects of our intellectual grasp of reality (Cassirer, 1946).

The following fourteen theoretical propositions constitute a conceptual guideline to discursive inquiry. The propositions are followed by an actual discourse about a homicide, the murder of Jennifer Levin, a widely publicized case of sexual assault in New York City. The discourse was recorded openly by a student-experimenter, with the full knowledge and consensus of the participants.¹ The student-experimenter freely participated in the conversation.

The analysis of the discourse is primarily concerned with the identification of the different evidential indicators (evidentials) used by the participants in their reconstruction of the homicide. Evidentials are arguments which relate a statement to some form of warrant for the statement. The reason for focusing on evidential indicators is that any construction of reality must begin with the evidence on which it is based. Of special interest in the present analysis is the selection process of evidentials in the absence of direct observation (no outsider actually witnessed the killing). Ordinary conversations frequently lack direct empirical evidence, yet agreements about what happened are reached. Such agreements have real consequences such as the determination of culpability (*mens rea*).

Theoretical Propositions

Proposition 1

The social situation reveals itself in the person-to-person discursive "text" produced during an encounter, a text being that which requires a reading and an understanding. The basic assumption of this proposition is that human beings cannot know their world except through symbolic expressions, especially language. That is the way all forms of knowledge are gained. Symbolic

¹The author wishes to express his gratitude to Marie Parnes for her assistance in obtaining the discourse.

expressions constitute reality (Cassirer, 1946), especially when consensually validated (Rettig, 1988).

Proposition 2

The aim of discursive analysis is to understand, that is, to gain *intelligibility* rather than prediction and control. Hence, meaning rather than time and space provide the coordinates for the construction of social reality. Intelligibility is achieved by a bi-directional recursive search for implication, rather than by a unidirectional (antecedent-consequence) order of causality. (If B implies A rather than being caused by A, it does not preclude the possibility that A also implies B, however A cannot then be caused by B.)

The understanding of a social fact derives from the evidential criteria offered by a speaker. Hence a *relationship exists between evidence and meaning which lies at the base of the everyday social reality construction of lay persons.*

Proposition 3

There is a recognition and appreciation of the textual richness (variability) in the production of the interpersonal discourse. Such variability is indicative of the spontaneity of the text production. Yet it also discloses perceptual constancies which constrain it. Speakers switch phrases and expressions to make something clear, yet their perceptions are invariant. Hence, textual versatility actually serves coherence.

Proposition 4

Discourse is an act of *mutual construction*, the construction of a shared social reality (Berger and Luckman, 1966). Initially discourse triggers a dynamic between a speaker and a listener, for example, an expectation that a questioner necessarily has evidence for the questions he/she asked (Swann and Giuliano, 1982). Discursive construction, however, fuses the evidential reasoning of two or more persons into "dyadic units" (Sears, 1951). This process entails dialectic accommodations and assimilations of contrary perceptions.

Proposition 5

Other persons are indispensable "empirical objects" to be perceived, comprehended, and discursively assimilated. However, the aim of discursive constructions is less that of portraying physical reality than that of constructing a social reality in which persons can safely and comfortably move about.

Discursive evidence is rarely confined to physical or behavioral observations.

Proposition 6

The initial encounter is often asymmetrical and unstable because information (and power) is unevenly distributed. The uneven distribution in information frequently is the reason for the encounter in the first place. The encounter then engages recursive strategies which stabilize perceptions and observations. At that point fact is separated from artifact and reality established. This process has been observed in different scientific laboratories (Knorr, 1980; Latour and Woolgar, 1986; Lynch, 1985).

Proposition 7

The critical point in discursive construction is the attainment of uncoerced consensus, a meeting of minds (Habermas, 1971; Rettig, 1988). Even where dissent and disagreements are more the order of the day, to make them coherent requires some common understandings. Consensus is accomplished gradually, by moving over an already agreed upon, often tacit track of mutual understandings.

Proposition 8

The attainment of uncoerced consensus through a meeting of minds is emancipatory (Habermas, 1981). It makes the perceptions of social reality a shared actuality. Such shared perceptions provide relative stability, solidarity, and interpersonal safety. These stabilizing factors leave the individual free to pursue other interests. More importantly, establishing consensus is a necessary first step for further progress.

Proposition 9

The construction of reality is a continuous process, engaging newly constructive as well as reconstructive efforts with every encounter. The progressive need for new understandings is brought about by changing circumstances, different discursive partners, and constantly evolving new information. These events create new perceptions and renegotiations of prior understandings.

Proposition 10

Discursive construction is not a purely rational process since it entails non-linear (bi-directional), non-logical (contradictory yet mutually inclusive), as well as affectively charged reasoning (Feyerabend, 1984; Kuhn, 1962).

Proposition 11

The discursive paradigm does not differentiate between *manifest* (e.g., behavior) and *latent* (e.g., perceptions, cognitions) processes (Potter and Whetherell, 1987). Hence, discourse analysis does not try to objectively and isomorphically represent an external world. Objectivity is achieved by discursive means such as agreement, critique, and joint reconstruction of events. Discursive processes do construct a logical and conceptual order of some sort, but not necessarily that of a physically integrated world. Its order resembles more a purposive, means-ends type of world hypothesis (Pepper, 1967).

Also not posited is the existence of a mind which drives the discourse. A separate and distinct concept of mind, as distinguished from that of intentional speech, evidential reasoning, and construction of meaning does not add to an understanding of discourse. Hence, proposition 11 makes discursive social psychology a form of post-positive *textual behaviorism*.

Proposition 12

Discursive construction is an active methexic (participatory) rather than a mimetic (copying) process. Methexic knowledge construction resembles ". . . a process that involves a teacher, a pupil and a (social) situation shared by both; the result, knowledge, can only be understood by those who participated in it" (Feyerabend, 1988, p. 162).

Proposition 13

Discursive construction is highly contextual, deeply embedded in the moment and locus of the social encounter. It is not merely a matter of not taking words or sentences out of context. Discursive construction is precisely the very process of placing words, sentences, pauses, and intonations into certain mutually negotiated positions and sequences during a conversation. Context here translates into a *co-text* (Latour, 1988) produced by multiple speakers.

Proposition 14

To study discursive reality construction nomothetically is to predict (reconstruct) from a given discourse (e.g., the relationship between the participants, their personality characteristics, their attribution processes, forms of stereotyping, sexism, racism, as well as the person perceptions of the observers and/or participants, and more). Such research reveals which aspects of the discursive exchange are interpretatively indexed to the perceived social

relationship, personality, or attribution, and how such indexing varies systematically with the characteristics of the speakers, listeners, and observers. Such reconstructive study leaves the question of the nomotheticity of discursive social psychology open to empirical investigation (Rettig, 1988).

Discourse Analysis

In the following pages an actual discourse on murder is presented: The Levin-Chambers case. The conversation takes place between a mother [M], a father [F], and a daughter [D]. The discourse is verbatim and took place in the home. The italicized parts of the analysis identify the various evidentials. (Further classification of evidentials requires the analysis of various discourses across different events, research that is now in progress.)

Discourse

Text	Analysis
D [daughter]: "Did you see the article in <i>People</i> magazine on Robert Chambers?"	Factual query on a "hot" topic, a murder.
M [mother]: "Yeah"	Factual reply yet interest in pursuing the topic is not stated.
D: "I thought it was very interesting. What did you think?"	Motive for query is presented, query repeated. [These introductory questions serve as initiating conditions of the discourse, triggering an unpredictable outcome.]
F [father]: "Well I did not read it. But I did read about this in the newspaper, and I drew my own conclusions on what I read."	Arousal of interest: correction about evidential source, strong assertion of self as source of knowledge [perhaps defensive about not having read magazine article?].
D: "What did you feel? Was it a fair sentence?"	Leading, by normative inquiry on fairness.
F: "No, I don't think it was fair. It was forced upon the court by public attention. It was taken far out of context and made larger than it really was and it was something that could have happened to any young person under similar circumstances. They [the courts] brought in background and made it a class issue of Chambers coming from upward mobility when in fact he did not. They made him	Taking anti-media position by <i>consensual</i> evidential [public coercion of the court], alluding to the corruptibility of the legal system. Evidential amplified [there was exaggeration] but by whom is not made clear—the courts, the media, the public? Additional <i>consensual</i> evidential [could happen to anyone]; denial of <i>historical-social</i> evidential [background]; denial of <i>categorical</i> evidential [preppie]; ir-

into a 'preppie' . . . They took issues and brought in various aspects that did not relate to the incident itself."

D: "So you felt that the sentence was too harsh?"

F: "Yeah . . . it was unreal. It should not have been that harsh."

D: "What do you think were his intentions? Do you think he murdered Jennifer Levin?"

F: "No, his intent was not to murder her. I don't think he went to the park with intent to cause physical harm. I think it was two individuals who were somewhat intoxicated with alcohol who went for a sexual encounter and got lost in the situation and uhhhh . . . I believe she has a large part in contributing to the situation. Uhhhh . . . That he was made a scapegoat because of what transpired because of the public and media attention that was brought to it. I really don't think that murder was his intent."

D: "So what do you think, M? Have you read the article? Have you followed the case?"

M: "Yes, I have been following the case with a great deal of interest. I feel the sentence was very unique. He obviously went there [to the park]; he was angry at her from what the article said. He was with his girlfriend [at the bar] and he went to the park with Levin. So I assume he went to the park to hurt her. I mean what would be the other reason? But I do think . . . uuhhh . . . I don't think that he meant to kill her; but he did intend to harm her."

D: "Basically you feel that he was angry at Jennifer because she caused his girlfriend to get angry at him and . . ." [interrupted]

M: "Levin caused a rift between him and his girlfriend and he was not

relevance of media manufactured [brought in] evidentials.

Leading inquiry by questioning verdict.

Agreement, justified by the lack of realism about the situation [supporting earlier misgivings].

Query about *intentional* evidential [intent to kill].

Denying *intentional* evidential; citing *prepositional* evidential [alcohol]; *motivational* evidential [sex]; *happstantial* evidential [situation]; and *consensual* evidential [shared responsibility] to counterweight intention.

Leading third party who had been listening.

Joining the conversation, denying *intentional* evidential to kill; but citing *motivational* evidential to harm and hurt due to anger and presence of girlfriend.

Leading, by repeating evidentials.

Citation of *historical-behavioral* evidential [prior sex, dating, rift] and

actively pursuing her [Levin]. Obviously, they had sexual relations previously, or had dated. But he obviously went . . . uhhh . . . he was angry and did not go for sex but went to hurt her because he was angry."

F: [yelling] "That does not make sense! I doubt he could control himself to the point where they could take a 15-minute walk to the park so he could beat her up. That doesn't make sense!"

M: [indignant] "I did not say that he was going to beat her up. But I think that he was angry at her and was going to humiliate her."

F: "I can't see that he would go to that extent to humiliate her. He would have done that at the bar publicly by refusing her or refuting her. I can't see that—it doesn't make sense to me that he had to go to that extent. Both of them were involved and it got carried away, and something happened at the time and he lost his temper. It happens in a great number of situations in any relationship."

D: "I just . . . uhhh, I'm not sure about this. He was a cocaine abuser. That night, did they establish whether he used cocaine?"

F: "They established that he had used it, but not that night."

D: "There is no evidence that he used it that night? Did they examine his state of mind when he killed Levin? I'm not sure. . . ." [interrupted]

F: "Well I . . ." [interrupted]

M: "I work with the police and they said all of that is inadmissible in court. It's not what the situation was. I think when they picked him up and showed part of the videotape he showed no remorse."

D: "That is a big factor in the public's

emotional evidential [anger] as basis for hurting Levin.

Anger, nullification of partner, citing *behavioral* evidential [loss of control] to infer irrationality.

Modification of position by denying *behavioral* evidential [beating], but maintaining *emotional-motivational* evidential [anger, desire to humiliate].

Disagreeing by citing *counter-behavioral* evidential using locale [could have humiliated at the bar]; and *consensual* evidential [both involved, happens in any relationship]; *happenstantial* [carried away]; and *emotional* [loss of temper] evidentials.

Questioning *consensual* evidential; introducing new *dispositional* evidential [drug user], inquiry into *behavioral* evidential [did he use it].

Stating irrelevance by citing *behavioral* counter-evidential [did not use it that night].

Attempt to re-establish *dispositional* evidential [state of mind], but questioning own position.

Authoritative [pragmatic] evidential [work with police, drug use evidence inadmissible]; *emotional* evidential [no remorse].

Agreeing with *emotional* [no remorse]

mind that no remorse was shown by him. I think. . . ." [interrupted by F]

F: [agitated—speaking to M] "How do you know that he has no remorse? Because he did not show it openly like the way we want him? Because he isn't crying or banging his head against the wall? I mean he could be torn up inside and he does not show it on the outside. . . . I can't condemn him for not being remorseful. The fact that he sat there at the park for a few hours watching what transpired made me believe that he was in total shock about what's happened."

D: "So?" [interrupted by F]

F: "He couldn't really believe what happened and didn't know how to handle it."

D: "You feel that is why he lied intentionally about his whereabouts that night, because he was in shock?"

F: "Yeah, he did not know how to handle it. That's acceptable. He doesn't want to go up and admit it and say 'I'm guilty and punish me.' His actions are understandable if put into appropriate context. I don't condemn him for not confessing or lying. Most of us would react the same way."

D: "Oh God. Thats . . ." [interrupted by M].

M: "I don't agree with your assessment of him. He was implicated in many burglaries. He was a drug abuser. This is not your average kid next door that got carried away with a couple of drinks and sex. This is a guy who has a different kind of personality. He could be calculating enough, because of his background, to bring this girl to the park to humiliate her and to hurt her. Maybe he did not want to murder her; but he went with the intent to harm her."

F: "As far as his conduct prior to

and *consensual* evidential [public mind].

Evidential inquiry challenging *emotional* evidential [lack of remorse]; suggesting alternative *emotional* evidential [torn inside, shock]; *behavioral* evidential [sitting in park].

Challenge for inference.

Continues, citing *cognitive* [could not believe] and *behavioral* evidentials [could not handle it].

Questioning inference of *intentional* evidential [lying] from *emotional* one [shock].

Modifying position by citing *behavioral* [not know how to handle it, not go and admit it]; *contextual* [not in appropriate context]; and *consensual* evidentials [most would react similarly]; hence acceptable and understandable.

Emotional exclamation.

Disagreement, citing *behavioral-historical* evidential [drug abuser]; appeal to unique *ideographic-dispositional* evidential [calculating personality]; and *intentional* evidential [to hurt and humiliate . . . but not murder].

Denial of relevance of *ideographic-*

that, it does not mean he had an antisocial personality. That can't be implicated as the reason for what he did to Jennifer Levin."

D: "M is saying that he had a deviant personality and that this was related to this incident; and you feel one does relate to the other?"

F: "That's right!"

M: "Yes . . . [yelling to F]. He had a character flaw. The cocaine use shows the kind of character he is and it is related to this case."

F: "No!"

M: [yelling] "Someone that can break into people's homes and steal has a flaw in their character."

F: [somewhat surprised] "Yes, but it does not mean that they are violent."

M: "His cocaine habit has altered his personality to a degree that it made him that forceful to hurt this girl."

F: "What's to say that Levin. . ." [interrupted by M].

M: "Levin may have been sexually aggressive; but she went with the intent to have sex; he went with intent to hurt her."

D: "Well then, F, you feel that the sentence was too harsh?"

F: "I feel there was not intent. A criminal act transpired, but it was totally unintentional. I believe she was partly responsible. I don't think it was manslaughter. I think it was negligence. The punishment of 5 to 15 years is out of character."

D: "And you feel, M, that he had intent and he was angry and wanted to hurt her?"

M: "Yes, the sentence is very fair. . . .

dispositional evidential [not antisocial].

Restatement of *ideographic-dispositional* evidential [deviant personality] and its subsequent denial of relevance.

Agreement.

Repeating relevance of *ideographic-dispositional* [character flaw] and *behavioral* evidentials [cocaine use].

Blunt disagreement, no further evidentials offered.

Ideographic-dispositional evidential [character flaw], based on *behavioral* one [breaking into homes and stealing].

Negating dispositional inference [violence] from *behavioral* evidential [breaking and entering].

Citing *behavioral* evidential [cocaine habit] as causing *ideographic-dispositional* evidential [forceful personality].

Differentiating between *intentional* evidentials of Levin [to have sex] and Chambers [to hurt]; to accentuate Chamber's intentions.

Objectified inquiry about sentence [too harsh?].

Agreeing that sentence was too harsh by denial of *intentional* evidential, by pointing out shared responsibility and reduced guilt [negligence].

Restating *intentional* and *emotional* evidentials (angry, wanted to hurt) to ascertain opposite position.

Agreeing with sentence, restating *dis-*

He is capable of doing harm and should be in jail."

F: "We are all capable of committing crimes against a particular circumstance. I am not denying that he's not capable of being a burglar. I'm denying that he has the aptitude for violence. Violence was not his intent."

D: "You both seem to be more receptive to each other's viewpoint; whereas before you violently disagreed and did not know where each person was coming from."

M: "Right."

F: "Yes, we were discussing two individuals that we really don't know."

D: "Yes, we really don't know."

M: "Right!"

F: "We made more of the issue than it really is. It could be an act that just took place. Uhh . . . maybe he was violent but she was responsible too because she wanted sex. Maybe they had rough sex before."

D: "It's possible that in their past sexual relations they did engage in rough sex; but she did not know that she would get killed when she went to the park with him."

F: "He did not know that he would kill her either. It just happened. It was an accident. Sometimes you slap a child harder than you intend. If you took the parents to court based on one accident, you could say the same thing. We all lose our temper; but it does not mean we have the intent."

D: "I understand what you are saying. The point is that we will never know what happened that night between Chambers and Levin."

F: "Her family doesn't really want to know."

M: "Chambers is not saying what

positional evidential [capable of doing harm].

Agreeing about dispositional evidential [capable of being a burglar] but denying specific *dispositional* [aptitude for violence] and *intentional* [to do violence] evidentials, citing *consensual* evidential [all are capable of crime].

Suggested convergence in views [more receptive to one another].

Agreement.

Agreement, buttressed by lack of *cognitive* evidential [don't know].

Accommodating agreement by citing *happenstantial* evidential [act just took place] and accepting *dispositional* evidential [violent] and shared *historical-behavioral* and *motivational* evidentials [wanted sex, had rough sex before].

Repeating shared *historical-behavioral* evidential [past sexual relations, rough sex] and eliminating intent to get killed, to facilitate consensus.

Still accommodating by citing *happenstantial* evidential [accident] and *consensual* evidential [all lose temper]; hence no *intentional* evidential.

Facilitating consensus by indicating lack of *cognitive* evidential [we will never know what happened].

Denial of desire for *cognitive* evidential by family.

Agreeing about unavailability of valid

happened. He also has a distorted view of what happened. It's from his perspective."

[unbiased] evidentials.

F: "Chambers was in a state of shock. He really doesn't know what happened."

Agrees that valid *cognitive* evidentials not available even to the accused due to *emotional* evidential [shock].

M: "Two people can do the same thing and have two different versions of what occurred. Everything is from Chambers' point of view. Jennifer is not here to give her perspective. If she were here it would be different from his. In my heart of hearts, I feel that he wanted to hurt her."

Repeating non-availability of evidentials, but restating *intentional* evidential [wanted to hurt].

F: "What you are saying is that you don't like him."

Questioning *motivational* evidential of discussant [you don't like him].

M: "There is a character flaw."

Ideographic-dispositional evidential of Chambers restated.

F: "We both feel that he is guilty and should be punished. But we have different views of the degree of guilt and the punishment he should receive."

Proposing consensus [guilty and deserving punishment], despite different views of degree of guilt and punishment.

M: "Yes!"

CONSENSUS

F: "Yes, how can you analyze ten seconds into weeks of the trial."

Stating uncertainty by questioning their use of any evidentials, etc.

D: "That is the problem with court cases."

M: "Yes, there were no witnesses. Even if Jennifer were here, we would never know what really happened. I don't think there is any solution or firm conclusion about it. We really don't know intent; therefore I can understand why F feels that say."

Agreeing about uncertainty due to lack of *observational* evidentials [no witnesses]; lack of knowing *intentional* evidentials. Lack of evidentials used to serve *understanding of opponent* [I can understand how F feels].

F: [nods head in agreement]

Discussion

It is clear that the analysis of one discourse does not allow for either empirical or theoretical generalizations beyond the discourse itself. However, if the present discourse is not atypical, the following observations can be made. The discourse is a form of joint social action which results in an outcome—

the determination of guilt for a murder. The action consists of an attempt at reconstructing the homicide by means of evidentials embedded in a free-flowing, natural exchange of views, designed to make sense of a seemingly chaotic form of behavior.

Though free-flowing and unplanned, the resulting discourse assumes a process of construction in the absence of direct observation. This process entails (a) a flexible selection of evidentials from among a pre-existing reservoir of warrants, designed to rationally integrate the perceived flow of events; (b) a dialectical form of negotiation in which opposing views are gradually assimilated and the order of evidentials rearranged accordingly; and (c) consensual agreement about (some degree of) guilt.

The actual presentation of evidentials is discontinuous, resembling more a passing of thoughts than a consistent account. Repetition of warrants are used more to justify one's position than to document a perception. The warrants themselves seem to have a personal flavor, based on familiar, close to life experiences, rather than an objectified or abstract quality. Such personal presentation suggests a selection based on participatory (and emotional) identification with the characters (see Proposition 12), rather than a choice based upon the separation between observer and observed. Personal identifications can be strong, producing intense emotions.

The array of evidentials is massive. However, most of the evidentials employ warrants attributed to the actors (e.g., intention, disposition, personal history) rather than to external forces (e.g., context, other people)—although a few times events are perceived as happenstance (chance, accident) and no warrants are assigned. At other occasions warrants are assigned to both actors, seeing them as equally responsible for what happened. Such shared responsibility did not include the actual homicide. Finally, there are evidentials which use some form of consensus as warrants (e.g., everyone does it). However, consensual evidentials were used less frequently than the experimental literature on attribution theory seems to suggest. The final understanding reached is that the defendant, Robert Chambers, is guilty of murder, though the degree of guilt is unclear.

Despite the massive, and often contradictory presentation of evidentials, the final understanding is probably not atypical for a group of reasonable and uncoerced people who were not at the scene, and were not themselves involved in the incident. Nor were these people formally charged with the task of determining the material or legal facts in the case. That had already taken place and the participants knew the outcome. Whether a charge of legal determination of the facts, without prior knowledge of the outcome, would have changed the selection of evidentials is unknown and would require separate study. The present discourse addresses itself to the informal and spontaneous construction of a social, not legal, fact—created at the

moment of construction, but constrained by the desire to make sense. Further research using discourse analysis is now in progress to study the spontaneous use of evidentials in the construction of social facts. It has already been shown that the type of evidentials generated is related not only to the issues, but also to the personal perspectives of the discussants. Religious perspectives, for example, of biological evolution, produce hardly any evidentials other than faith (Rettig, 1989).

If social psychology is to expand into the realm of discourse analysis, a question to be asked is to what extent the type of discourse shown here is replicable. Also what does replicability consist of? Is scientific replicability satisfied by a similarity in conclusion, in evidentials, or perhaps only in both? If social facts are fairly orderly constructions, then the demonstration of the stability of evidential premises on which they are based is as essential as the reality they portray.

References

- Anderson, L.B. (1986). Evidentials, paths of change, and mental maps: Typological regular asymmetries. In W. Chafe and J. Nichols (Eds.), *Evidentiality: The linguistic coding of epistemology* (pp. 273-312). Norwood, New Jersey: Ablex.
- Berger, P.L., and Luckman, T. (1966). *The social construction of reality*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Cassirer, E. (1946). *Language and myth*. New York: Harper.
- DuBois, J.W. (1986). Self-evidence and ritual speech. In W. Chafe and J. Nichols (Eds.), *Evidentiality: The linguistic coding of epistemology* (pp. 313-336). Norwood, New Jersey: Ablex.
- Farr, R.M., and Moscovici, S. (1984). *Social representation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Feyerabend, P. (1984). *Against method*. Thetford, Norfolk, England: Thetford Press.
- Feyerabend, P. (1988). Knowledge and the role of theories. *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, 88, 157-178.
- Habermas, J. (1971). *Knowledge and human interest*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Habermas, J. (1981). *The theory of communicative action: Reason and the rationalization of society* (Volume 1). Boston: Beacon Press.
- Hansen, R.D., and Donoghue, J.M. (1977). The power of consensus: Information derived from one's own and others' behavior. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 35, 294-302.
- Heider, F. (1958). Consciousness, the perceptual world, and communication with others. In R. Tagiuri and L. Petrucco (Eds.), *Person perception and interpersonal behavior* (pp. 27-32). Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Knorr, K. (1980). *The manufacture of knowledge: Toward a constructivist and contextual theory of science*. Oxford: Pergamon.
- Kuhn, T.S. (1962). *The structure of scientific revolutions*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Latour, B. (1988). A relativistic account of Einstein's relativity. *Social Studies of Science*, 18, 3-44.
- Latour, B., and Woolgar, S. (1986). *Laboratory life: The construction of scientific facts*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Lynch, M. (1985). *Art and artifact in laboratory science*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Pepper, S.C. (1967). *Concept and quality: A world hypothesis*. LaSalle, Illinois: Open Court.
- Potter, J., and Whetherell, M. (1987). *Discourse and social psychology*. London: Sage.
- Rettig, S. (1988). Are "dialogic" data positive? *Journal of Mind and Behavior*, 9, 97-112.
- Rettig, S. (1989). *The discursive social psychology of evidence II: A religion called evolution*. Unpublished manuscript, Hunter College.
- Ross, L., Greene, D., and House, P. (1977). The false consensus effect: An egocentric bias. *Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 13, 279-301.

- Sears, R.R. (1951). A theoretical framework for personality and social behavior. *American Psychologist*, 9, 476-483.
- Swann, W.B., Jr., and Giuliano, T. (1982). Where leading questions can lead: The power of conjectures in social interactions. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 42, 1025-1035.