

**CRACKS IN THE GLASS CEILING?:
LAUGHTER AND POLITICS IN BROADCAST NEWS INTERVIEWS
AND THE GENDERED NATURE OF MEDIA REPRESENTATIONS**

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By **Tanya Romaniuk**

a dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of
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Abstract

This dissertation investigates politicians' laughter in televised Broadcast News Interviews (BNIs) and mass media representations of Hillary Rodham Clinton's laughter in the context of her failed bid for the Democratic nomination in the United States in 2007-2008. The data for this study comprise spoken, interactional data (corpora of televised BNIs) and written, representational data (a corpus of media discourse)—distinct forms that require the use of different theoretical and methodological apparatus. The first component of the analysis employs the methodological framework of Conversation Analysis to examine the interactional work accomplished by Clinton's laughter and that of other politicians *in situ*, that is, in the BNIs themselves. The second component of the analysis employs an intertextual approach to analyze the *post-hoc* recontextualization of Clinton's laughter by the mainstream media as a gendered representation, namely, as a “cackle”. In analyzing Clinton's laughter *in* talk-in-interaction and its subsequent representation in talk-*out-of*-interaction, this study makes a distinctive contribution to a central question in studies of language, gender and sexuality—when gender can or should be invoked as an explanatory category in the analysis of discourse.

The first two empirical chapters presents an *interactional* analysis of politicians' and Clinton's laughter in BNIs, and reveals how the previously undescribed practice of laughing in the course of “serious” interviewer questions, or at their completion, is not something that is unique to Clinton but is in fact a generic interactional practice. Further, this practice is not something that is oriented to as gendered by any of the participants in the news interviews analyzed. However, the *intertextual* analysis developed in the third

empirical chapter suggests that this practice *became gendered* in *post-hoc* recontextualizations of those interactions, that is, in subsequent media representations of Clinton's laughter. By considering the way Clinton's laughter travelled across contexts and into other discursive spaces, this dissertation shows how, despite women and men behaving in similar (non-gendered) ways, Clinton's behaviour was taken up in gendered (arguably, misogynist) ways. As a result, this dissertation gives empirical substance to claims about the "double-bind" situation that women politicians still face in the public sphere of politics.

In loving memory of my tato, Taras Roman Romaniuk

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Introduction

This dissertation investigates politicians' laughter in broadcast news interviews, and mass media representations of one politician's laughter—that of Hillary Rodham Clinton. I became interested in Clinton's laughter back in the fall of 2007 when various news media organizations reported on what became popularly known as "The Clinton Cackle". Although it had only been one month since Clinton had endured the overtly sexist media coverage about her "cleavage", suddenly it was all about her "cackle". Not only did I find the particular word choice problematic, I was also disappointed that, yet again, an issue of absolutely no substance was being given "serious" treatment in the course of the first (non-symbolic) woman's bid for the Democratic nomination for President of the United States. With no shortage of *serious* foreign and domestic issues to attend to, the media were really going to discuss Clinton's laughter? I initially encountered the "cackle" characterization in reading an article in *The New York Times* by political reporter, Patrick Healy, who posed the question, "What's behind the laugh?" Healy's answer to this question seemed to suggest that Clinton's "cackle" was a political tactic she used to deflect tough questioning by journalists. Leaving aside the "cackle" characterization, I decided to also investigate the question of "what's behind the laugh?" by analyzing Clinton's laughter in the source interactions themselves, that is, in the broadcast news interviews in which she participated. One of the principal goals of this component of my analysis is to understand what actions Clinton's laughter accomplished in the local, sequential environments in which it occurred and to determine whether Clinton's laughter was, indeed, a strategy unique to her, as the media suggested. That

is, did other politicians deploy laughter within broadcast news interviews in the same ways she did and, if so, what can explain the particular characterization that Clinton's laughter received in the mainstream media? Thus, not only does this dissertation investigate the use of Clinton's laughter relative to that of other politicians *in situ*, it also examines the *post-hoc* recontextualization of her laughter by the mainstream news media (i.e., as a "cackle") as a gendered representational practice. In analyzing these two dimensions of Clinton's laughter, that is, its deployment in broadcast news interviews (and the actions it accomplishes therein) and its representation in the news media (and the recontextualized version of her laughter that is (re-)produced), this dissertation is able to contribute to an issue that has been central to research on language, gender and sexuality—the question of when gender can or should be invoked as an explanatory category in the analysis of discourse.

Analyzing these two dimensions of Clinton's laughter requires drawing on two different kinds of data—spoken, interactional data (i.e., the broadcast news interviews in which Clinton's laughter, and that of other politicians, occurred) and written, representational data (i.e., the mainstream media representations of Clinton's laughter). Correspondingly, each type of data necessitates the adoption of distinctive theoretical and methodological apparatus. To compare and contrast Clinton's laughter with that of other politicians' in the broadcast news interviews themselves, I adopt the framework of Conversation Analysis (or, CA). As a method for analyzing talk-and-other-conduct in interaction, CA is concerned with describing the orderly practices participants use to produce, understand and coordinate their own and others' communicative behaviour. According to CA, however, analyses of social categories such as gender should be grounded in what participants say and do, as opposed to

what analysts may take to be relevant, say, because of their own politics, ideologies or theoretical dispositions. Conversation analysts ground their analyses of orderly practices of talk and other conduct by showing how they are accomplishments of the participants themselves (rather than being based on the assumptions of the analyst). Accordingly, analysis is principally concerned with the turn-by-turn unfolding of interaction, without appealing to exogenous contextual factors such as gender, unless they are made relevant by the participants themselves in talk-in-interaction. But what about dimensions of talk and other conduct (such as gender) that are made relevant beyond the interactions themselves? What about talk-*out-of*-interaction (Blommaert, 2005)?

As we all know, many forms of talk extend beyond singular interactions; thus, many aspects of talk can be made subject to interpretations and relevance assessments by *other* participants, later, and in consequential ways for “original” participants (Blommaert, 2005). Indeed, this is the case for politicians who participate in mediated forms of public discourse, discourse that often becomes the subject of subsequent media coverage. To consider the second dimension of Clinton’s laughter (i.e., how the mainstream media reported on and represented it as a “cackle”), I adopt an intertextual framework and draw on the theoretical concept of indexicality to explain how this “cackle” characterization is gendered in consequential ways. An intertextual approach recognizes that talk and other conduct in interaction do not occur in a vacuum. Talk is always shaped by earlier talk and can be implicated in future talk. As an approach to analyzing discourse, intertextuality is concerned with the socially and historically situated nature of discourse and the complex discursive trajectories of “texts”—representations of talk that are written down, quoted,

summarized, etc. Accordingly, analysis is concerned with the ways in which such texts are subject to transformations (in meaning, or otherwise) in the process of production, reproduction, circulation and interpretation. For instance, some portion of talk or other conduct from an “original” setting may be decontextualized and then recontextualized, and in that process, new meanings may be introduced in subsequent representations.

In terms of this dissertation’s findings, then, the *interactional* component of my analysis reveals how the practice of laughing in the course of interviewer questions, or at their completion, is not something that is unique to Clinton but is in fact a generic interactional practice. Further, this practice is not something that is oriented to as gendered by any of the participants in any of the news interviews analyzed. However, the *intertextual* component of my analysis suggests that gender can become a relevant feature of other contexts in which that talk may be represented despite the absence of any explicit orientations to gender in the talk itself.

Broadcast news interviews are speech events characterized by a unique participation framework, such that talk is designed for an overhearing audience. Accordingly, what transpires in those interactions may be reported on subsequently by news media; thus, media representations are in fact one possible locus for such orientations to be realized. Although Clinton’s laughter was not oriented to as a gendered practice by any of the participants in the news interviews in which it occurred, this dissertation makes the case that the practice *became gendered* in *post-hoc* recontextualizations of those interactions, in this case, in news media representations of her laughter that followed those interactions. Thus, while this dissertation demonstrates that Clinton’s laughter is similar to that of other politicians

(in terms of its use and function), it also shows that, in spite of such similarities, it is taken up by the media in gendered (arguably, misogynist) ways. As a result, the analysis gives empirical substance to claims about the “double-bind” situation that women politicians continue to face in the public sphere of politics.

Chapter 1: Conversation Analysis, Context and the Relevance of Gender

1.1 Introduction

Having already established the overarching argument of this dissertation, this chapter situates that argument within a broader contextual framework. It is organized as follows. The first section presents an overview of Conversation Analysis (CA), the methodology that informs Chapters 2-4. Included in this methodological discussion is CA's view of context, a view that has important consequences for how analysts support or "warrant" claims about the relevance of gender, or any other social category. The second section situates the larger argument of this dissertation within the context of this problem of relevance—a subject of ongoing discussion and debate among discourse analysts and language and gender scholars within the broader field of sociocultural linguistics. Together, these two sections provide the analytic backdrop for the current study. The final section situates the argument put forward in this dissertation in relation to these sections, and subsequently presents the organization of the dissertation's remaining chapters.

1.2 Conversation Analysis: A methodological overview¹

This section offers a brief methodological sketch of CA, in terms of its main assumptions and principles.² As a method of analyzing talk and interaction, CA emerged in the 1960s and 1970s in the work of sociologist Harvey Sacks, and his close collaboration with Emanuel Schegloff and Gail Jefferson. Many of the ideas developed in Sacks' (1992 [1964-1972]) lectures, which constitute much of the basis for CA, were heavily influenced by the work of Harold Garfinkel (see, for example, Heritage, 1984b) and Erving Goffman (see, for example, Drew & Wootton, 1988/1995). From Garfinkel's ethnomethodological approach, Sacks developed a concern with the "common sense resources, practices and procedures through which members of a society produce and recognize mutually intelligible objects, events and courses of action" (Liddicoat, 2007: 2). At the same time, Sacks shared a strong interest in Goffman's concept of *the interaction order*, which emphasized the study of actual instances of social interaction by asserting that ordinary activities of daily life were an important subject for study. Drawing on these ideas, Sacks sought "to develop an alternative to mainstream sociology: an observational science of society and social action" grounded in the "details of actual events" (Sacks, 1984: 26; cited in, Speer & Stokoe, 2011a: 9). Working with such "details" means that there are some key differences between CA and other social scientific approaches such as sociology. For example, CA provides detailed descriptions

¹ I originally wrote portions of this section for a chapter on discourse analysis (Ehrlich & Romaniuk, in press).

² Comprehensive overviews of the field and its origins can be found in numerous book chapters (e.g., Clayman & Gill, 2004; Heritage, 1984a; Levinson, 1983), monographs (e.g., Hutchby & Wooffitt, 2008; Sidnell, 2010; ten Have, 2007), survey articles (Goodwin & Heritage, 1990) and edited collections (e.g., Atkinson & Heritage, 1984; Sidnell & Stivers, 2012; ten Have & Psathas, 1995).

of naturally occurring data rather than “experimental” or “research-provoked” data; embodies a perspective on talk-in-interaction that is “organizational and procedural”; and views talk-in-interaction as a “situated achievement” (ten Have, 2007). Ten Have (2007: 9) aptly summarizes the analytic focus of CA as “not explaining *why* people act as they do, but rather explicating *how* they do it.” These differences reflect one of the fundamental assumptions of CA: that conversation is not random or unstructured, but is in fact orderly, and participants construct their talk in orderly ways (Sacks 1984). Another key assumption of CA is that participants in interaction produce talk and other conduct, to a large extent, in order to accomplish social action rather than to exchange propositional content or information (Schegloff, 1995). Accordingly, an analyst’s principal task is to discover and describe the orderly practices, structures and patterns through which participants produce, understand and coordinate their own behaviour and that of others in interaction.

CA views talk as proceeding on a turn-by-turn basis, wherein turns are composed of turn constructional units (TCUs)—syntactic units (sentences, clauses, noun phrases, etc.) identified based on prosody, syntax and pragmatic context (Ford & Thompson, 1996)—and are organized into sequences of action (see, for example, Schegloff & Sacks, 1973). By analyzing audio and videotaped records and transcripts of actual, naturally occurring interaction, CA practitioners investigate a range of interactional practices participants deploy in talk-in-interaction, for example, in: designing and coordinating taking turns at talk (e.g., Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974); designing and coordinating the accomplishment of different (sequences of) actions (e.g., Drew &

Walker, 2009); repairing problems of speaking, hearing or understanding (e.g., Hayashi, Raymond, & Sidnell, 2013; Schegloff, 1979); accomplishing entry and exit from conversation (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973); and coordinating vocal and nonvocal conduct (e.g., Goodwin, 1981, 2011). Typically, transcriptions are based on the unique method developed by Gail Jefferson (see, for example, Jefferson, 2004), which seeks to capture *how* people say what they say.³ As a result, the transcripts are more detailed in their representation of linguistic and interactional features of the talk than those often used by other kinds of discourse analysts. This is because a CA transcript embodies, both in its format and in the phenomena it tries to capture, the analytic concerns conversation analysts bring to the data (e.g., the dynamics of turn taking are captured by identifying precisely where overlaps, silence and the onset of participants' talk and other conduct occurs) (Hutchby & Wooffitt 2008).

For conversation analysts, careful and repeated listening to (and viewing of) recorded interaction in transcribing data and producing a transcript constitute important initial steps in the process of data analysis. Indeed, because producing a transcript requires the analyst to attend to very subtle details of the interaction not necessarily obvious at first hearing/viewing, transcription operates as an important “noticing device”. But what should one “notice”? As Schegloff (1996a: 172) describes, “analyses may begin with a noticing of the action being done and be pursued by what about the talk or other conduct—in its context—serves as the practice for accomplishing that action. Or it may begin...with the noticing of some feature of the talk and be pursued by asking

³ See Appendix A for a description of the transcription conventions utilized in this dissertation.

what—if anything—such a practice of talking has as its outcome.” To ground such “noticings” and further observations in the talk itself, analysts focus primarily on two things that constitute major components of an array of practices and phenomena in talk-in-interaction—composition and position (Schegloff 2003: 246). Further, in describing some feature of the talk (composition) and where it occurs in the course of interaction (position), practitioners of CA refer to a number of different dimensions of the organization of talk that underpin the practices, structures and patterns found in interaction. At a most basic level, turns at talk and turn taking, turn design, social action, and sequence organization are all dimensions analysts draw upon in analyzing the orderly practices of participants in talk-in-interaction.

1.2.1 Conversation Analysis and institutional talk

Within CA, some have made the distinction between “pure” (e.g., ten Have 2007) or “basic” (Heritage, 2005) CA and “institutional” or “applied” CA. “Basic” CA views talk-in-interaction as an institution in and of itself and is concerned with discovering what Sacks (1984: 26) called “the machinery of conversation” (i.e., the orderly practices participants co-construct in social interaction as outlined above). In “applied” CA, on the other hand, the principal goal is describing the procedures—ordinary or otherwise—by which participants produce and understand their behaviour as being “institutional”. Part of this goal involves identifying the features that make institutional talk distinct from ordinary conversation and illustrating how those features are accomplished in interaction. Since ordinary conversation constitutes the fundamental or primordial scene of social life

(Schegloff, 1996b: 4) and is the central vehicle for socialization, it is “the point of departure for more specialized communicative contexts (e.g., the legal process, the education system, the medical encounter), which are analyzed as embodying systematic variations from conversational procedures” (Goodwin & Heritage, 1990: 289). In an incisive introductory chapter to what is probably the most influential book on the subject to date, *Talk at Work* (1992b), the editors, Paul Drew & John Heritage (1992a: 22), propose three basic features of institutional forms of interaction:

1. Institutional interaction involves an orientation by at least one of the participants to some core goal, task or identity (or set of them) conventionally associated with the institution in question. In short, institutional talk is normally informed by *goal orientations* of a relatively restricted conventional form.
2. Institutional interaction may often involve *special and particular constraints* on what one or both of the participants will treat as allowable contributions to the business at hand.
3. Institutional talk may be associated with *inferential frameworks and procedures* that are particular to specific institutional contexts (emphasis in original).

These three features, Drew & Heritage (1992a: 26) further suggest, constitute a unique “fingerprint” of each institutional form of interaction. Finally, whereas ordinary conversation encompasses a range of interactional practices deployed “in pursuit of every imaginable kind of social goal” (Heritage, 2005: 109), institutional talk generally involves a reduction in the range of practices deployed and limitations on the kinds of interactional contributions that can be made (Drew & Heritage 1992a). Research on institutional talk, then, builds on the findings of “basic” CA by drawing on the many available studies concerning fundamental orders of conversational organization (e.g., turn-taking, sequence organization) and the practices through which they are

accomplished (e.g., turn design, lexical choice) (see, Drew & Heritage, 1992a; but also, Heritage, 2004; 2005). The analyses in Chapters 3 and 4 of this dissertation examine interviewee laughter in one kind of institutional setting—that of broadcast news interviews. Accordingly, these analyses represent a form of “applied” CA in the sense that they build on what is known about the organization of talk-in-interaction, in general, and the interactional practice of laughter, specifically, based on the findings of “basic” CA (see Chapter 2).⁴

1.2.2 Conversation Analysis and broadcast news interviews

CA has been applied to a range of institutional settings including, for example, courtroom interaction (e.g., Atkinson & Drew 1979), educational settings (e.g., Mehan, 1979), medical encounters (e.g., Heritage & Robinson, 2006), and emergency 911 calls to the police (e.g., Whalen & Zimmerman, 1987); however, the following discussion will focus on broadcast talk, and, in particular, broadcast news interviews since they constitute the interactional context for the CA analyses put forward in this dissertation.

While the analysis that follows builds on CA’s analytic resources and findings regarding the organization of talk-in-interaction, it also relies on the specialized procedures that have been found to characterize the formal, institutional context of broadcast news interviews specifically. Such procedures have been identified principally through the work of the conversation analysts Steve Clayman, David Greatbatch and

⁴ Although it is assumed that institutional realities are not confined to interaction, it is also assumed that in interactions “institutionality” is invoked, constructed, and maintained in and through talk and other conduct in interaction. In other words, it is an emergent property of talk-in-interaction (see Drew & Heritage 1992; Heritage 2004, 2005).

John Heritage. Indeed, their research has been foundational in establishing the distinctive institutional “fingerprint” of the news interview by specifying the principal norms, practices and constraints that characterize it. Three features of news interview talk are particularly relevant for the analysis of interviewee laughter presented in Chapters 3 and 4, namely, the turn-taking system of news interviews, its distinctive participation framework, and the journalistic norms that come to bear on interaction in this setting. Each component will briefly be described in turn.

The broadcast news interview is an example of a formal speech exchange system (see Sacks, et al., 1974), characterized by a specific “turn-type pre-allocation procedure” (cf. Atkinson & Drew, 1979:61 ff.) that specifies a normative procedure of how particular participants should talk. Unlike ordinary conversation, the turn-taking system of broadcast news interviews pre-allocates the type and order of turns to speakers with particular institutional identities, so that the interviewer (henceforth IR) and interviewee (henceforth IE) are expected to restrict themselves to questioning and answering, respectively (Heritage, 1985). Correspondingly, the ‘doing’ of interview is constituted and realized, for the most part, through the participants’ orientation to the interviewer producing turns minimally recognizable as questions and the interviewee producing turns minimally recognizable as answers (e.g., Greatbatch, 1988; Heritage & Greatbatch, 1991; Schegloff, 1988/89). As Schegloff (1988/89: 221-222) describes, “the designated questioner’s turn is not ‘over’ in a sequentially relevant sense, and it is not its recipient’s turn to talk, until a question has been asked. And it *is* over, and it *is* the other’s turn to talk, when a question *has* been asked” (emphasis in original). When IEs abide by this

normative interactional framework, they withhold taking the floor until a question has been brought to completion (i.e., until a transition relevance place). Thus, news interview interaction typically proceeds along the lines of question-answer sequences, and departures from this pattern by either participant are treated as normative violations and accountable actions (see, for example, Greatbatch, 1988).

Broadcast news interviews are also characterized by a participation framework (Goffman, 1981) that differs from ordinary conversation. As a form of broadcast journalism, the nature of talk in this environment is audience-directed. IR questions are designed in ways that are sensitive both to the professional context and to the broader public arena, despite the fact that the audience is rarely addressed directly (Clayman, 2010). Through the design of questions and the systematic avoidance of certain forms of talk, journalists treat the audience as ratified but unaddressed “overhearers”, to use Goffman’s terminology (Heritage, 1985).

Finally, the turn-taking constraints of news interviews and many of the interactional practices characteristic of news interview talk can be traced to the journalistic norms of neutralism and adversarialness. With regards to neutralism, although absolute neutrality is unattainable, IRs are expected to project a formally neutral or “neutralistic” posture (Heritage & Greatbatch, 1991). Consistent with the ideal of objectivity, then, IRs organize their conduct in particular ways, for example, by avoiding the assertion of opinions on their own behalf and instead formulating questions that reference the views of others, and also by refraining from direct forms of (dis)affiliation (see, for example, Clayman, 1988, 1992, 2002, 2007). One final journalistic norm that shapes news

interview interaction is the ideal of the press as an independent “watchdog” and counterweight to official power (Clayman, 2012; but see also, Clayman, Heritage, Elliott, & McDonald, 2007). What this means is that IRs are also expected to be adversarial and not let their IEs (i.e., public figures) transform the setting into a “personal soapbox” (Clayman, 2012). How they accomplish this is through the design of their questions, in which they can exert pressure, sanction resistance and hold IEs accountable for not answering them (Greatbatch, 1986; but see also, Romaniuk, 2013).

One remaining issue regarding CA’s approach concerns how is it that analysts come to describe some spate of talk as “institutional”. What is/are the warrant(s) for characterizing such talk as taking place within the context of broadcast news interviews, for example? Answers to these questions are provided by CA’s view of context.

1.2.3 Conversation Analysis and context

CA differs from other fields in the human and social sciences, including linguistics, in terms of its notion of context. Broadly, social scientists tend to be concerned with two main “senses” or types of context: what can be called “macro” or “distal” context, on the one hand, and “intra-interactional” or “proximate” context on the other (Schegloff, 1992: 195). This first sense of context is one that is immediately recognizable based on our intuitions, that is, what is typically thought of in terms of macro social categories, social relationships, and social and cultural institutions. Schegloff (1992: 195) more precisely characterizes this “external” view of context as encompassing “aspects of social life long central to the social sciences—the class, ethnic, and gender composition of an interaction,

each of these understood either as a distinctive source of ordering of and constraint on social life, or as an embodiment of more general properties such as “power” (in various of the senses in which that term is used), [...] the various institutional matrices within which interaction occurs (the legal order, economic or market order, etc.) as well as its ecological, regional, national, and cultural settings, all of which may be taken as “shaping” what goes on under their auspices or in arenas of social life on which they have a bearing”. The second sense of context typically regarded among social scientists is what might be thought of as “the sort of occasion or genre of interaction which participants, by their conduct, make some episode to be an instance of, the sorts of sequences of talk or courses of conduct in which particular events may occur (stories, request sequences, etc.), the capacity in which participants act relative to the episode in progress, [...] etc.” (Schegloff, 1992: 195). For conversation analysts, however, the relationship between that which may be thought of as “macro” context and that which may be thought of as “intra-interactional” context can be problematic.

From a CA point of view, what is problematic is when analysts invoke “external” formulations of context in addressing interactional conduct without some empirically grounded warrant for doing so. Schegloff (1991) has referred to this as *the problem of relevance*—showing that the (contextual) categories proposed for analysis are demonstrably relevant to the participants themselves, in and through the production of their actions. Schegloff (1991) situates the initial articulation of this “problem” in the early work of Sacks (1972a, 1972b, 1992 [1964-1972]) as it was related to reference to

persons specifically.⁵ In particular, Sacks (1972a: 32-33) noted that there is a set of category terms, what he called “Pn adequate collections”, which adequately characterize or categorize any member of any population. For example, according to Sacks, the collection of category terms for sex (e.g., female/male) and age are Pn adequate. One of Sacks’ main points was that “since everyone who is an instance of some category in one of those collections is necessarily [...] also an instance of some category in the other, or *an* other, the fact that someone *is* male, or *is* middle aged, or *is* white, or *is* Jewish is, by itself, no warrant for so referring to them, for the warrant of “correctness” would provide for use of any of the other reference forms as well” (Schegloff, 1991: 49-50). Thus, “some principle of relevance must underlie use of a reference form, and has to be adduced in order to provide for one rather than another of those ways of characterizing or categorizing some member” (Schegloff, 1991: 50). Although Sacks initially developed this problem in describing how *members* (i.e., participants to interaction) talk about *members*, Schegloff relates it to the enterprise of scholarly, professional, and scientific analysis, and proposes that analysts should not “naïvely” rely on any characterization of context (or otherwise) without some justification or warrant of the relevance for doing so (Schegloff, 1991: 50). From the perspective of CA, the solution to this problem is to ground any characterizations of context (about the participants’ social identities and/or their courses of conduct) in participants’ own demonstrable orientations, as displayed in the details of their talk and other conduct (Schegloff, 1988). As Schegloff (1991: 51, emphasis in original) explains:

⁵ Goodwin & Heritage (1990: 295) trace Sacks’ work on this topic to that of Goodenough (1965) and his formulation of “the problem of identity selection”.

The point is not that persons are somehow *not* male or female, upper or lower class, with or without power, professors and/or students. They may be, on some occasion, demonstrably members of one or another of those categories. Nor is the issue that those aspects of the society do not matter, or did not matter on that occasion. We may share a lively sense that indeed they do matter, and that they mattered on that occasion and mattered for just that aspect of some interaction on which we are focusing. There is still the problem of *showing from the details of the talk or other conduct in the materials* that we are analyzing that those aspects of the scene are what the *parties* are oriented to. *For that is to show how the parties are embodying for one another the relevancies of the interaction and thereby producing the social structure.*

Thus, one fundamental methodological constraint of conversation analytic work is to warrant the relevance of analysts' descriptions, analyses and interpretations of participants, action, and context in terms of the demonstrable orientations of the participants themselves, and crucially, "at that moment—at the moment that whatever we are trying to provide an account of occurs" (Schegloff, 1991: 50).

A second, methodological constraint involves what Schegloff (1991: 52ff) has characterized as *the issue of procedural consequentiality*, which is an extension of his discussion of the problem of relevance. The basic point is that even if some aspect of context is shown to be demonstrably relevant for the participants, it must also be shown how whatever aspect of context formulated as relevant is made operative and consequential to the participants' talk. In Schegloff's own words: "How does the fact that the talk is being conducted in some setting (say, 'the hospital') issue in any consequences for the shape, form, trajectory, content, or character of the interaction that the parties conduct? *And what is the mechanism by which that context has determinate consequences for the talk?*" (Schegloff 1991: 52-53; emphasis in original). Within CA, several studies have addressed this constraint by investigating talk in institutional settings

where interaction is formally distinct from ordinary conversational interaction. For example, Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson (1974) described how the turn taking procedures of ordinary conversation may differ from those of institutional talk; this has been shown to be the case in classrooms (e.g., McHoul, 1978), in courtrooms (e.g., Atkinson & Drew, 1979), and in news interviews (e.g., Greatbatch, 1988).

What should be clear from this discussion is that CA practitioners avoid *a priori* invocations of context and instead treat context as a dynamic process that is “locally produced, incrementally developed and, by extension, [...] transformable at any moment” in the course of social interaction (Drew & Heritage, 1992a: 21). As Heritage (2004: 223) explains, “CA embodies a theory which argues that sequences of actions are a major part of what we mean by context, that the meaning of an action is heavily shaped by the sequence of previous actions from which it emerges, and that social context is a dynamically created thing that is expressed in and through the sequential organization of action”. In this view, communicative action is “doubly contextual”, meaning that every action is simultaneously *context-shaped* and *context-renewing* (Heritage, 1984: 280). For CA, then, “context” is both the project and product of the participants’ own actions, and thus, fundamentally built, invoked and managed through interaction (Heritage, 2005: 109). CA does not deny that a more “macro” sense of context may have overarching relevance for participants in interaction. Intuitively, we know when something is, for example, radio talk; however, that intuitive view of context is treated as inadequate in CA. This is partly because a reliance on the private realm of individual awareness fails to account for the public means by which participants display for one another their

orientation to context and their understanding of each other's actions (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 2008). In order to move beyond our intuition, then, and generate claims that are empirically defensible, according to CA, such claims must be shown to be both relevant to the participants and procedurally consequential for the interaction. In general, adhering to these two methodological constraints as evidence for analytic claims (about exogenous features of context, or otherwise) is the essence of CA's methodology.

1.2.4 Conversation Analysis and "doing" gender

Before turning to a discussion of how analysts support or "warrant" claims about what is going on in their data, particularly in relation to gender, it is necessary to briefly introduce CA's understanding of gender. Given its ethnomethodological roots, CA does not view gender as an inherent property or characteristic of individuals, but instead as a *situated accomplishment*—"the local management of conduct in relation to normative conceptions of appropriate attitudes and activities for particular sex categories", where "sex categories" refers to the social identification of individuals as women or men (West & Fenstermaker, 1993: 156). This perspective has important implications for how CA goes about analyzing gender. For one, viewing gender as an ongoing accomplishment, accountable in interaction, implies that analysts must locate its emergence in social interaction, rather than within the individual or some set of role expectations (West & Fenstermaker, 1993). A second and related implication is that analysts cannot determine the relevance of gender to social action apart from the context in which it is accomplished. Any individual inhabits a number of different social identities, many if

not all of which can be emphasized (made relevant) or not (not brought to the surface of interaction), depending on the situation. Given that “sex category” is omnipresent in social life—and thus, has always the potential to be made relevant in—any social situation can be adapted to the doing of gender. In CA’s view, this adaptation is what makes gender relevant in situated social interaction and what contributes to the reproduction of social structure (West & Fenstermaker, 1993, but see also, Schegloff, 1991). The question of the relevance of gender has been, and continues to be, one of the most controversial debates in language and gender studies. This debate, and the key questions it raises, is the focus of the next section.

1.3 The relevance of gender in discourse-based research

In the field of language and gender, there has been a longstanding dispute about the relationship between gender and discourse, a dispute which gets played out on methodological terrain, specifically, about analytic procedure. These arguments are summarized in the following key questions, formulated by the feminist sociolinguist, Deborah Cameron (2005): “Where, as analysts, should we look for the workings of gender and discourse? On what grounds is it legitimate to argue for the relevance of gender, and of power relations between gender groups, in analyzing a particular piece of data?” This question of when gender is relevant, that is, when gender should be invoked as an explanatory category in the analysis of discourse has been the subject of widespread discussion and debate since the publication of an article in *Discourse & Society* by Schegloff (1997) entitled, “Whose text? Whose context?”. Following Sacks (e.g., 1984),

Schegloff argued that analysts should not impose social categories such as “female” or “male” on the data (i.e., claims about the relevance of gender to interaction should not be assumed *a priori*) but should instead focus on participants’ orientations to such categories (i.e., how participants display and invoke their own orientations to features of the interactional context, which indexes relevant aspects of identity). Specifically, he argued that analysts must attend to what is demonstrably relevant for participants in interaction rather than what is—or may be—of political (or otherwise) interest to analysts.

Schegloff’s remarks were targeted at, in his own words, those who “put ‘politically’ grounded issues and questions (in some sense of that term) at the start or the center of inquiry, and as its guiding concern” (1997: 185); they were treated as having been aimed at critical discourse analysts, specifically. As a consequence, the considerable theoretical and methodological discussions that have ensued illustrate many of the tensions and disagreements, of both an analytic and political nature, that currently exist between proponents of conversation analytic and ethnomethodological approaches to discourse (such as discursive psychology), on the one hand, and critically informed approaches such as critical discourse analysis or critical discursive psychology, on the other (Speer, 2005).

This section provides an overview of some of the principal issues that have been raised as they relate to analyzing language and gender. It begins with a brief discussion of the well-known debate between Schegloff and Margaret Wetherell (Schegloff, 1997, 1998; Wetherell, 1998) that sparked a number of other disputes and commentaries, including the debate between Michael Billig and Schegloff (Billig, 1999a, 1999b;

Schegloff, 1999a, 1999b),⁶ and early feminist responses and criticisms (e.g., Kitzinger, 2002 [2000]; Stokoe & Smithson, 2001; Stokoe & Weatherall, 2002; Weatherall, 2000). Following an overview of these commentaries, two significant questions raised in contemporary studies of language and gender are considered, which, in various ways, address the provocative theoretical and methodological challenge posed by Schegloff (1997). These include: 1) what counts as a participants' *orientation* to gender? and 2) who counts as a *participant* in analysts' claims about gender orientations? This discussion paves the way for situating the research questions of the present study.

1.3.1 Schegloff, Wetherell, and beyond

In the (1997) article that instigated the debate, Schegloff encouraged scholars to directly engage with the question of “whose characterization of the conduct, and the context of the conduct, is to shape, to determine, to control our treatment of discourse?” (167). In providing one answer to this question, Schegloff argued against what he calls the “theoretical imperialism” of critical scholars who analyze texts from their own ideological perspective and instead argued in favour of CA's procedure of discovering participants' own understandings of what the interaction is “demonstrably about” for the parties within it (Schegloff, 1997). In this view, as Susan Speer (2005: 3) explains, “if the participants *do* orient to gender, then that gives us grounds, as analysts, for making the claim that gender is ‘procedurally consequential’ for [...] what is going on.

⁶ Bonnie McElhinny (2003b) notes how the debate between Schegloff and Billig was especially interesting considering the fact that neither scholar has carried out much work on gender and yet used gender to discuss their points of view.

Conversely, if they do *not* orient to gender, then we do not have grounds for claiming that gender is relevant or consequential for the participants in the interaction at that moment” (emphasis in original). This position, espoused in Schegloff’s article, generated a substantial response, particularly among feminist linguists and other critically oriented scholars.⁷ This is in part because his argument that there is no principal reason why analysts should privilege gender over other possibly relevant aspects of one’s identity seemed to target much of the early work in language and gender that used gender as an *a priori* lens to analyze women’s and men’s talk (e.g., Lakoff, 1975; Spender, 1980; Zimmerman & West, 1975). It is also in part because his claims problematized those approaches to discourse that prioritize analysts’ assumptions, theories or agendas. However, in arguing that analysis should proceed with participants’ demonstrable orientations, Schegloff neither excludes the possibility of critical analysis, nor suggests that gender is never relevant to interaction; instead, he proposes that a technical analysis *precede* a critical one “in order to constitute the very object to which critical or sociopolitical analysis might sensibly and fruitfully be applied” (1997: 174). Clearly, it is apparent why such an argument might spark debate among scholars who espouse a critical or politically motivated agenda, as the conversation analytic stance, articulated by Schegloff, gives primacy to the local conversational activity over other possible sources of, or resources for, beginning analysis.

⁷ Notably, Schegloff had made similar arguments previously (e.g., 1988, 1991, 1992); however, in the (1997) piece, he illustrated his claims using examples revolving around the issue of gender (but also power and asymmetry, see Schegloff, 1997: 172-173, although these other contextual features have not often been discussed in subsequent commentaries), which is perhaps why it generated such a widespread response from feminist-oriented scholars.

Margaret Wetherell (1998: 338) was among the first to make this argument in her response to Schegloff, contending that a “complete”, “scholarly” analysis, as opposed to an exclusively technical one, “must range further than the limits Schegloff proposes”. Such an analysis, she argues, requires an eclectic approach that combines the strengths of both “molecular” (i.e. ethnomethodological and conversation analytic) and “molar” (i.e. post-structuralist/Foucauldian) approaches, which import “extra-textual systems of meaning-making” including the broader argumentative and interpretive resources of both speakers *and* analysts (Stokoe, 2005: 334). While both Schegloff and Wetherell agree that talk-in-interaction is an important site for examining the construction of meaning, intersubjectivity, and social order, Wetherell questions the idea that a line can be neatly drawn between making acceptable use of concepts to describe one’s data and importing one’s own preoccupations. In Schegloff’s (1998: 415) response, he suggests that, “rather than beginning from gender ideologies”, the starting point of Wetherell’s analysis could be to consider “what sort of interaction the participants show themselves to be collaboratively constructing.” For Elizabeth Stokoe and Janet Smithson (2002), Schegloff’s way of proceeding provides a more politically effective position from which to make claims about the relevance of gender in talk. Ann Weatherall (2000) agrees, at least to some extent, noting that Schegloff’s proposal offers several advantages including a solution to the question of privileging gender over other possible relevant aspects of social identity, the avoidance of imposing feminists’ preoccupation with gender on whatever material being examined, and the maintenance of empirical rigour. Other feminist scholars (e.g., Kitzinger, 2000; Stokoe, 2005) have argued that CA is a useful

tool for exploring feminist issues, particularly from a social constructionist point of view, in that such a perspective can be empirically grounded. That is, a social constructionist can ground their claims about gender in participants' orientations rather than drawing on their own political assumptions and categories, a practice that often reproduces essentialist notions of gender and reinforces gender stereotypes (Sidnell, 2003; Stokoe, 2005).

Neither Wetherell (1998) nor Billig (1999a, 1999b) deny these advantages outright; nevertheless there are other aspects of Schegloff's position they do take issue with. For example, in countering the claim that conversation analysts should "bracket their politics" and begin analysis from a stance of "unmotivated looking", Wetherell (1998), Billig (1999a) and Weatherall (2000) have all pointed out that analysts necessarily impose their own motivations on data, for example, by selecting which fragments of talk to analyze and which analytic concepts to make use of (Stokoe & Smithson, 2001; Swann, 2002). Billig (1999a) takes this view one step further by highlighting various aspects of CA's analytic procedure that contain their own sociological and ideological assumptions including what he calls a "foundational rhetoric" (548). Rather than illustrate his argument with reference to the data Schegloff (1997) presented or introduce his own (as Wetherell did), Billig instead uses Schegloff's own writing on the subject as the basis for his critique. For example, he suggests that the practice of labeling speakers in transcripts without providing a rationale for certain identifications (e.g., "Marsha" and "Tony" as opposed to A and B) implies that CA practitioners take certain background information for granted even though they claim not

to rely on it. In Schegloff's (1999b: 564ff.) reply to Billig, he submits that any practice of identifying speakers can be criticized for its shortcomings, but explains his own preference for the use of personal names because they are the terms most often used by participants (and, according to Schegloff, at least to some extent, they "neutralize the category shadow problem"; that is, aside from gender, and possibly age, personal names are "opaque" with respect to other aspects of a person's identity). Acknowledging the inevitable political and theoretical lenses through which data has to be analyzed, Schegloff clarifies that "participants' own terms" is not to be understood as free from interpretation. However, he emphasizes that this does not mean one should sidestep rigorous, empirical analysis of actual instances of talk nor does it justify importing ideological positions onto data based on one's own political agenda. What precisely is meant by "participants' own terms", or, "orientations", however, is something that has also been the subject of much discussion and debate. Given the significance of this question for the current study, and its ongoing relevance for language and gender studies, it is necessary to explicate how analysts have gone about addressing it.

1.3.2 What counts as a participants' *orientation* to gender?

Depending on the theoretical and methodological approach one adopts, the term *participants' orientations* has variable meanings (Kitzinger, 2000). For CA, the term is "fundamentally grounded in the turn-taking and sequential organization of interaction" and "is meant to capture the way in which utterances are in the first instance contextually understood by the people engaged in conversation with reference to their placement in

and contribution to sequences of action” (Schegloff, 1984, cited in Kitzinger, 2000: 198).

Celia Kitzinger’s (2008: 198) examples are illustrative:

People are analyzably “oriented” to the grammar of unfolding terms of talk in the course of their production, as they monitor and project the trajectory of TCUs-in-progress. The evidence for this “orientation” lies in what participants *do*, both in normative practices of turn-taking as repeatedly observed across data corpora (initially by Sacks et al., 1974), and in the management of breaches of normative practices, such as overlapping talk. [...] Likewise, participants “orientation” to sequence organization is made available—in the first instance to their co-participant(s) but also to us as analysts—by the sequential unfolding of talk. In sum, participants’ orientations are displayed in and through the practices and actions of their talk. (emphasis in original)

In posing the question of what counts as a participants’ orientation *to gender*, what has been taken as the most immediate or straightforward answer is instances in which a participant in interaction makes *explicit* mention of a gender reference/category. The following example from Sacks’ (1992 [1967]: 597ff.) lectures serves as an illustration. Sacks analyzed an episode of talk from a group therapy session involving a therapist, Dan, and a group of teenage boys. Usually, the group also involved a girl, Louise, but Sacks explains that she had recently got a job and so she had announced, prior to this session, that she would no longer be able to attend. Excerpt (1.1) begins with one of the participants, Ken, inquiring about her.

(1.1) Group therapy session (Sacks, 1992: 597)

Ken: So did Louise call or anything this morning?
 Dan: Why, didju expect her t’call?
 Ken: No, I was just kinda hoping that she might be able to figure out some way t-to come to the meetings and still be able t’work. C’z she did seem like she d-wanted to come back, but uh she didn’t think she could.
 Dan: D’you miss her?

Ken: Well in some ways yes, it's- it was uh nice having- having
 → the opposite sex in-in the room, you know, havin' a chick
 in here.

Sacks was interested in how Ken switches from a personal name (“Louise”) to “the opposite sex” to “a chick” in producing a compliment about the absent party. Indeed, he observes that both formulations serve to index Louise’s sex category membership (i.e., her femaleness) as the relevant thing about her (see also, Edwards, 1998). More specifically, Sacks argued that Ken’s formulation of Louise as gendered functions as a “safe” compliment. That is, as the only member of the relevant population (i.e., the group) who is also a member of the category “female”, Ken selects that aspect of Louise’s identity that can “safely” be said about her without “implicitly categorizing” the others in the room and possibly establishing a basis for argument from other group members (599). He can “safely” miss Louise’s contribution to the group as a woman without risking the display of either a personal interest in her or insulting others in the group. In this way, Ken displays an orientation to Louise’s gender (or, in Sacks’ terminology, sex category membership) as relevant.

Another frequently cited—though also, arguably, frequently misunderstood—example of talk in which gender is made relevant by participants via the explicit mention of a gendered category term is presented in Schegloff (1997). In the following videotaped exchange (Excerpt 1.2), Michael (M) and Nancy (N) are having dinner with Shane (S) and Vivian (V).

(1.2) Chicken Dinner 1: 18-29 (Schegloff, 1997: 181)

1 S: [.hehh huh .hhhh Most wishful thinkin
 2 hey hand me some a dat fuckin budder willyou?

3 (0.8)
 4 ?S: °°Oh::yeah°°
 5 (0.1)
 6 N: C'n I have some t[oo
 7 M: [mm-hm] [hm
 8 N: [hm-hm-^hh[m [^he-ha] ha .hehh]
 9 V: [Ye[h[I wa]nt] sometoo.]
 10 S: [N [o:.] [()-
 11 S: No.
 12 (0.2)
 13 S: → Ladies la:st.

Schegloff (1997: 181) explains how Shane produces a request for the butter that is addressed to Michael, and he describes how both participants orient to Shane as requester and Michael as request recipient through their gaze and body behaviour (not shown in transcript). In the course of the granting of the request (i.e., Michael passing Shane the butter), both Nancy and then Vivian ask Shane for it (at lines 6 and 9, respectively), thereby, according to Schegloff, potentially competing with Shane taking the butter for himself. Shane then responds with “the ironic or mock rejection” of Nancy’s (line 10) and then Vivian’s (line 11) requests, displaying himself as the request recipient, and, as it happens, “the request rejecter” (Schegloff, 1997). Following a brief delay, Shane then produces an account for that rejection: “ladies last” (line 13). Here, then, is what Schegloff points to as a participants’ orientation to the relevance of gender when the current activity does not evidently warrant it; that is, Shane makes relevant his co-participants’ gender when it was not ostensibly relevant to rejecting their requests (182).

Schegloff does not provide an extended account of why Shane invokes gender as a relevant feature of the context at that moment, but he does sketch one possible direction of such an account that is consonant with CA’s understanding of participants’

orientations outlined above.⁸ He suggests that, when Nancy and Vivian issue their requests, Shane is confronted with “competing proprieties of action, ones embodied in various adages concerning orders of service: on the one hand ‘first come, first served’, on the other hand ‘ladies first’ (1997: 182). While ‘first come, first served’ would yield “as the proper next action that Shane continue to help himself to the butter”, ‘ladies first’ “yields that Shane defer continuing to serve himself and pass the butter” (Schegloff, 1997). Thus, Shane’s utterance “ladies last” serves as an ironic account of his rejection of Nancy and Vivian’s requests, in a way that reformulates the gendered “rule” he is *not* observing (Schegloff, 1997). It stands as another example, then, of how gender (specifically, a gendered norm of social etiquette) is explicitly invoked and oriented to by a participant in the course of interaction.

A third example whereby gender gets explicitly indexed by participants comes from Hopper & LeBaron’s (1998) discussion of “how gender creeps into talk”. In attempting to understand how gender becomes a relevant feature of context, they analyze cases in which participants “advance gender from background to focal status” (1998: 60). According to Robert Hopper & Curtis LeBaron (1998: 72), drawing on Sacks’ (1992) work on “noticings”, one way this is accomplished is through a sequence of utterances they refer to as a “noticing series”, consisting of three phases: a) “a peripheral gendered

⁸ This example, and his “sketch” of an account of it, appears to be one source of misunderstanding concerning Schegloff’s (1997) articulation of CA’s stance. For example, many language and gender scholars have expressed dissatisfaction with focusing on single utterances (see, for example, Swann, 2002: 53-54; but for a compelling exemplar, see, Sidnell, 2011). However, Schegloff himself concedes that the account he provides of this singular instance is “hardly [...] likely to appeal to critical discourse analysts”. Still, the example is only meant to illustrate how “categories of analysis which are often central to CDA can turn out to be relevant to discourse, and to be oriented to by the parties, even when not ostensibly relevant to the activities otherwise ongoing” (1997: 182).

activity”, which is followed by b) “a gendered noticing”, which, in turn, occasions the possibility of c) “extending of gender’s relevance”. Excerpt (1.3) is an example.

(1.3) Field note (Hopper & LeBaron, 1998: 69)

1 J: a→ I’ve signed up for one of those informal classes about
 2 car maintenance and repair.
 3 P: b→ That’s a good idea. A lot of women can really learn a
 4 lot from these classes
 5 ((short pause))
 6 P: c→ Well I guess there’s a lot of guys who can learn from ‘em
 7 too.

At lines 1-2, Jill (J) announces her enrollment in an auto mechanics class, which constitutes a possible “implicit indexing of gender”, given the cultural stereotype that women know little about cars (1998: 69). Pip’s (P) response explicitly introduces gender as a relevant part of the context (“a lot of women...”), which presupposes this kind of class as of particular relevance to women (Hopper & LeBaron, 1998; lines 3-4). Pip then corrects this presupposition at line 6, indicating an orientation to the possible offense caused by indexing a gender stereotype. In this way, the authors argue that gender’s prominence as an aspect of relevant context “creeps into talk” rather than it being introduced as an explicit issue from the start (Hopper & LeBaron, 1998).

All three of these examples include explicit references to gender in the form of gendered category terms (“chick”, “ladies”, “women”); however, as many scholars have pointed out, an explicit mention is *not* necessary in order to establish relevant participants’ orientations (see, for example, Frith, 1998; Kitzinger, 2000; Sidnell, 2003). That is, orientations to gender can be manifested without being explicitly named or

mentioned.⁹ In an article demonstrating the ways in which CA can be seen as theoretically compatible with certain kinds of feminist research, Kitzinger (2002 [2000]: 57) argues that adopting a CA framework for analysis would be “unbearably limiting” if it meant one could only describe talk as “sexist”, “heterosexist” or “racist” if the participants explicitly oriented to it as such. “Indeed”, she writes, “*it is precisely the fact that sexist, heterosexist and racist assumptions are routinely incorporated into everyday conversations* without anyone noticing or responding to them that way which is of interest to me” (emphasis in original). Kitzinger goes on to provide a personal anecdote that highlights how “limiting” it would be if analysts could only make claims about the relevance of gender when participants make use of explicit terms such as “ladies”.¹⁰ Based on unrecorded field notes, she describes how hotel dining room staff routinely designed questions in a different way based on what appeared to be visual cues of embodied gender. That is, before being seated, a couple consisting of a man and woman would routinely be asked, “Smoking or non-smoking?”, and then would be shown to a table for two. However, when these same hotel staff encountered Kitzinger and her partner (a party composed of two persons of the same sex, in this case, two women), they

⁹ In the article that sparked widespread consideration of these issues and following his discussion of the example outlined in Excerpt (1.2), Schegloff (1997: 182) wrote: “Although this orientation is made overt by the explicit mention of a category term, this is by no means necessary to establish the relevant orientation by participants. [...] Various accounts have been offered of conduct by which orientation to gender [...] can be manifested *without being explicitly named or mentioned*” (my emphasis). He then cites the groundbreaking work of Garfinkel’s (1967) on Agnes, Ochs’s (1992) on indexing gender (see Chapter 5), West & Zimmerman’s (1987) on ethnomethodology’s account of “doing gender”, in addition to Sacks’ (1992) on partitioning constancy as well as portions of Schegloff’s own commentaries from his extensive introductory remarks to Sacks’ lectures (Schegloff, 1997: 182). Hopper & Le Baron (1998: 61) also acknowledge that “not all gendering activity gets indexed explicitly in talk.”

¹⁰ Recall from the discussion of Schegloff’s position above, however, that he did not in fact make any claims about the necessity of *explicit* references to such terms as required to demonstrate gender’s relevance.

would instead be asked: “how many in your party?”, a question that in some sense implied their number was insufficient. Kitzinger suggests that the hotel staff appear to display an orientation to the female gender of the guests in entertaining the possibility of (presumably) two, tardy male partners. According to Kitzinger, this is one of the “seen-but-unnoticed” ways that the construction of a normative, taken-for-granted heterosexual world is accomplished in mundane social interaction, what she labels a display of “heteronormativity” (Kitzinger, 2005). Surely, however, if Kitzinger were to ask the hotel staff to provide an account of their differential use of questioning in such cases, they would deny any intention of displaying a heterosexist presumption. This example, and Kitzinger’s work more generally, then, demonstrates how CA’s view regarding participants’ orientations offers some important challenges for “developing a more politically sensitive approach” to analyzing gender in talk (Kitzinger, 2002: 60), given the requirement that social categories should not be considered unless it can be shown that the participants demonstrably orient to them. For example, how do we as analysts adhere to participants’ concerns while at the same time developing feminist analyses that may present divergent accounts of those concerns (Kitzinger, 2002 [2000])?

Kitzinger suggests that if language and gender scholars “take seriously” the view that gender is socially constructed and continually (re)produced in social interaction (including, but not limited to, talk), then, “we need to explore how ways of talking actively produce speakers as males or females” so that, “instead of seeing language use as marking a gender or sexual identity which exists prior to the act of speaking, we can understand language use as one way of producing that identity” (2002 [2000]: 56).

“Instead of how you talk depends on who you already are,” she writes, “who you are and who you are taken to be, depends on your repeated performance over time of the talk that *constitutes* that identity” (Kitzinger, 2002 [2000]: 56; emphasis in original). In fact, Kitzinger heeds her own recommendation in later empirical work (e.g., 2006 [2005]). Reviewing classic data sets in CA, she shows how recurrent displays of heterosexuality, not usually oriented to by participants, nevertheless demonstrate the taken-for-grantedness of heterosexuality as an identity manifested in everyday talk. Given that such identities are inferred rather than actively displayed, Kitzinger (2006 [2005]: 170) argues that heteronormativity is constructed and reflected in the “very inattentiveness to heterosexuality as a possible identity category”. Kitzinger is aware of her departure from CA’s methodological requirements of relevancy and procedural consequentiality (see Schegloff, 2009 for critical commentary on this aspect of Kitzinger's, among others', work). Still, she advocates its use for analysts who seek to understand “the kinds of social worlds on which the practices and actions of speakers depend, and that they reproduce in their talk” (2005: 224). Indeed, in much of her work, Kitzinger demonstrates some of the ways that the normative heterosexual world in which “doing being ordinary” is signaled through unremarkable ways of talking (which do not overtly or explicitly reference gender) are unavailable to—and problematic for—lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered people.

This issue of whether it matters that participants be demonstrably oriented to gender has also been of concern for certain conversation analysts and discursive psychologists who have used Membership Categorization Analysis (MCA) to investigate

gender categories in use. MCA developed initially out of observations made by Sacks' (1972a, 1972b, 1992) early on in his career, but has, for the most part, been "relegated to the sidelines of CA's development" (Stokoe & Weatherall, 2002: 709) (but see Schegloff, 2007, for more contextual background on this issue with regards to Sacks' work in this area). Stokoe & Smithson (2002: 91) have argued that research on MCA provides a solution to the problem of contextual knowledge and the restricted notion of participants' categories—without "slipping into essentialist claims about particular groups of people"—by focusing on the local management of speakers' categorizations of themselves and others. A central concept for MCA is the notion of the *Membership Categorization Device* (MCD). According to Sacks, the MCD explains how categories of person (or *members* as Sacks called them) may be linked together. In a now-classic example that Sacks found in a book on children's storytelling, "The baby cried. The mommy picked it up", he observed that members hear links between mommy and baby, specifically, that the mommy is in fact the mommy of that baby (Sacks, 1972b). According to Stokoe and Smithson (2001: 227), Sacks aimed to provide "an explanatory apparatus that allows this 'fact' to occur", and the MCD is precisely this apparatus (i.e., the MCD "family" allows for the link between "mommy" and "baby" to be made). Categories, then, come to be linked to particular actions through inferential processes regarding the commonsense expectations about what constitutes a "mommy's" and "baby's" normative behaviour (Stokoe & Smithson, 2001). So, for example, members can infer "being heterosexual" from the category of "wife" (see Kitzinger, 2006 [2005]). Given the "inference rich" (Sacks, 1992: 41) nature of such categories, Speer (2005: 117)

explains, they are also “indexical, context-sensitive resources” that carry subtle nuances of meaning in talk-in-interaction. Accordingly, MCA can show what kinds of membership categories are used by participants, or what kinds of inferences are triggered by particular membership categories. For example, Sacks’ notion of the *standardized relational pair* proposes that, if one category of a collection is mentioned, such as “patient”, the other, such as “therapist”, can be inferred. Thus, an analyst making use of MCA will necessarily draw on extra-textual knowledge (sociocultural knowledge) in order to make sense of participants’ orientations. Stokoe and Smithson (2002: 105) argue that an approach like MCA, that incorporates the participants’ *and the analysts’* sense-making procedures and acknowledges cultural and background knowledge as a resource, provides “the most fruitful framework for studying the links between gender, sexuality and discourse”.

In an incisive review of language and gender scholarship, Stokoe (2005: 338, emphasis in original) argues that MCA offers a way out of the problem in language and gender work—even for some social constructionist approaches—of “making ‘gender difference’ sorts of claims about, for example, the way *women* perform *femininities*”. For Stokoe, such work is problematic because researchers “start out ‘knowing’ the identities whose very constitution ought to be precisely the issue under investigation” (Kulick, 2000). Indeed, she has developed a sustained argument advocating an MCA approach to the study of gender (e.g., Stokoe, 2000, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012). In adopting this approach, she has shown “how gendered ‘common sense’ is constructed, challenged and maintained” (Stokoe, 2012: 235), and “how people constitute themselves as recognizably,

take-for-grantedly, gendered, resist such categorizations or hold each other accountable for normative membership in a category” (Stokoe, 2008: 157). Among her many findings regarding MCA and gender, she has illustrated how disputes between neighbours are routinely gendered so much so that being a “woman” can sufficiently warrant complaint (Stokoe, 2003), how gender can be used as grounds to nominate the only female member in a group as “secretary” (Stokoe, 2006), and how it can also be mobilized in doing denials in police interviews (Stokoe, 2010). Ultimately, Stokoe’s work in this area has sought to demonstrate “how socio-cultural knowledge and cultural understandings can be accounted for in talk-in-interaction and how categorization works, in its anatomical detail, in the activities that comprise everyday, gendered, social life” (Stokoe, 2012: 237).

Of course, the use of MCA to analyze the workings of gender in interaction is not without its problems. Not surprisingly, Schegloff (2007: 476) is highly critical of *any* research that uses “common sense” knowledge to develop analyses. While those who adopt MCA regularly talk about sociocultural knowledge and cultural understandings as invoked in interaction and as something speakers display, orthodox conversation analysts such as Schegloff remain explicit in their rejection of invoking any formulations of contextual knowledge beyond participants’ orientations (Stokoe & Smithson, 2001). Indeed, in a discussion of both his own, and Sacks’, understandings of MCA, Schegloff asserts what he sees as two fundamental issues for analysts:

- 1) how do the ordinary workings of talk and other conduct in interaction serve to get categorization devices made relevant or activated for the parties? And

- 2) how can analysts show parties' orientation to the categories they want to claim are in play, without the parties saying things like, "as a woman, I..." (in fact, saying that does not make it so, and should be tracked for what its speaker is doing with it, and what other category is more compellingly in play) (Schegloff, 2007: 477)

Kitzinger (2007) also proposes analysts focus on these two issues, and she also cautions against the notion that MCDs always offer a solution to the problem of determining the relevance of gender in talk by illustrating how the use of categorical person reference forms (e.g. "woman") are not always necessarily relevantly gendered for participants. Indeed, she problematizes this taken-for-granted assumption, demonstrating how an exclusive focus on such categories can actually obscure the actions participants are also, or otherwise, engaged in. This is because, as Kitzinger (2007: 46) explains, gendered linguistic terms "are neither a necessary (gender is imbricated into talk and interaction in general in numerous ways other than overt labeling) nor sufficient (MCDs can be used without any specific orientation to gender per se and can be doing other interactional work) condition for establishing the relevance of gender to participants in talk-in-interaction" (see, for example, Jackson, 2011; Sidnell, 2003; Stockill & Kitzinger, 2007). She adds, "and even when there is such an analyzable orientation, the concept of 'doing gender' may not provide the best analytic purchase on the key action(s) in which participants are engaged" (Kitzinger, 2007: 46). In other work, Kitzinger (2000) also suggests that focusing on gendered category terms deflects attention away from what she takes to be the core meaning of the phrase "participants' orientation" in CA, which was introduced at the beginning of this section. Instead, she proposes focusing on what participants might be doing in using sex category terms other than "doing gender" (in

other words, what other actions might the use of such terms accomplish) and how participants orient to, negotiate and manage gender in ways other than through the use of sex category terms (Kitzinger, 2007). Jack Sidnell (2003) makes a slightly different, though somewhat related argument, in problematizing another taken-for-granted assumption often made by scholars, namely, the formulation of contexts as “male-only” or “female-only”. He notes that a common problem with early work in language and gender was that it took “all-female” or “all-male” groups to be self-evident, yet he puts forth a compelling argument about the ways such information is actually constructed and managed in the interactions themselves. Specifically, Sidnell (2003: 330) argues that members “routinely go about providing for the recognizability of some setting as ‘exclusively male’” and that analyses should be able “to uncover the everyday methods which underlie the production and recognition of such exclusivity”. As his analysis demonstrates, such work reveals how practices of speaking are not necessarily linked to gender in any straightforward way, but that gender can nevertheless emerge as a recognizable feature of social settings within the course of situated activities. Furthermore, it highlights the fact that there may not be any one-to-one correlation between such practices of speaking and the perceived gender of participants; instead, such practices can be deployed in courses of action that provide for the production and recognition of gender. Accordingly, as Sidnell (2003: 332) explains, it is the analyst’s job to discover the systematic, grounded ways members of a society methodically go about producing their gender as a recognizable “social fact”.

One feminist linguist who has emphasized the role of gender as a *structural* “fact”—and thus, views gender as having an overarching “relevance” regardless of whether participants in interaction observably orient to it as such—is Deborah Cameron.¹¹ She believes, as do many other feminist scholars, that gender is a pervasive social category that informs how one is perceived, how one’s behaviour is interpreted and how one is ultimately responded to across interactions at all stages of life (Weatherall, 2000). Drawing on the insights of Gricean pragmatics (Grice, 1975) and Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson’s elaboration of those insights in relevance theory (Sperber & Wilson, 1986), Cameron (e.g., 1998, 2005) highlights the ways in which an inference-based account of meaning calls into question the idea that gender has to be overtly oriented to by participants to count as relevant for an analysis of what an utterance means or how it is interpreted. “Getting at” gender, she argues, requires going beyond or “underneath” the surface of linguistic data in order to reconstruct participants’ interpretive processes (Cameron, 2006 [1998]: 80). She writes: “In an inferential account of communication it is assumed that conversationalists in their active efforts to make sense of discourse have far more to bring to bear on that discourse than what is explicitly and overtly encoded in it [as is the case in the use of gendered category terms, the central focus of MCA, for example]; furthermore, it is routinely expected that they *will* ‘go beyond the data’ in this way” (Cameron, 2005: 327). For Cameron, then, it is possible to argue for the potential relevance of gender (or, as she puts it, “conversationalists’

¹¹ McElhinny (2003b) also suggests the need for feminist scholars to engage more fully in accounts of gender as a structural principle, with the understanding that it allocates access to discursive and material resources (see also, McElhinny, 2003a)

background knowledge and beliefs about gender”, 2005:327) even in cases where gender is not—or does not appear to be—explicitly at issue. This argument, of course, bears some resemblance to that outlined by Kitzinger (2000) above; for example, both see these background assumptions of participants as operating at a “global” rather than “local” level, in the sense that they preexist the interaction being analyzed. Kitzinger is aware of how this view departs from orthodox conversation analytic procedures and is careful to acknowledge her “unusual analytic strategy” (2005: 223). Cameron, too, acknowledges that invoking such assumptions is “going beyond the data”, but from her perspective, “if you do not invoke them, you are arguably missing an important dimension of participants’ own behavior—the use they routinely make of knowledge drawn from sources other than the ongoing interaction itself” (2005: 329-330). Indeed, Cameron, among others (such as Stokoe & Smithson, 2001, 2002, for example), argues that such assumptions are a crucial part of interpreting utterances in communication (for both participants and analysts).

What does this inference-based account of meaning Cameron proposes look like? First of all, she notes that most social constructionists would agree that linguistic forms have the property of what Deborah Tannen (1993) calls “relativity”; that is, there is not a direct, one-to-one mapping of linguistic forms onto discourse functions, but instead, the relationship between form and function is typically many-to-many. Given this, Cameron explains, in any given interaction, from moment to moment, participants are faced with the task of narrowing down “the multiplicity of interpretations that might in principle be licensed by an utterance or turn-at-talk” and of coming to a decision about what it means

(2005: 326). That decision, she points out, need not be entirely accurate (i.e., perfectly matched to the speaker's intentions) but only "good enough" to allow interaction to proceed (Cameron, 2006 [1998]). Thus, "both conversation and the analysis of it, then, involves a series of guesses" (81). Of course, we do not have access to the internal states of others' minds (either as participants to interaction or as analysts); all we can do is "use what people say as a basis for constructing inferences about what they intended" (Cameron, 2006 [1998]: 81). According to a pragmatic account of communication, we do this by the available background assumptions about roles, rights and obligations that we bring to bear on interpretation or that we infer others do.

To serve as one example, Cameron (1998) analyzes a single turn-at-talk, "Is there any ketchup, Vera?" issued by a man to his wife (Vera) during dinnertime, and she describes the process of how Vera comes to interpret this utterance as an indirect request for her to get it for him. Vera—like any other conversationalist—goes beyond the surface form of the utterance (i.e., a yes-no interrogative that could be construed as a request for information) by drawing on general pragmatic principles (e.g., Grice's *Cooperative Principle* and Sperber and Wilson's *Principle of Relevance*) as well as context-specific assumptions to interpret what her husband means. The former have nothing to do with gender; the latter, in Cameron's view, do. That is, Vera draws on her knowledge about the world and the specific context of her husband's utterance to make the most obvious inference that he wants ketchup at that moment precisely because he has just been served food. But in order to understand why Vera interprets her husband's utterance as a request that *she*, in particular, go and get it requires a consideration of

certain taken-for-granted assumptions about their respective social roles. As Cameron (2006 [1998]: 88) describes it:

Vera and her husband apparently agree that if he wants ketchup, she should fetch it. None of this is specified in the form of the utterance, but it is part of the contextual information used to interpret the utterance. [...] The actors in this scene are playing recognizable roles which are gendered as well as context specific: the roles of the traditional husband and wife having dinner at home.

Even though gender is not explicitly mentioned, then, Cameron suggests that it is relevant in terms of a conventional division of labour that exists in traditional marriages (whereby wives provide domestic service to husbands). She recalls Elinor Ochs' (1992) observation that "few features of language directly and exclusively index gender", and she says, "rather the use of strategies that conventionally index more specific roles (e.g. "mother" or in this case "domestic service provider") may connote gender through a process of inference" (2006 [1998]: 89). In this example, then, Cameron suggests that gender is made relevant through the kind of inference that would be drawn by Vera, as wife, and the kind of conventional role (and obligations) indexed through the husband's use of the indirect request form.¹² Accordingly, this pragmatic approach to communication treats the structural fact of gender not as something that must inevitably show up in the surface forms of utterances, but as something that participants may or may not treat as relevant to their interpretation (Cameron, 2006 [1998]).

¹² It is worth pointing out that Cameron is not suggesting that this particular linguistic form "Is there any X?" always *has* to be gendered. That is, it does not universally apply to all married couples nor is it confined to them. Indeed, as Cameron points out, any participant can use it in addressing another person performing a service role. For example, Vera could adopt this strategy herself if placed in a situation of being a recipient rather than a provider of domestic services (Cameron, 2006 [1998]: 89) So, this approach highlights the fact that the same person can display different understandings of the same utterance depending on who one is talking to, from what position and under what circumstances.

To a conversation analyst such as Schegloff, this inferential account would be unsatisfactory, given CA's central concern with grounding one's claims in the *observable* orderliness of talk-in-interaction and not in participants' intentions or reasoning about such intentions. Cameron (2005) acknowledges the strength and utility of CA's approach in its focus on the organization of talk as it unfolds and its ability to provide answers to the question, "why that now?" As a micro-analytic approach, she writes, CA can "give an account of what is being accomplished locally by the production of a particular turn at the particular moment in the unfolding interaction" but, she goes on to say, "[...] there are clearly supra-local patterns in the way gender is enacted and talked about, which cannot be accounted for using a purely "local" analytic approach. To answer the question 'why that now?' it is often necessary to presuppose an answer to the prior question 'why that ever?' (Cameron, 2005: 329). For Cameron, the fact that participants recurrently treat certain issues as requiring careful management only makes sense in relation to the background assumptions they bring to bear on interaction. Within a pragmatic perspective, she contends, "in 'going beyond the data,' or bringing 'global' assumptions to bear on local instances, analysts need not be automatically thought of as imposing their own procedures in place of the participants. In any inferential approach to communication, it is axiomatic that participants are using other information besides what is actually encoded in discourse to derive meaning from what is said" (Cameron, 2005: 332). Cameron is of the belief that attempts to model this process in "principled" ways may help those interested in the relationship between language and gender "to arrive at a

better understanding of—and perhaps a greater degree of consensus about—the relevance of gender” for communicative behaviour (2005: 332).

To briefly summarize, this section has attempted to elucidate CA’s position—articulated via Schegloff (1997, *inter alia*)—regarding the kinds of warrants necessary for analysts to make claims about the relevance of gender and to outline some of the main responses and critiques of it. CA’s focus on participants’ orientations to social identities and categories such as gender no doubt provides an empirical grounding for claims about gender’s relevance and thus also helps analysts to avoid imposing their own ideological positions on the data. As has been shown, however, some scholars have suggested that the boundary for what counts as an orientation perhaps needs to be thought of as more permeable/variable than what CA’s methodological requirements of relevance and procedural consequentiality permit. While there is general agreement regarding those cases in which gender is explicitly named or mentioned and relevantly oriented to by participants (as in Excerpts 1.1-1.3), there is less so regarding those cases involving the use of background knowledge and taken-for-granted assumptions in developing analyses. Schegloff himself would not accept the latter form of research as remaining faithful to CA; however, that does not mean that the arguments that have been put forward for grounding claims about the relevance of gender in the analysis of interaction and discourse—even in the absence of explicit or demonstrable orientations—are not persuasive (e.g., Stokoe and Kitzinger’s inferring aspects of social identity from shared background or sociocultural knowledge; Cameron’s inferring the interpretation of meaning based on sociocultural and interpersonal knowledge). On the contrary, these

scholars offer convincing accounts of gender's implicit or indirect relevance that call attention to some of CA's limitations and highlight the inevitable issues inherent in any approach that seeks to analyze social categories such as gender (for other recent examples that take up these issues, see Speer & Stokoe, 2011b). For some, "the salience of gender in social life is such that participants in interaction are always aware of themselves and others as gendered beings, whether or not they refer to gender explicitly" (Cameron, 2009: 5).

In keeping with this view, this dissertation will offer another account of gender's relevance through indirect means. Specifically, the case will be made that Clinton's laughter in broadcast news interviews was subject to recontextualization by the mainstream media in such a way as to bring an awareness of gender to the fore. Drawing on Cameron (2005), the analysis proposes that to understand why the mainstream media's characterization of Clinton's laughter as a "cackle" is gendered requires going beyond its denotative meaning (akin to the earlier discussion of "surface forms" in talk), and taking into consideration "a cluster of assumptions and beliefs about social roles and behaviors to which that appellation is likely to direct the [recipient's/reader's] attention" (329), thus enabling one to infer that "The Clinton Cackle" is, in fact, a gendered representation.

1.3.3 Who counts as a *participant* in considering orientations to gender?

Just as there have been critiques of CA in terms of what constitutes a participant's *orientation* to gender, so too have there been critiques related to *who* counts as a

participant in analysts' claims about gender orientations. Indeed, some scholars have argued that CA's "narrow" view of "participant" limits precisely whose interpretations can be considered relevant to and consequential for an interaction (Blommaert, 2005; Cameron, 2008; Ehrlich, 2002, 2006, 2007).

One feminist scholar whose work has drawn attention to this issue is Susan Ehrlich. Much of her work centers on the institutional context of legal settings, and, in particular, courtroom/trial interaction. In some of this work, Ehrlich (2007) draws attention to the distinct participation framework (Goffman, 1981) that characterizes a courtroom trial. As is the case with many other forms of institutional talk, although talk generally proceeds on a dyadic basis (i.e., between lawyers and witnesses), ultimately it is designed with some third-party recipient(s) (i.e., a judge and/or jury) in mind. In Goffman's terms, these third-party recipients are "ratified overhearers" who constitute the "indirect target" of trial talk (Levinson, 1988, cited in Ehrlich, 2007: 456). What is important for Ehrlich's analysis of courtroom interaction is Goffman's recognition that participants who may not actively and directly participate in the interaction (i.e., judges in trial contexts) can still offer interpretations of it that are not only consequential for the participants involved but are so in specifically gendered ways. So, for example, in an analysis of court transcripts from a Canadian criminal trial dealing with sexual assault, Ehrlich (2002) finds that, despite the absence of any explicit orientations to gender in the trial itself, gender *became* a relevant feature of the context when considering the ratified overhearer's (i.e., the judge's) judgment. In this research, Ehrlich first employs a technical, turn-by-turn analysis of the trial transcripts, consistent with a CA approach,

and observes that the participants orient to the type of trial rather than explicitly to gender. However, given that explicit orientations to or understandings of gender were made relevant in the judge's decision, she argues, those understandings became significant—i.e., consequential for the participants—to the outcome of the trial. As a result, Ehrlich suggests expanding the notion of “participant” in certain speech events in order to expand analysts' access to the way that cultural norms (in her case, norms regarding “the intelligibility of gendered meanings”) may regulate participants' enactments of (more or less “authorized”) social identities, gendered or otherwise (2007: 456).

The idea that certain aspects of participants' identities (e.g., gender, race) may not be made relevant by the immediate participants to interaction at the moment they are interacting but may nonetheless be made consequential for those participants by others is one that sociolinguist, Jan Blommaert, has also raised. For Blommaert (2005), one of the principal problems with CA is that its view of context is restricted to what happens *within* specific communicative events. According to Blommaert, much of what is made of interaction—by participants, not just analysts—in terms of the way meaning-attributing practices are ascribed to it, is based on “the *post-hoc* recontextualization of earlier bits of [talk] that were produced, of course, in a different contextualization process, at a different time, by different people, and for different purposes” (2005: 46). Of particular concern to Blommaert with respect to CA, then, is that it does not consider such “post-hoc” accounts of interaction or the way that singular instances of talk may be embedded within larger

sequences of *interaction* (emphasis mine). In the following, Blommaert explains why this matters:

One of the fundamental features of communication in contemporary societies is the fact that it is often the object of complex trajectories: texts, discourses, images get shipped around in a process in which they are repeatedly decontextualized and recontextualized. In such processes, all kinds of transformations occur, often drastically different from the ones performed in the initial act of communication. Consequently, categories or other features that did not occur as salient in the initial act are often added to it in later phases. For instance, talk can be “gendered”, “raced” or “classed” afterwards, by someone who was not involved in the initial act of communication. (Blommaert, 2006: 76)

This fundamental feature of discourse articulated by Blommaert here—the ability of talk to be lifted out of its originating setting and to travel across discursive contexts—seems especially salient in/for institutional settings, wherein talk originally produced in one setting will be written down, summarized, cited and discussed by participants not directly engaged in the originating context of interaction (Blommaert, 2005; Ehrlich, 2007).

Given that the overarching context of this dissertation involves a distinct form of institutional talk (i.e., political discourse in broadcast news interviews), this feature of discourse is also particularly salient for the argument to be developed herein. If we consider it in the light of the nature of the type of interactions that are the focus of this dissertation—contemporary broadcast news interviews—specific characteristics of interviews make components or aspects of them particularly susceptible to travelling across contexts and into other discursive spaces (and modes of communication). First, talk is done in the service of displaying politicians’ views and opinions for a public audience. That is, just as courtroom interaction is characterized by a distinct participation framework in which talk is designed for an overhearing third-party, so too are the

seemingly dyadic exchanges that take place in the broadcast news interview between interviewer and interviewee. In the case of broadcast interactions, talk is designed with the listening and viewing audience (“ratified overhearers” to use Goffman’s terminology) in mind. Second, given the performative dimension of this kind of talk, and the important status of the participants (i.e., politicians during election campaigns), these forms of interaction constitute enduring forms of communication. For example, what transpires in an interview is subject to being written down, reported on, posted on *YouTube*, linked to an individual’s *Facebook* page, discussed on the 6 o’clock news, etc. Components of talk in this interactional environment, then, “can be understood along gender lines by *other* participants, later, and in consequential ways for the ‘original’ participants” (Blommaert, 2005: 56; emphasis in original). Finally, news interview talk is a consequential form of public discourse. The content of the discussions that take place can have far-reaching effects on issues relating to policy, election campaigns, and matters of public opinion. With these features of news interview talk in mind, the final section of this chapter will now situate the current study in light of the aforementioned discussion and outline the focus of the remaining chapters.

1.4 Situating the current study

The sections leading up to this one have introduced much of the information that forms the backdrop for the current study. The first substantive section began by introducing the method to be employed in the next three chapters, CA, and has outlined its relationship to analyzing talk in institutions and to analyzing talk in broadcast news interviews more

specifically. It has also presented an overview of CA's distinct view of context. The second section described the CA view of gender, a perspective grounded in ethnomethodological soil. This led to a discussion of a fundamental theoretical and methodological question concerning whether and in what ways it is appropriate for analysts to draw on social categories such as gender in their analyses of discourse. While an orthodox CA position, as represented by Schegloff, holds that it is only relevant to do so when participants demonstrably orient to such social categories as relevant, others have raised important questions and issues concerning what "counts" as a "demonstrable orientation" (e.g., how explicit do such orientations need to be in order to be analyzed as a "relevant" social category?) as well as who "counts" as a "participant" in making claims about gender's relevance (e.g., is the interaction(s) shaped by a special kind of participation framework?). Where orthodox CA subscribes to the view that analysts should not go "beyond the data" nor impose analytic categories of their own choosing in place of participants' own categories, for many feminists, such an approach is criticized as too restrictive or constraining. Such criticisms are grounded in the claim that CA denies the relevance of gender as an overarching and organizing principle of social organization, and thus limits analysts from taking full account of its far-reaching effects on talk-in-interaction as well as "talk-out-of-interaction" (Blommaert, 2005: 56). Given all of this, the findings reported in this dissertation regarding Hillary Rodham Clinton's laughter in news interviews—dubbed by the mainstream media, "The Clinton Cackle"—are meant to serve as one approach that contributes to this debate about the relevance of gender in discourse-based research.

The first component of the analysis presented in this dissertation employs the methodology of CA to illustrate how Clinton's laughter is in fact just one instance of a generic interactional practice employed by other (male) politicians as interviewees in the context of broadcast news interviews, contrary to the kinds of characteristic explanations offered by media. Crucially, the analysis shows how this practice is not inherently gendered, is not oriented to by any of the participants as relevantly gendered (either explicitly or implicitly), nor is it a practice employed exclusively by her. Following Blommaert (2005) and Ehrlich (e.g., 2007), the analysis then moves to consider other "participant" orientations to Clinton's laughter, that is, members of the overhearing audience (i.e., the mainstream media)—the unaddressed but targeted recipients of the talk. The argument developed with respect to these representations necessarily extends beyond a CA approach to the theoretical lenses of intertextuality and indexicality and makes the claim that Clinton's laughter was recontextualized in a way that *made gender relevant*. Ultimately, then, what the analysis reveals is how a generic interactional practice—in this case, laughter—is made subject to interpretations and relevance assessments by *other* participants, at a subsequent point in time, in ways that became consequential for this individual woman politician, and that have broader implications for women in politics.

1.4.1 Outline of chapters

The remaining chapters are organized as follows. Chapter 2 provides an overview of previous research on laughter from a social-interactional perspective, including studies

from ordinary conversation as well as institutional settings. It reports the main findings regarding its sequential organization and what it contributes to the formulation of action(s) in specific interactional contexts. Chapters 3 and 4 present the analysis of politicians' laughter and Hillary Rodham Clinton's laughter in broadcast news interviews, respectively, from the perspective of CA. The third and final empirical chapter of the dissertation (Chapter 5) leaves behind the originating contexts of talk-in-interaction in which Clinton's (and other politicians') laughter occurred and turns attention to talk-out-of-interaction, specifically to *post-hoc* interpretations of Clinton's laughter by mainstream media. In making the case for the gendered nature of these representations, an intertextual approach that additionally draws on the theoretical concept of indexicality is adopted. Chapter 6 concludes the study by presenting a summary of the empirical chapter's main findings and their implications for research on laughter, language and gender, and politics more generally. Finally, the dissertation closes with some suggestions for future research.

Chapter 2 - Laughter: A Social-Interactional Perspective

2.1 Introduction

What is laughter? What does it look like and sound like in the context of social interaction? How is laughter organized within the ebb and flow of human social interaction? These are all questions to be addressed in this chapter. The goal is to provide an overview of previous research on laughter from a social-interactional perspective, which treats laughter as an embodied, multimodal and locally structured social phenomenon. It begins by considering common definitions of laughter, and then by describing what it sounds and looks like from such a perspective. Particular attention will be devoted to the sequential organization of laughter, its prospective and retrospective dimensions, and the multiple actions it accomplishes in the local, sequential environments in which it occurs. The principal findings concerning laughter in the management of interactional trouble will briefly be summarized given its significance for the analyses presented in subsequent chapters (3 and 4). Finally, the chapter closes with a discussion of the fundamental practices through which participants can and do respond to laughter as this, too, lays important groundwork for the argument put forward in Chapters 3 and 4.

2.2 What is laughter?

It seems appropriate to begin by addressing the question, “What is laughter?”, and as good a place as any to start is with a definition. *The Oxford English Dictionary* defines

the act of laughing as follows: “To make the spontaneous sounds and movements of the face and body usual in expressing joy, mirth, amusement, or (sometimes) derision; to have the same reaction in response to being tickled; to emit laughter.”¹⁴ Defining what is essentially a vernacular category is no easy task, and, although useful on some level, the result is necessarily selective, revealing important emphases and absences. Pointing to the “sounds and movements of the face and body”, for example, locates laughter as both a vocal and embodied action, the production of which combines different modalities (e.g., the production of laugh tokens/particles, facial expressions, and body movements) (Haakana, 1999). The OED definition further implies both mental (e.g., expressing derision) and physical (e.g. tickling) causes of laughter, not solely derived from humour. Interestingly, the adjective “spontaneous” suggests that laughter is uncontrollable and uncontrolled, and, yet, there are contexts in which people produce laughter in very controlled and systematic ways. Indeed, one of the notable absences from the OED definition is some indication of laughter’s social and communicative components, for example, when and where laughter occurs, how it takes on meaning and comes to be understood in the variety of ways that it does. As Phillip Glenn (2003: 8) writes,

Laughter [...] covers a wide variety of behaviors, manifested in different sights and sounds, occasioned by diverse stimuli, and contributing in a multitude of ways to human interaction. [...] It is a physiological process and a perceptual phenomenon. It is universal among humans and probably shared with certain other species, prompting theorizing about its origins and evolutionary functions. It is behavior produced in response to certain stimuli. It is a lived experience involving one’s body and emotions. It can make people feel good, and it draws attention for its possible physical and psychic benefits. It is communicative action, influenced by and contributing to social interaction. As a prime indicator of humor or play, it

¹⁴ Retrieved from: <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/106250?p=emailAINztiANfxYco&d=106250>.

helps us understand what makes something funny, how we signal a playful mood, and what constitutes mirth. As an integral (yet commonly overlooked) part of our communicative repertoire, often accompanying linguistic activity, laughter invites examination of details of its systematic organization and the part it plays in bringing people closer together or pushing them apart.

Being the complex phenomenon that it is, a single work cannot possibly capture all of the dimensions of laughter nor all of its intricacies, especially since it can be considered from a number of different perspectives. For example, research that focuses on laughter as physical action and physiological process attempts to answer the question, "How do people laugh?" Such work treats laughter as natural, a matter of instinct, a pure expression of emotion and thus beyond our conscious control (Glenn, 2003). The methods used to describe laughter under this point of view tend to isolate laughs from their naturally occurring contexts. Many philosophical and cognitive-psychological approaches to laughter have focused on the question, "Why do people laugh?" These theories treat laughter as a response to some external or internal stimulus, and, most commonly, something humorous (for an overview of such theories, see Holland, 1982; or, more recently, see Vöge & Wagner, 2010). By contrast, a social-interactional approach to laughter, which characterizes the research reviewed here and subsequently undertaken in the analysis, reveals that laughter is much more than a simple response to humour. Under this approach, the principal question is "What are people doing when they laugh?" Answering this question requires focusing on the production and

interpretation of laughter as intentional social action in interaction.¹⁵ In this view, laughter is treated as ‘a systematically produced, socially organized activity’ (Jefferson, Sacks, & Schegloff, 1987: 152), as opposed to an instinct or involuntary reflex, or a causal stimulus-response. The methods used to describe when and where it occurs, and in what ways people organize, produce, respond to, and interpret laughter focus on naturalistic data from a range of contexts rather than what is generated under somewhat artificial circumstances or in experimental settings. In summarizing and presenting the research that follows, claims about the psychological or emotional states of persons laughing are minimized in favour of descriptions of what people display to each other and accomplish in and through their laughter.

2.3 What we know about laughter in talk-in-interaction

This section reviews what we know about laughter from previous studies that take a social-interactional perspective. It begins with a brief discussion of what laughter sounds like (2.3.1) and what it looks like (2.3.2) from this perspective, and then moves to describe some of the key findings of conversation analytic studies (2.3.3-2.3.4), all of which lay important groundwork for the ensuing analysis.

2.3.1 What does laughter sound like?

Within social-interactional studies, laughter has long been described not as a linguistic

¹⁵ Following Glenn (2003: 32), “intentional” is used here in the phenomenological sense; that is, as “a guided doing with ascribable, accountable purposes” and is not meant to suggest conscious awareness or motive.

construction but an acoustic one, with no readily apparent semantic or syntactic features (Schenkein, 1972).¹⁶ Conversation analysts use the term *laughter* to refer to both *freestanding* tokens/units¹⁷ (e.g., typically represented in transcripts as, for example, ‘heh, hah, huh’), and a variety of other speech sounds commonly described as practices of *within-speech laughter* or *speech-laugh* (Ford & Fox, 2010). The central acoustic feature of laughter is aspiration /h/. And, it is the reiteration of this sound, or its combination with a limited range of others that enable both participants to interaction and analysts alike to identify an utterance as laughter. As Munro Edmonson (1987: 23) describes:

This fundamental consonant [‘h’] is subject to two kinds of variation, depending on openness of the mouth and glottalization. One may laugh with the mouth closed [typically represented with ‘m’ in transcripts], half open [(‘n’)], or fully open [(‘h’)]; and one may accompany any of these sounds with glottalization. The laughter consonants may be accompanied by any vowel or by a vocalic nasal, /m/ or /n/. These vowels are normally pure rather than diphthongized, and only rarely is the vowel quality changed within a laugh utterance (i.e., [what can be produced during] the space of a single breath). The vowels are subject to modulation of length, pitch, and stress. It is clear that the phonetics of laughter is more restrictive than that of speech, though even within this range there is ample room for variation.

Cecilia Ford & Barbara Fox’s (2010) more recent work offers an even more detailed account of some of the salient phonetic practices associated with *within-speech laughter* including: “lengthened and loud aspiration on voiceless stops, lengthened fricatives, localized modulations of pitch and loudness on vowels, high pitch, and laryngeal constriction on vowels” (341). As they point out, however, all of these phonetic practices

¹⁶ Similarly, within linguistics, it has been characterized as a non-verbal device and as a “marginal vocalization” within the category of paralinguistics (Apte, 1985).

¹⁷ A terminological distinction is adopted by some phoneticians and psychologists where *calls* refer to laugh pulses analogous to and co-extensive with syllables (what are commonly described by conversation analysts as *pulses* or *particles*), while *bouts* constitute a continuous sequences of calls (or *units* in CA) (O’Connell & Kowal, 2008: 166); however, it is not found to be warranted in this dissertation.

may be deployed in different interactional contexts to distinct ends. For example, loudness and lengthening of stops and fricatives and high pitch can all indicate emphasis. Together these practices provide a wide range of variability within individuals, and alongside patterns of tempo, melody and phrasing, can constitute an individual's "musical signature" (Edmonson, 1987: 32).

Jonathan Potter & Alexa Hepburn (2010: 1543) take a more "cautious approach" to the category of laughter, raising questions about the prosodic and interactional boundaries of the phenomenon and different styles of sound, breathiness, and so on, that may or may not be treated as laughter. They argue that even when many of the phonetic practices outlined above are produced together on a single word, they do not unequivocally constitute *within-speech laughter*. As they point out, crying, for example, displays many of the same phonetic properties often characterized as laughter (see Hepburn, 2004). Jefferson (2010) has also observed that there are many sounds which are not themselves laughter but are possibly *laughter-relevant*. In response to these kinds of observations, Potter & Hepburn (2010: 1543) propose the term, *interpolated particles of aspiration* or IPAs as a "less analytically presumptive" description for aspiration that gets vernacularly described as laughter when it occurs *within-speech*. Examples are provided in (2.1) below (in bold face).

(2.1) (Potter & Hepburn, 2010: 1545; ex.2-4)

Caller: The type of punishm(h)ent .hh

Caller: Tim is a little po(h)rk(h)er huh heh

Cou: I'm .hhh I'm very gratef(h)u(h)u(h)ul

Potter & Hepburn outline the structural features of IPAs: they are not propositional; they

are highly discrete objects, which can accompany laughter, but frequently do not; they can be a highly targeted conversational resource (i.e., their introduction into particular lexical items can be crucial to the action being performed); and, they can be used with relatively little disruption to the overall delivery of an utterance (Potter & Hepburn, 2010: 1545-1546). In this way, Potter and Hepburn suggest that IPAs are similar to features like emphasis, volume and pitch shifts. Whatever terminology is adopted, as Edmonson (1987: 29) remarks, “the explication of laughter is not purely, perhaps not even primarily, a matter of phonetics.” While participants in interaction do in fact orient to its length and acoustic shape, laughter comes to do what it does by reference to its precise placement in the course of the activities it is used to accomplish (Glenn, 1989; O'Donnell-Trujillo & Adams, 1983). This, then, requires consideration of the sequential organization of laughter, which first warrants a brief discussion of how laughter is represented in conversation analytic studies.

2.3.2 What does laughter look like?

As Ford & Fox (2010: 340) observe, studies of laughter from an interactional perspective owe much to the extensive body of literature on laughter by Gail Jefferson. Jefferson's pioneering work on laughter (e.g., 1979, 1984, 1985) has provided both the transcriptional foundation and the analytic tools for such research. Different systems for transcribing interactional data, in general, and laughter, in particular, embody different assumptions about what is important to notice and how various features are related to one another. The conversation analytic transcription system originally developed by

Jefferson (see Atkinson & Heritage, 1984) uses symbols to represent both verbal and vocal actions. These symbols indicate such features as timing, pitch and intonation, various aspects of voice quality (e.g., volume, emphasis), and even to some extent, breathing patterns.¹⁸

Unlike other systems of representation, laughter is not merely noted but is actually transcribed, as in (2.2).¹⁹

- (2.2) (Glenn, 2003: 125; SIUC S1)
- Stan: What are you doin' tonigh, hh
 Dave: ↑Uh::hhh ↓I don'know man I gotta study for
 that test.
 Stan: You ain't got no damn test.
 Dave: .ehh Yeah I'm gonna go out an' get baked an'
 → drink 'n nhhh[[.uhh.uhh].uhh.uh
 Stan: → [heh hah [(.euhh)]

Hearable aspiration, including laughter, is indicated by the letter “h”²⁰, and when laughter occurs within speech, it is enclosed in round brackets, as in (2) above.

¹⁸ As Ford & Fox (2010) point out, the current state of transcribing laughter certainly requires refinements from the point of view of linguists (for example, distinguishing features such as breathy voice, lengthened and loud aspiration voiceless stops, modulations of loudness and possibly pitch, smile voice, etc.); however, its limitations are not seen as impinging on the argument put forward in this dissertation, and thus, the current system will suffice.

¹⁹ See Appendix A for a complete list of transcription conventions.

²⁰ As Haakana (2012) reminds us, although we tend to represent the sounds of laughter as tokens such as *heh, hah, huh*, “people do not—for the most part—laugh through such clearly distinguishable tokens.” As a multimodal phenomenon, laughter is more complex than most conversation and discourse analytic procedures suggest, in part due to the fact that the vocal elements of laughter can be difficult to capture orthographically. The written version of such tokens, then, is partly symbolic—indicating the type of sounds laughter consists of—and partly iconic, given the conventionalized written versions of laughter (e.g., in literature, text messages, computer-mediated communication, etc.) we have come to associate with these tokens.

For specific qualities related to laughter (e.g., breathiness, *smile voice*²¹), beginnings and endings are not discrete and clearly bounded in the talk itself. In subsequent transcripts, following Ford & Fox (2010), approximate beginnings and endings are indicated using square brackets (i.e., where these laugh-relevant sounds begin to be evident and a point after which they are no longer evident). All of this permits analysis of how variations in the acoustic structure of laughter figure in its sequential organization alongside talk and other relevant components of the interactional scene, issues to which we now turn.

2.3.3 The sequential organization of laughter

The sequential organization of laughter within talk-in-interaction has been researched within CA over the last forty or so years. One important strand of this research has focused on the initiation of laughter in either first position (i.e., current speaker initiates laughter) or second position (i.e., recipient initiates laughter in response). Previous studies on laughter's initiation in first position have dealt in various ways with its prospective dimension (2.3.3.1), while those on the initiation of laughter in second position have done so with respect to its retrospective dimension (2.3.3.2). Related to the issues of who initiates laughter (e.g., current speaker or recipient) and in what position (e.g., first or second) is a second major strand of research—what the presence or absence

²¹ *Smile voice* is used in CA to describe a particular voice quality achieved when a speaker smiles during the production of talk. Lavin & Maynard (2002) note two studies that offer technical specifications of smile voice and that evidence its detection both visually and audibly (Shor, 1978; Tartter, 1980). Both studies report that smile voice describes an audible alteration of the vocal tract. That is, when individuals speak, their mouths are usually placed in a somewhat neutral position. However, when the vocal tract is moved from this position, as in the case of smiling, the “mouth orifice widens, shortening the vocal tract and its opening enlarges,” thereby altering voice quality (Shor, 1978: 82). As a result, the fundamental and formant frequencies and amplitude of speech are noticeably raised when individuals smile (Tartter, 1980).

of laughter accomplishes in the doing of particular activities. A discussion of that strand of research, however, requires consideration of an important distinction—whether and to what extent laughter indexes seriousness or non-seriousness—relevant to the range of complex interactional activities laughter can accomplish (2.3.3.3). While a comprehensive overview of all of laughter’s diverse functions is beyond the scope of the present discussion, one systematic and recurrent interactional environment for laughter relevant to the argument put forward in this dissertation is also briefly described and that is its use in managing various forms of interactional trouble (2.3.3.4). Finally, a third significant strand of research concerns the practices for responding to laughter in both dyadic and multi-party interactions (2.3.3.5).

2.3.3.1 The prospective dimension

The relationship between laughter and its prospective consequences has been the subject of a number of previous studies. Jefferson (1979), for example, introduced the notion of *inviting laughter*. In Jefferson’s view, a current speaker’s initial laugh proposes the relevance of a particular treatment in response (i.e., laughter) and invites the recipient to align with current speaker in that treatment (i.e., laughing in response) (Glenn, 1991/92). Jefferson identified two sequential environments where a current speaker can explicitly initiate what she called a *laugh invitation* by laughing first: *post-utterance completion* (2.3; arrowed) or *within speech* (2.4; arrowed).

(2.3) (Jefferson, 1979: 80)

Dan: I thought that wz pretty outta sight didju
Hear me say’r you a junkie.

(0.5)
 Dan: → hheh heh=
 Dolly: =hheh-heh-heh

(2.4) (Jefferson, 1979: 83)

K: But going sou::th.
 F: Et the end of Harbor
 → Bouleva(HH)ard=
 K: =ah ha::ha::ha::

In (2.3), Dan's utterance reaches completion and, then, following a brief gap, Dan produces a first laugh. Dolly's laughter begins some distance from his utterance, providing evidence that Dolly treats his laughter—and not his talk—as an invitation. In (2.4), the speaker F constructs a laugh-specific recognition point by inserting particles of within-speech laughter into his utterance, which the recipient, K, treats as having provided a cue that laughter is a relevant response at that point. In both cases, then, a current speaker's initial laughter is treated as an invitation to recipients to laugh in response.

Of course, there are other ways, aside from laughing, in which current speaker can invite laughter, or otherwise provide for the relevance of laughter as a subsequent action. Perhaps most obviously speakers can produce talk that is recognizably “humourous” or “laughable” such as jokes and puns (Haakana, 1999). Less obvious, however, are other verbal and visual items that are not themselves embedded in or accompany laughter but that nevertheless make recipient laughter relevant (Haakana, 2002).²² A number of analysts have drawn on Jefferson's (1979) early work and have examined a range of

²² These verbal and visual means are neither obviously nor inherently “laughable”; rather, their status as such is established *in situ*, a point that is made in many previous CA studies (e.g., Greatbatch & Clark, 2003; Holt, 2011; Lavin & Maynard, 2002).

resources speakers draw upon in contextualizing an utterance as laughable. Following Tanya Stivers & Federico Rossano (2010: 4), Elizabeth Holt (2011) suggests that responsive laughter can be made relevant through a combination of multiple resources employed simultaneously, including: the social action a speaker produces, the sequential position in which it is delivered, and turn design features that increase the recipient's accountability for responding in a particular way. In addition, she and others (e.g., Ford & Fox, 2010; Haakana, 2010) highlight the importance of multimodal resources (i.e., both audible and bodily-visual practices) in establishing the relevance of a laughing response. Gaze, for example, can be used as one resource to invite recipients to respond with laughter (e.g., Wilkinson, 2007). Gestures and facial expressions can also play a significant role in establishing the relevance of responsive laughter (e.g., Eriksson, 2009; Greatbatch & Clark, 2003). Some researchers have also discussed the role that both smiling and smile voice can play in inviting a laughing response by recipients (e.g., Haakana, 1999, 2010; Lavin & Maynard, 2002). In Ford & Fox's (2010: 344) description of laughter as an embodied phenomenon, for example, they argue that what invites laughter "is not uniformly or even typically identifiable with single, clearly bounded linguistic units or otherwise clearly bounded segments of action. On the contrary, what constitutes and may be reciprocally oriented to as a laughable involves diffuse and cumulative practices rather than discrete and contrastive structural slots, segments, or units." Inviting laughter, then, can be accomplished through the use of a range of techniques, which enable speakers to indicate that and when it is appropriate for others to laugh.

The term “invitation” certainly suggests that first laughs make second laughs relevant, but first laughs do not constrain recipients to produce second laughs in the same way that first pair parts of adjacency pairs implicate seconds (Glenn, 2010). For example, it is not the case that all first laughs operate as laugh invitations, and there are many cases where “invitation” may be too strong or active a term (Glenn, 2010; Romaniuk, 2009). The question of when laughter is or is not inviting is indeed complex, and depends on a number of factors including but not limited to the type of activity the co-participants are engaged in, the placement of the laughter, and the quality of the laughter itself (Glenn, 2010; Haakana, 2002). An oft-cited example in which speaker laughter is not regularly treated as calling for reciprocation is in the environment of what Jefferson (1984) calls *troubles-telling*. Jefferson (1984) described situations in which speakers (or, *troubles-tellers*) laugh in the course of recounting some trouble, and recipients (more specifically, *troubles-recipients*) generally do *not* treat their laughter as an invitation to laugh along. In such cases, the troubles-teller displays that, despite trouble, she is taking it lightly, thus, exhibiting *troubles-resistance*. A recipient aligns with the troubles-teller as a trouble-recipient by *not* treating the teller’s laughter as an occasion to laugh together—thus, exhibiting *troubles-receptiveness*—since that would signal not taking the trouble seriously (Jefferson, 1984: 351). A notable exception is when speakers introduce a *buffer topic* (e.g., a joke, an anecdote) in the course of the troubles-telling. In such cases, recipients regularly *do* respond with reciprocal laughter and thereby accomplish what Jefferson (1984: 351) describes as a “time-out for pleasantries”.

Another context in which laughter does not appear invitational is described by Markku Haakana (1999, 2001) in the context of Finnish doctor-patient interactions. He shows how patients make systematic use of laughter in the course of complaining about symptoms, resisting doctors' advice, or talking about delicate issues. Accordingly, he argues that in such cases, patients are not inviting doctors to laugh along but are instead displaying a particular stance towards what is being talked about, and it would not be appropriate for doctors to collaborate in that stance by laughing (Haakana, 2001). In the following excerpt (2.5), a patient describes her (painful) experience of swelling eyelids that, from her perspective, appear to move down to her feet as the day progresses.

(2.5) (Haakana, 2001: 201-202; ex.6 [transcription simplified; English translation only])

47 P: [...] and now it has been then uhmm for a couple of
 48 months like <quite> continuously. .hh and it wa-
 49 >then it is sometimes like< (0.4) in the morning it's
 50 → (0.2) like worse (.) and then it gets eas(h)ier (h)
 51 → b(h)ut then it g(h)oes fto the f(h)eet for the
 52 → afternoon.f (.) he he fit like <makes me laughf so
 53 that then they feel tight. .hhh the feet in the
 54 afternoon .mh (0.3) and and uhmm especially if I sit
 55 (.) mh .hhh and and uhmm, [mhh
 56 D: [In other words is it so
 57 that in the mor[ning] the eye [lids] are swollen
 57 P: [.hh] [Yeah.]
 58 D: and in the afternoon the [feet.
 59 P: [Yeah.]

Just as the patient begins to describe the transition of this swelling, which Haakana claims is a "strange" account of her problem, she begins to produce hearable particles of aspiration ('and then it gets eas(h)ier (h) b(h)ut then it g(h)oes to the f(h)eet for the afternoon'; line 50). She then produces two post-completion laugh particles that can be heard as an implicit way of marking the strangeness of this account, prior to explicitly

marking it as laughable ('it like < makes me laugh'; line 52). In cases such as this, Haakana argues that the doctor's serious response (i.e., not laughing nor smiling in response) shows that he does not treat the patient's description as having invited laughter. Indeed, laughing at a patient's painful (no matter how "strange") experience is no laughing matter.

Similarly, Derek Edwards (2005) makes the case that in enacting complaints, speaker-initiated laughter is one means to display and manage the speaker/complainer's stance or attitude, so that the complaint-recipient is not placed in the difficult or awkward position of having to work out how to respond. Edwards claims, for example, that laughter can signal to the recipient that a complainable item, even when serious, is not something that the complainer is "here-in-this-telling" worried, angry or upset about, but rather, "that those 'feelings' are part of the (elsewhere) offence, and yet are still felt, and re-animated in the telling" (15). Finally, Schegloff (1996: 90) describes a similar prospective consequence of speaker-initiated laugh tokens as one, among others (e.g., nodding, facial expressions, etc.), of what he calls *post-completion stance markers*: that is, "elements which are positioned post-possible completion, but do not represent extensions of the prior talk, but rather a retrospective or retroactive alignments *toward* it, or consequences *of* it." Akin to what Jefferson (1979) described as post-utterance completion laughter (tokens, or otherwise), Schegloff offers a more general characterization of the action import of such items than "inviting laughter"; that is, such items may guide the recipient to interpret the utterance in a certain way.

Clearly, first laughs are not always invitational, and the potential ambiguity regarding what any particular laugh is doing can lead to cases in which participants may find themselves unsure whether it is appropriate to produce reciprocal laughter. Following Schegloff (1996), then, a more general way of formulating one of the systematic and recurrent activities accomplished via speaker-initiated laughter is that it is an important way of instructing a recipient about how a particular utterance is to be heard (Glenn, 1991/92; O'Donnell-Trujillo & Adams, 1983; Schenkein, 1972). This broader characterization includes cases of inviting laughter as described by Jefferson (1979) and others (e.g., Glenn, 1989), but also those in which laughter is not necessarily invitational (e.g., Jefferson, 1984; Haakana, 1999). Specifically, it highlights the way in which speaker-initiated laughter works to manage reciprocity, which is accomplished by proffering affective stance displays that help cue recipients as to how they should receive a speaker's contribution. Such a view necessitates understanding what laughter accomplishes by considering each sequence in which it occurs *on its own terms*. And, one type of sequence not addressed thus far involves *recipient-initiated* laughter, where the invitational character of laughter does not appear to be as strong (Adelswärd, 1989; Politi, 2009).

2.3.3.2 The retrospective dimension

The last section focused on cases whereby a current speaker initiated the first laugh; however, first laughs can also be initiated from second position (i.e., by recipients). In addition to engendering a sequence that can be heard as inviting or establishing the

relevance of laughter in response, then, laughter can also be produced as the sequential outcome of something that preceded it (i.e., the laugh source). Indeed, the sequential placement of laughter is also a key resource in establishing what it is about; that is, laughter is usually adjacent to its referent. Schegloff (2007: 217ff) observes that some instances of laughter mark what he calls a *retro-sequence*. Unlike adjacency pair-based sequences, which operate *prospectively* (i.e., a first pair part makes prospectively relevant some second pair part that can be found missing if not provided), as the name suggests, retro-sequences operate *retrospectively*. What this means is that this kind of sequence is activated from its second position, thereby invoking a source-outcome relationship (Schegloff, 2007). In the case of laughter in second position, its occurrence can initiate a sequence which treats as its source something that preceded it and which is being treated as having engendered the laugh as its outcome. This indexical dimension of laughter was first noted by Sacks (1974: 348) when he observed that “laughings are very locally responsive—if done on the completion of some utterance they affiliate to last utterance and if done within some utterance they affiliate to its current state of development.” Thus, in some cases, laughter “retrospectively indexes” the laugh source, or *laughable* (Glenn, 1989), displaying what the *laughable* is via placement concurrent with or immediately following that object (Glenn, 2003).

In such cases of *volunteered laughter* (Jefferson, 1979), whereby recipient laughter is proffered rather than invited by the current speaker (West, 1984), analysis can prove difficult since, as a number of analysts have observed, the source of laughter (i.e., the precise *laughable*) is not necessarily easily identified/identifiable (e.g., Glenn, 1989,

2003; Haakana, 1999; Holt, 2011; Wilkinson, 2007). One of the difficulties in locating a laugh's source lies in the widespread but incorrect assumption that the source of laughter is necessarily humorous in some way. As a great deal of conversation analytic work has shown, laughter is far more complex and recurrent than as a simple response to humour. Both Jefferson's (1984) and Haakana's (1999; 2001) studies discussed in the previous section exemplify non-humorous environments where laughter systematically occurs. Conversely, Drew's (1987) analysis of responses to teases reveal that contributions designed to be non-serious recurrently receive a *po-faced* (i.e., non-laughing) response from recipients. As these, and many other CA studies (e.g., Edwards, 2005; Osvaldsson, 2004; Politi, 2009; Wilkinson, 2007) have demonstrated, "there is no straightforward causal relationship between laughter and humorous discourse in interaction, and, in fact, much laughter in interaction does not arise from the presence of humour in any straightforward way" (Holt, 2011: 395). Thus, laughter and humorous talk, though obviously related, are treated as distinct within CA. While there is a close relationship between some bit of laughter and its source, Glenn (2003: 49) reminds us that, "the relationship between laughs and their referents defies consistent labeling, in part, because the term *laughable* glosses over an analytically problematic notion. Virtually any utterance or action could draw laughter, under the right (or wrong) circumstances." And, in cases where a laugh source is ambiguous in some way, co-participants are always capable of working out what the source of a participant's laughter may have been. For example, when the relationship between an instance of laughter and what preceded it is ill-fitted, recipients can in some way attend to, call into question or inquire about what

the source of laughter is (e.g., ‘I still don’t know what you’re laughing about’) (Schenkein, 1972: 365). Recognizing that laughter does not provide “a direct barometer of perceived humour” (Glenn 2003: 26), then, has led contemporary CA research to consider what other factors might influence its occurrence and what else it might be doing when it occurs.

Just as speaker-initiated laughter often instructs a recipient how an utterance is to be heard, recipient-volunteered laughter can display how a message was heard (O'Donnell-Trujillo & Adams, 1983). Depending on its sequential position within the recipient/second speaker’s turn-at-talk, recipient-volunteered laughter can propose some hearing of (some aspect of) what preceded it, and may additionally invite subsequent laughter or elaboration by the first speaker, especially if laughing is not taken to be an appropriate response. And, one predominant sort of proposal that laughter can put forward is the non-seriousness of the prior utterance (Schenkein, 1972: 366).

2.3.3.3 The serious/non-serious distinction

The serious/non-serious distinction is an important one for the analysis put forward in Chapters 3 and 4, and it is one that is occasionally made by both participants in, and analysts of, interaction (e.g., “I’m joking”, “I’m serious”) (Sacks, 1972; Schegloff, 2001; Schenkein, 1972). Sacks (1992 [1964-1972] [1967]: 671-672) was the first to note that recipients of first pair parts always face a potential *sequential ambiguity* regarding what

sort of response should follow; that is, they are faced with the question “Is it serious or is it a joke?” or, “Is he serious or is he joking?”:²³

For pretty much any such first part-members you can find, either directly on the occurrence of it or after a response, “You’re kidding.” “Are you kidding?” “Are you serious?” And what that utterance is specifically attending is the issue of what *sequence* that first utterance should generate [...] Are you making an ‘offer’ that I might accept? Or are you joking? Do you want me to marry you or are you just kidding.

The fundamental point Sacks makes here is that whether an utterance is judged to be serious or non-serious is crucial to the kind of response it makes relevant, and correspondingly, the kind of response it receives. So, for example, a “joking” offer does not establish a “real” acceptance or declination as its expected response, but instead something that orients to its non-seriousness.

Just as laughter can be crucial in displaying a speaker’s stance towards their own talk—e.g., that s/he is not being (at least not entirely) serious—it is also a principal means by which recipients can display their treatment of some prior as non-serious. Holt (in press) contends that laughter is “recurrently and centrally bound up with notions of non-seriousness: it is often the clearest clue that some turns are being designed to be non-serious or are being treated as such.” Taking non-seriousness “seriously” involves identifying how participants establish the non-seriousness of a contribution and considering the significance this has on the ongoing trajectory of the sequence. To more fully understand the nature of seriousness/non-seriousness in talk-in-interaction, Holt (in

²³ Although Sacks considered “serious” and “joking” to be the relevant alternatives here, following Schegloff (2001: 1952-1953), subsequent discussion of this distinction will replace “joking” with the more general feature “non-serious,” and thus, “joking” (alongside things like hyperbole, non-literalness, etc.) will be considered “values” along a continuum of serious/non-serious.

press) proposes the following six finer-grained distinctions, which are the result of participants' negotiation and collaboration across turns. Regarding first turns, she discusses three possibilities: they may be designed as 1) non-serious (i.e., as potential laughables), 2) serious, or 3) equivocal; and, regarding second turns (i.e., responses), recipients may orient to a prior turn (or some aspect of it) as 1) non-serious, 2) serious, or 3) some combination of the two. Examining these different possibilities in a corpus of telephone calls, Holt (in press) illustrates how turns can be built using elements that can push in the direction of being oriented to as serious or non-serious and how responses to first turns can orient to prior turns in a range of ways along that continuum. Seriousness and non-seriousness, then, are inextricably intertwined, and this intermingling of the two can be particularly useful in environments where participants negotiate their way through potentially problematic or troublesome situations. Indeed, by constituting actions as non-serious, participants can manage various forms of interactional trouble. As this is an area of significance for the analysis put forward in this dissertation, the next section briefly summarizes previous research on the use of laughter in attempting to deal with serious matters in more or less serious ways.

2.3.3.4 Managing interactional troubles

Quite a substantial amount of work considers the role of laughter in the context of "serious" matters, although most of it is not necessarily framed in this way. Interestingly, the bulk of this work involves the analysis of institutional forms of interaction such as medical encounters (e.g., Emerson, 1969; Haakana, 1999, 2001; Zayts & Schnurr, 2011)

and various forms of workplace interactions (e.g., Adelswärd, 1989; Gavioli, 1995; Glenn, 2010; Lavin & Maynard, 2002; Markaki, Merlino, Mondada, & Oloff, 2010; Vöge, 2010). These studies essentially build on Jefferson's (1984) argument about the role of laughter in the environment of troubles-tellings. Specifically, through laughing, she argues, a troubles-teller exhibits that, "although there is this trouble, it is not getting the better of him [sic]; he is managing; he is in good spirit and in a position to take the trouble lightly" (1984: 351). Following this line of argument, many studies report how laughter is used to facilitate speakers in dealing with potentially embarrassing situations and/or otherwise sensitive or delicate issues.

The relationship between laughter and embarrassment has been noted by some scholars, particularly in describing the management of threats to one's *face* (Goffman, 1967). For example, Goffman (1956) describes the use of laughter in concealing embarrassment, and Adelswärd (1989) suggests that "embarrassed laughter" glosses situations in which laughter is used as a resource in managing face threats, either by signaling a loss of face or in diminishing face threats. Haakana's (2001) analysis of laughter in dealing with delicate activities in Finnish doctor-patient interactions proposes that laughter can have a dual function. That is, speakers (i.e., patients) can construct an activity as delicate or potentially embarrassing but also display an awareness of its delicate nature, mitigating the embarrassing nature of the activity. He discusses two such activities whereby patients regularly laugh: when patients reject a doctor's candidate understanding with more problematic descriptions and when patients problematize a doctor's directive. Haakana (2001: 196) notes that both of these activities share a

common feature: “In these kinds of possibly problematic and delicate slots, the patients are producing activities that—at least momentarily—portray them in an unfavourable light. These activities are possible ‘cracks’ in the self-image the patients project; the laughter occurs at places of possible embarrassment (Goffman, 1956).” By producing laughter in both situations, Haakana argues that patients “re-project a picture of a ‘reasonable’ patient by showing that s/he recognizes the types of things that are problematic or delicate on such an occasion” (2001: 196).

Elsewhere Haakana (1999) has noted the recurrent use of laughter in other such delicate or embarrassing “slots” where, to use Goffman’s (1956) terms, the acceptable self or identity projected by the individual has been threatened or discredited in some way. Haakana (1999: 234-235) describes displays of “not remembering” or “not being capable of producing the required action” as two such “slots”, one example of which involves a situation where a patient’s inability to recall a relevant medical procedure results in an extended word search. Many studies have noted similar recurrent “slots” where laughter is produced, for example: Olga Zayts & Stephanie Schnurr (2011) outline several studies on laughter in medical contexts, whereby laughter facilitates patients’ recounting of difficult or sensitive topics and assists them in dealing with painful experiences; Ray Wilkinson (2007) cites various research on laughter in aphasic talk-in-interaction in which laughter regularly occurs at points where aphasic speakers display some form of linguistic error or incompetence; and a number of studies, both in the context of ordinary conversation and institutional settings, have examined the use of laughter in the environment of complaints (Edwards, 2005; Holt, 2010b; Vöge, 2010).

All of these studies describe some of the ways laughter can be seen as a resource in managing activities or interactional moments that are potentially face threatening or problematic in some way.

In some of these studies, the focus has been on freestanding laughter, which, depending on its position, can resemble what Goffman (1981) calls *response cries*. This term refers to “signs meant to be taken to index directly the state of the transmitter” (116), often containing minimal lexical content. At specific points in the discussion of sensitive or delicate matters, participants may deploy laughter to “break frame” (Goffman, 1981) retrospectively indexing something about one’s turn—or another’s—as laughable. *Within-speech* laughter, in particular, has been associated with the management of such problematic or otherwise delicate activities. For example, Potter & Hepburn (2010) discuss two related ways in which *interpolated particles of aspiration* (IPAs) are implemented as a resource by speakers, first, in managing descriptive trouble by marking one or more individual lexical items as having some problem or insufficiency, and second, in modulating the action being accomplished through talk. In the first context, they argue that IPAs can signal trouble in the use of a particular word and/or a speaker’s reasons for using it. Specifically, IPAs can do “early work” to suggest difficulties without disrupting the progressivity of talk, and thereby to act as “an interactional flag” in marking the speaker’s orientation to the problematic status of the lexical items they appear on (Potter & Hepburn, 2010: 1546ff.). In the second case, they argue that IPAs can be inserted into lexical items within turns to modulate potentially problematic actions. So, for example, rather than marking trouble on an individual

lexical item, IPAs can convey a possible sense of “softening the action or showing understanding of problems that may indicate sensitivity to how the recipient will understand the action” (1552). Given the nuanced interactional work IPAs can accomplish, Potter & Hepburn warn against treating all occurrences of IPAs as instances of within-speech *laughter* (and thus, as showing that the utterance should not be taken as seriously as it would have been without their occurrence, for example). Regardless of the terminology adopted, delicate sequences of action involving laughter and other non-serious turns can and recurrently are used to accomplish serious tasks, just as they can be produced and responded to under the guise of non-seriousness. The issue of responding to laughter is taken up in the next section.

2.3.4 Responding to laughter

Recipients have at their disposal a range of practices through which they can respond to laughter, thereby producing or declining to produce subsequent laughter (Gavioli, 1995; Glenn, 2003; Jefferson, 1979; Jefferson, et al., 1987). This section outlines some of the principal issues regarding the relationship between laughter and how it is responded to, including accepting versus declining laugh invitations (2.3.4.1), laughing together versus laughing alone (2.3.4.2), and laughing with versus laughing at (2.3.4.3).

2.3.4.1 Accepting vs. declining laugh invitations

In some of her early work (1979), Jefferson analyzed responses to speaker-initiated laughter and considered the three following possibilities: recipient laughter, recipient

silence and recipient non-laughing pursuit of topical matters. Recipient laughter (in response to first speaker laughter) constitutes acceptance of a laugh invitation, as illustrated in Dolly's response in (2.6).

(2.6) (Jefferson, 1979: 80)

Dan: I thought that wz pretty outta sight didju
Hear me say'r you a junkie.
(0.5)
Dan: hheh heh=
Dolly: → =hheh-heh-heh

Although it is possible for a recipient to remain silent following a speaker's first laugh, silence does not foreclose the possibility of laughter. Indeed, as Jefferson (1979: 83) points out, silence following speaker-initiated laughter can simply be treated as delay (or, for example, possible misunderstanding of the utterance) and may lead the laugh initiator to re-invite or further pursue a laughing response. However, this does not appear to be the case in every interactional context. For example, in a study of laughter in telephone survey interviews, Danielle Lavin & Douglas Maynard (2002) show how an interviewer's silence or even an extensive pause after a speaker's turn-at-talk that invites a laughing response is sufficient for signaling a declination, which is the third option Jefferson describes. As Jefferson (1979: 83) observes, "to achieve a no-laugh response to a prior utterance, the recipient must do more than" not laugh or refrain from laughing; instead, they must do something to "terminate the relevance of laughter". One thing a recipient can do is start talking, since talk will "observably *replace* both laughter and the silence which may be awaiting an invitation" (84; emphasis in original). Thus, recipients do not simply refuse to laugh, but decline taking up one aspect of the previous speaker's

utterance (i.e., its status as a candidate laughable) and instead take up a different aspect, for example, its topical import. Serious pursuit of topical issues is one technique for terminating laughter's relevance (Jefferson, 1979), especially when that relevance was established post-utterance completion, as illustrated in excerpt (2.7).

(2.7) (Jefferson, 1979: 84)

Gene: So that shook the old (h)house(h)hold
Up fer a(h)whi(h)le heh[

Patty: → [Oh yes I c'n imagine.

Of course there are other kinds of responses possible, which have been described in more recent work. Some studies have considered the use of smile voice or even just smiling as possible minimal reciprocation of speaker-initiated laughter particularly in the context of institutional interactions, where their status as reciprocation remains—perhaps strategically—ambiguous (Glenn, 2010; Haakana, 2002; Jefferson, 1979; Lavin & Maynard, 2002). Both smile voice and smiling occur in overlap with the stream of speech, thereby requiring minimal divergence from the institutional task at hand (be it the problem presentation of doctor-patient interactions or survey response elicitation in telephone interviews, for instance). Neither of these practices officially or formally accepts a laughter invitation, although they can be heard and understood as exhibiting some appreciation and awareness of the speaker's laughter (Lavin & Maynard, 2002). In the context of telephone survey interviews, where interviewers are procedurally mandated not to respond with “emotional displays” such as laughter, smile voice can be interpreted as responding positively to respondent-initiated laughter, without violating interviewing procedure and thus averting potential admonishment from supervisors who

may listen to the call (Lavin & Maynard, 2002). In some cases, then, smile voice and smiling can constitute a more neutral response, especially in situations where the recipient's institutional role requires a "professional cautiousness" or "professional neutrality" (see, for example, Drew & Heritage, 1992). Indeed, the use of such "mild" displays in response to speaker-initiated laughter (when the speaker is a patient or telephone survey respondent, for instance) may be one means by which the recipient's institutional identity is manifest.

A few studies have suggested possible other forms of "middle ground" between acceptance and declination (Glenn, 2010: 1487). Nick O'Donnell-Trujillo & Katherine Adams (1983), for example, discuss cases in which recipients respond with *within-speech laughter* that can be heard and treated as accepting the laugh invitation while at the same time acting upon the topical import of the utterance. Of course, some of the studies outlined in previous sections have pointed to the fact that laughter does not always *invite* responsive laughter and in such cases (e.g., troubles-tellings), declining to laugh along is considered the "appropriate" thing to do. This "resistance-receptiveness" feature appears to hold in other activities beyond troubles-talk.²⁴ For example, in his analysis of video recordings of people with aphasia in two-party interactions with another (non-aphasic) speaker, Wilkinson (2007: 548ff.) describes two ways aphasic speakers treat their displays of incompetence as delicate through their use of laughter during "correction production sequences". In one form—in which laughter marks the failure of a repair

²⁴ Jefferson (2004: 125) suggests that it may even be applicable to laughter itself—that is, someone joining another's laughter may be characterized as *laugh-receptive*, while refraining from joining, they might be characterized as *laugh-resistant*.

attempt—the laughter either occurs within a comment that registers the incompetence or as freestanding laughter. In response, conversation partners regularly do not laugh along but instead orient to the topical content of the aphasic speaker's turn (i.e. the repair). As Wilkinson (2007: 552) remarks: “Laughing together or laughing in response to another participant's [non-serious] display is a display of intersubjectivity, a sign that each participant has seen an aspect of the world in the same way at that point (cf. Schenkein, 1972). Therefore, by declining to laugh, [...] recipients ‘tactfully’ decline to acknowledge they have noticed what the speaker is laughing about or that they are treating anything about the aphasic speaker's performance as being laughable or possibly embarrassing.” As Wilkinson also points out, another reason co-participants may not produce reciprocal laughter in such cases is that the aphasic speaker's laughter is hearable as laughing at self (cf. Glenn, 1995), and thus, to laugh along could be heard as affiliating with that stance and thereby laughing *at* the aphasic speaker.

The issues of both *laughing together* versus *laughing alone* and *laughing at* versus *laughing with* will be taken up in the following sections. What should be clear from the work described above is that there are a variety of ways in which recipients can respond—or not—to a speaker's laugh invitation, or, when the relevance of responsive laughter has been established in perhaps more subtle ways. Although a range of options exists, not laughing following a speaker's laughter does not necessarily indicate some form of misalignment; speaking does not always constitute a “declination to laugh”. It is always going to be a question of what actions are being accomplished when laughter

occurs, where those actions occur in the course of an unfolding interaction and in what ways those actions are being formulated moment-by-moment.

2.3.4.2 Laughing together vs. laughing alone

In one of his early lectures, Sacks (1992 [1972]: 570-571) highlights an important feature of laughter, namely that it is one of the few things that can be “done together in conversation” (i.e., simultaneously)—a “time out” from the basic “one at a time” turn-taking rule of conversation (Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974). As previous work has demonstrated, laughing together, or shared laughter, is an achieved activity that can be oriented to, produced, and extended in its own right—the product of methodic, coordinated activities (Jefferson, et al., 1987), recurrently accomplished via recipient laughing by reference to a prior speaker’s laughter. In an analysis of shared laughter in two-party interactions, Glenn (1991/92:139) writes:

Sharing laughter displays mutual co-orientation towards the laughable object, action or utterance. It also displays affiliation of the laughers with each other. Thus shared laughter provides one resource for doing particular kinds of interactional work. The ways shared laugh sequences begin carry implications for what they display and what people accomplish through them.

Accordingly, early studies of shared laughter in ordinary conversation examined the ways in which it begins (i.e., who initiates it), how it gets ratified as shared, and how it can occur as an *accessory* activity (i.e., as a way of arriving at a specific outcome) (Glenn, 1989; Jefferson, et al., 1987). Glenn’s (1989: 134) investigation of over 200 instances of shared laughter, for example, revealed the following general pattern regarding who laughs first: in multi-party interactions, someone other than current speaker provides the

first laugh, whereas in two-party interactions, current speaker provides the first laugh. In a subsequent study of laughter in two-party interactions, Glenn (1991/92: 141 ff.) outlined three types of laughables, distinguishable by how participants orient to them through the organization of who laughs first. They include: 1) current speaker will laugh first when the laughable features self-deprecation, self-teasing, or otherwise makes relevant laughing at self; 2) current speaker will laugh first when attributing the laughable to other speakers; 3) current speaker will laugh first to explicitly mark the utterance in progress or just completed as “not-serious”, thereby cueing the recipient for what type of response is relevant in the next turn. Glenn (1991/92) further described the ways in which each of these sequential activities is a common source of shared laughter.

More recently, in Glenn’s (2010) analysis of videotaped employment interviews, he finds that the organization of shared laughing sequences—which occur frequently in this context relative to other institutional settings such as medical interactions and telephone survey interviews—reflect a “time out” from the interview proper (cf. Jefferson, 1984). Specifically, he reports that interviewers routinely initiate shared laughs, and although interviewees laugh along, they refrain from extending the laughing sequence (for example, by producing additional laughs, appreciation tokens and laughables). Just as Lavin & Maynard (2002) argue that survey interviewers manage dual constraints of professionalism and rapport (for example, by responding with smile voice but refraining from laughing along), so too must interviewees in employment interviews. That is, interviewees must strive to appear focused on the task, and in that sense “serious”, but also seek to be regarded as “sociable, the kind of person employers

would want to hire” (Glenn, 2010: 1496). By responding with laughter but not escalating or extending the laughter, then, Glenn argues that interviewees effectively manage these dual constraints. And, while the interviewer may extend the laughter, in general, he reports that these time outs from the interview end quickly, and it is the interviewer who returns them to the business at hand. In summarizing the significance of his findings, Glenn (2010: 1497) suggests:

Shared laughter brings people together, and it is possible to see in these moments, interviewers attempting to level the field between participants. Employment interviews differ from doctor-patient interactions or telephone survey interviews in that the interaction carries an explicitly persuasive dimension and is seen as a predictor of a possible future relationship. Thus it may be in interviewers’ self- and organizational interest to try to put interviewees at ease and convey a friendly demeanor, through laughables and shared laughter as well as other means.

While laughing together might appear to reduce power and distance and bring participants together, Glenn argues that the organization and distribution of shared laughter sequences reflect and reinscribe their asymmetrical relationship. Through the asymmetrical organization of shared laughter sequences, then, he concludes that participants reveal their ongoing understandings of their respective rights and obligations as interviewer and interviewee.

Another recent study of shared laughter is Holt’s (2010) analysis of American and British telephone calls including both institutional and ordinary conversations. Although Holt finds laughter to be a ubiquitous feature of the interactions in her corpus, she notes being surprised to find that the majority of instances involve solo rather than shared laughter (1514). She then explores one interactional environment where laughter is regularly shared—at or around topic termination—and compares these with ones where a

laugh invitation is not reciprocated. Holt shows how participants can influence the trajectory of the talk by sharing or declining to share laughter, and that recurrently, shared laughter precedes the introduction of a new topic/activity sequence (and thus forms the end of a prior topic). Holt argues that the regularity of this association between shared laughter and closing initiations may suggest that laughing along is one element of sequence-closing sequences.²⁵ She puts forward two suggestions for this association: one is “that shared laughter is associated with ‘light topics’ that tend to precede, or help facilitate, the end of conversation. A second suggestion relates to the fact that shared laughter can be associated with rapport and intimacy (Jefferson et al., 1987) and closings are a point in the conversation where participants may attend to their relationship (Button, 1991). That is, the rapport or intimacy potentially fostered by the shared laughter may create an appropriate environment to introduce talk that displays the ongoing nature of the relationship, such as arrangements (Button, 1991) and/or to bring the conversation to a close” (Holt, 2010a: 1524). Previous research on shared laughter, in general, has suggested that laughing together (i.e., a recipient producing reciprocal laughter when it is initiated by a co-participant) often signifies at least a temporary display of affiliation and rapport between the participants involved. However, the affiliative status of laughter is something that participants in fact negotiate over many turns, an issue which we will return to below.

Early on in the conversation analytic tradition of describing laughter, Sacks (1992: 571) suggested that if laughing is done “right” it is normally done together, but as

²⁵ Holt also claims that a recipient’s refusal to provide reciprocal laughter and instead proceed with further topical talk can prolong a topic at a place where it may otherwise have been brought to a close.

we have seen, such a statement only seems to apply to a restricted class of laughables, for example, those designedly meant to be “humorous”. Indeed, regarding laughter, Sacks seemed primarily interested in situations such as joke-tellings (e.g., 1974), where laughter forms the primary response for conveying an understanding of some bit of talk as joking. In such contexts, it is by laughing that a recipient can display that s/he has recognized and understood that first, a joke was told, and second, that it was funny. In so doing, a recipient affiliates with the stance the joke teller has conveyed by having told the joke. As we have already seen, however, there are a number of interactional environments in which laughing along or together is *not* heard as the “right” thing to do (e.g., responding to a speaker’s troubles-telling or complaint). And, as has been outlined previously, situations arise in which only one participant is to be found laughing.²⁶ Interestingly, although many studies have reported more instances of laughing alone as opposed to laughing together (e.g., Haakana, 2001: 196; Holt, 2010: 1514; Thonus, 2008:347-348), there is actually little conversation analytic research that makes solo laughter, and, in particular, *volunteered laughter*, the focus of analysis. Since the little work that does exist has already been described in previous sections, attention will now be turned to one final important distinction regarding recipient responses, namely *laughing with* versus *laughing at*.

²⁶ Some analysts have described these situations of solo laughter as “laughing alone” (e.g., Thonus, 2008), “unilateral” (e.g., Adelswärd, 1989) or “volunteered” (e.g., Jefferson, 1979). Although terminological distinctions have not been explicitly discussed in previous work, I would suggest *unilateral laughter* should be reserved for cases where speaker-initiated laughter is not reciprocated (i.e., not ratified by co-participants), while *volunteered laughter* might be reserved for cases where recipients initiate laughter in second position when its relevance has not been previously invited or otherwise established. *Solo laughter*, then, may be used as an umbrella term for the more general phenomenon of *laughing alone* (i.e., single participant laughing).

2.3.4.3 Laughing with vs. laughing at

One of the fascinating aspects of laughter that has been noted by a number of scholars across disciplines is its dual nature: “It may signal alignment and bring people together, but it may also display hostility and be used mockingly or derisively” (Glenn, 2008). Since laughter may itself be ambiguous in terms of whether it displays going along with what is happening or resisting it, the question is how do we know, beyond our intuition, whether any particular instance of laughing is affiliative or disaffiliative? Clayman (1992) provides one answer to this question in his analysis of the affiliative status of audience responses during televised American presidential debates. Political debates are an effective site for exploring the affiliative and disaffiliative status of responses. Not surprisingly, debates are a context in which both competition and contention but also cooperation and agreement are featured. The political and persuasive dimensions of this type of speech event also promote strong reactions from a co-present audience divided along ideological lines. And, as Clayman reports, the structured ideological composition of the audience is further reinforced by their physical arrangement within the auditorium. In a collection of three 90-minute debates during the 1988 U.S. presidential elections, Clayman recorded a total of 169 audience response episodes, 24 of which he coded as *disaffiliative* (i.e., booing, derisive laughter). He defines disaffiliation as “those responses which are unfavorable, which express disapproval or derision, and which are used by audience members to dissociate themselves from speakers and their views” (Clayman, 1992: 35). Focusing on the audience’s laughing responses, he finds that affiliative laughter occurs in rhetorical environments that involve criticisms of a

candidate and are marked as laughable by explicit or implicit means. He argues that such environments establish the relevance of audience laughter while at the same time constituting a *laughing with* environment. On the other hand, disaffiliative laughter occurs following a candidate's positive and non-critical self-talk (where descriptions of their accomplishments or qualities are judged unconvincing, evasive or otherwise inadequate in light of previous talk)—talk that is not marked as laughable. These statements are treated as laughable, however, and thus such laughter is hearable as disaffiliative. That is, such laughter shows the audience to be not taking the candidate seriously, and in that sense, *laughing at* him. In general, then, Clayman's study illustrates how analysts (like participants) must look to features of the local sequential context in order to disambiguate the status of laughter as affiliative or disaffiliative.

Building on Clayman's discussion, Glenn (1995) describes how participants interactively negotiate laughter's affiliative status in the context of ordinary conversation. Specifically, he proposes four crucial features, or "keys", that participants draw on as resources in any laugh relevant sequential environment to create, modify, or disambiguate the affiliative work laughter may be doing (Glenn, 1995). These keys include 1) the nature of the laughable, 2) first laugh (i.e., who laughs first), 3) (possible) second laugh, and 4) subsequent talk. Regarding the nature of the laughable, Glenn observes that certain types of laughables appear to make *laughing at* relevant: specifically, in *laughing at* environments, "The laughable appoints/nominates some co-present as a butt" (e.g., by, ridiculing, teasing or making fun of co-present others) (1995: 44). Who laughs first can also provide ways for participants to align themselves with

respect to the laughable and co-participants. Glenn (1995: 44) proposes that "First laugh by someone other than the butt (especially by perpetrator) likely indicates *laughing at*." Whether or not responsive laughter is produced can also be an indicator of *laughing with* versus *laughing at* environments. Glenn reports, "In multiparty interactions, (possible) second laugh by someone other than butt reinforces *laughing at*. In two-party situations, *laughing at* is not shared. Thus two-party shared laughter will likely be a *laughing with*, while multiparty laughter may be *laughing with* or *laughing at*" (1995: 45). Finally the issue of what participants do following laughter can further shed light on its affiliative status. Glenn suggests that "subsequent talk on topic displays laughter as *at*" (46). Glenn notes that these four features may act as starting points for understanding at least some of the ways participants may disambiguate *laughing at* from *laughing with*. As alignments that participants may orient to in diverse ways, these features are not fixed, may sometimes be equivocal, and are always subject to variation and change in the moment-by-moment unfolding of interaction (Glenn, 1995). Although these features are no doubt useful in helping analysts (like participants) come to terms with the affiliative status of laughter, Glenn is quick to point out that the *with/at* distinction is not intended to be a "too-limiting dualism, suggesting that all laughter must do one or the other" (1995: 55). Instead, *laughing with* and *laughing at* should be viewed as two possibilities that may arise when an instance of laughter occurs. In this way, as Glenn affirms:

The *with/at* possibilities stand as microcosms of, and ways of enacting, cybernetic adjustments common to all relationships. The development, maintenance, and termination of relationships involves continuous adjustments between movement towards greater intimacy and movement towards distancing and differentiation. We do this moment by moment, through such seemingly insignificant actions as

laughables and laughter. Thus conversational laughter plays a fundamental role in the organization of human interactions. (1995: 56)

As Glenn (2003: 168) aptly summarizes: “The choice to laugh or not to laugh may display acceptance of or resistance to some definition-of-situation proposed by other. [...] Although not possessing linguistic or semantic content, laughs still allow for varied, nuanced, and subtle displays of definitions of situation” (see also, Coser, 1959). As the research reviewed in this section demonstrates, participants can and do engage in complex negotiations regarding the laughing or serious nature of talk in terms of how they choose to respond—or not—over the course of a range of activities in talk-in-interaction.

2.4 Summary

This dissertation adopts a social-interactional perspective of laughter as an embodied, multimodal and locally structured social phenomenon. Accordingly, the research reviewed thus far has focused on studies that share this perspective. In addition to outlining what laughter sounds and looks like from such a perspective, particular attention has been paid to the sequential organization of laughter. This is because the meaning of any particular instance of laughter can only be understood by describing the actions it accomplishes, and this in turn requires a description of the local, sequential environments in which it occurs. The basic terminology and findings reported here form the basis of the proceeding analysis of both interviewee laughter (Chapter 3), in general, and Hillary Rodham Clinton’s laughter (Chapter 4), specifically, in the context of broadcast news interviews.

Chapter 3 – Interviewee Laughter in Broadcast News Interviews

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents an analysis of interviewee (IE) laughter in the broadcast news interview. Unlike the bulk of previous work on laughter that has focused on its use in the service of affiliation—for example, indicating alignment and bringing people together—this chapter offers a more complex picture by viewing laughter as more than just a simple response to “humour”. Principally, the chapter is concerned with the interactional work IE laughter can accomplish in the different sequential environments in which it occurs. One of the main goals is to provide a detailed account of what such laughter accomplishes in two specific environments, namely, 1) at the completion of an interviewer’s (IR) question, and 2) during its production. This account of laughter will then be subject to comparative analysis with Hillary Rodham Clinton’s laughter in Chapter 4.

The chapter is organized as follows. The first section offers a brief review of the little research that exists on laughter in broadcast interactions. It organizes this review in terms of three main areas of contribution, first, research on laughter as *audience* behaviour, then on laughter both *outside* and *within* the context of broadcast news interviews (BNIs). The next section stands as the chapter’s analytic core, first by identifying and exemplifying the various environments in which IE laughter occurs, then by zeroing in on laughter that responds to, or occurs in the course of, IR questions

designed as “serious”. The analysis draws on Glenn’s (1995; 2003) “keys”—the nature of the laughable, (possible) second laugh, subsequent response—to demonstrate how such laughter disaffiliates from what is being proposed by the IR as a “serious” matter or inquiry, while simultaneously projecting a dispreferred verbal response. The concluding section summarizes the main findings of the chapter, which form the basis of comparison with the findings of Chapter 4.

3.2 Laughter and political discourse in broadcast interactions

Since Jefferson’s (1979) pioneering work on the organization of laughter in talk-in-interaction, conversation analytic (CA) work has investigated its various uses and accomplishments in a range of institutional settings, including medical encounters (Haakana, 2001, 2002; West, 1984; Zayts & Schnurr, 2011), legal and workplace contexts (Adelswärd, 1989; Gavioli, 1995; Glenn, 2010; Markaki, Merlino, Mondada, & Oloff, 2010; Matthews, 2011; Vöge, 2010), and academic settings (Politi, 2009; Thonus, 2008). However, laughter in politics, particularly within the context of broadcast interactions, has received comparatively little attention. The few studies that do exist have not made laughter per se central to their analyses, and have tended to focus on laughter as *audience* behaviour (e.g., Clayman, 1992a; Eriksson, 2009), or have been carried out in genres of broadcast talk distinct from the broadcast news interview, such as (celebrity) talk shows (e.g., Eriksson, 2010; Hopper, 1995; Montgomery, 2000) or presidential news conferences (e.g., Ekström, 2009; Hualpa, 2012). To the best of my knowledge, only two studies of laughter within the context of media interviews exist,

although they are carried out from a psycholinguistic perspective and focus primarily on lifestyle as opposed to accountability interviews. The main findings of this previous work on laughter in broadcast interactions will briefly be summarized below.

3.2.1 Laughter as audience behaviour

Much of the previous research on laughter in broadcast interactions has focused on production formats that include a studio audience. Accordingly, these studies devote attention to laughter as a response by the studio audience in order to display an appreciation of, or at least acknowledgment of, a speaker's "humorous" remarks (e.g., Anderson, 2000; Clayman, 1992a; Eriksson, 2010; Montgomery, 2000). For example, Clayman (1992a) investigated laughter as one among what he calls *collective audience responses*—which also include applause and booing—during three U.S. presidential debates. "While booing is a straightforward display of disapproval and disaffiliation," Clayman asserts, "the semantics of laughter are considerably more complex" (43). In his study, Clayman shows that audience members generally respond with laughter to treat an antecedent utterance as "laughable" and thus display appreciation of something humorous or non-serious within it. Further, he finds that one environment where audience members recurrently laugh is when candidates offer a criticism or attack of the opposition that is marked as humorous in explicit or implicit ways (for a discussion of similar findings, see Anderson, 2000). In such cases, he argues, audience laughter is an expression of affiliation with the current speaker (Clayman, 1992a).

Although Clayman finds audience laughter in this context to generally function as a humour-appreciation display, he goes on to argue that it can accomplish a variety of other actions (i.e., affiliative or disaffiliative) depending on what evokes it. For example, he finds that disaffiliative laughter occurs in environments that are the opposite of those that precede affiliative laughter: that is, audience members regularly laugh when candidates offer non-critical remarks about themselves that are not designed as humorous. One common environment for such remarks occurs after a candidate initially attempts to respond to a fact-based hostile or accusatory question. Specifically, Clayman observes that responses that appear unconvincing, evasive or involve flat denials often evoke disaffiliative laughter while those that directly or decisively confront the “facts” of the question are treated seriously.

Clayman also discusses cases of what he calls *equivocal laughter*, with respect to the polarity of affiliation and disaffiliation (1992: 51ff.). He suggests two environments where audience laughter “falls short of being a full-fledged display of disaffiliation but nevertheless retains certain disaffiliative elements”: laughter following speech errors or disfluencies and laughter following humorous self-deprecations (Clayman, 1992). In both cases, the speaker is the obvious target of laughter (and thus, audience laughter can be heard as *laughing at*); however, the content of such utterances can provide the relevance of a humorous display, so the audience can also be heard as *laughing with*. As in other contexts of public speaking, while affiliative laughter can display audience members’ appreciation of a speaker’s humour, as Clayman points out, it does not necessarily represent an unequivocal expression of support for that speaker. In contrast

to applause, which he claims has affiliation as its sole objective, the ambiguous nature of laughter allows audience members to participate in an activity that implies affiliation but without unequivocally aligning with the position a speaker expresses (e.g., audience members may disagree with a candidate but appreciate a good joke). This may help to account for the fact that audience laughter occurs in a greater range of public speaking settings than does applause (see also, Anderson, 2000; Greatbatch & Clark, 2001; Partington, 2006).

3.2.2 Laughter outside the broadcast news interview

There are a few studies that involve the analysis of laughter in genres related to, but distinct from, the broadcast news interview, although in none of these is laughter the exclusive focus of attention. The two genres reported on include talk show interviews in Britain (Montgomery, 2000), Sweden (Eriksson, 2010) and the United States (Hopper, 1995), and American presidential news conferences (Ekström, 2009). In the former interactional setting, formats involve a host, guest (i.e. politician or public figure) and a studio audience, and talk is informal and primarily designed to engage and entertain viewers (Montgomery, 2000). Accordingly, reactions from the studio audience play an important role in the process of engaging and entertaining viewers as they provide model responses (such as signs of approval or affiliation via laughter or applause) for television viewers (Eriksson, 2010). In such contexts, audience laughter is invited (by the host, guest, or interactions between the two) and laughables are constructed in ways that stress their humorous potential. Given that talk show topics predominantly revolve around the

everyday life of guests, their relationships, family life, etc. it is not surprising that these studies focus on the role of audience laughter as a humour-appreciation display.

Similarly, in the context of American presidential news conferences, Mats Ekström (2009) finds that the primary role of laughter is this humour-appreciation relationship. Specifically, he finds that laughter primarily occurs as a response to a joke or as an invitation for others to laugh by joker. In his analysis of 19 press conferences with President George W. Bush, Ekström (2009: 401ff.) shows how the President uses jokes in combination with interruptions as a resource in being evasive—specifically, as a way of responding to hostile questions. By joking, Ekström argues that the President delays answering a journalist's question or turns the tables on the journalist by posing a question of his own. In the cases shown, Ekström claims that the President is successful in these situations because his laughter is ratified by the journalists who join in the laughter, and there is not a single instance where a journalist explicitly challenges him for laughing off tough questions.

Laughter is neither the exclusive focus of any of the work that investigates broadcast interactions *outside* the news interview, nor do these studies address what the implications of these different formats are in terms of either the production or reception of laughter. Instead, they focus attention primarily on studio audience laughter, and with the exception of Clayman (1992), they only consider examples of laughter as an *affiliative* response to what is constructed by participants as “humourous”, coinciding with a widespread but incorrect assumption that the source of laughter is necessarily “humourous” in some way. Yet as the research reported in Chapter 2 indicates, a great

deal of CA work has shown that laughter is far more complex and recurrent than being simply a response to humour (e.g., Glenn, 2003; Haakana, 1999; Holt, in press). The little work that exists on laughter *within* the broadcast news interview indicates similar findings, as will be discussed briefly below.

3.2.3 Laughter within the broadcast news interview

Within the broadcast news interview, laughter has not previously been investigated from a CA perspective. Although two studies have made both Hillary Rodham Clinton's, and her husband and former president, Bill Clinton's, laughter in media interviews the focus of analysis (O'Connell & Kowal, 2004, 2005), these studies draw on research from phonetics and CA but are characterized as embodying a psycholinguistic perspective, and thus, do not conduct the kind of sequential analysis of laughter offered in this chapter. Furthermore, the interviews selected for analysis in both studies followed the publication of both Hillary Rodham and Bill Clinton's memoirs, *Living history* (H. R. Clinton, 2003), and *My life* (B. Clinton, 2004), respectively, and thus, a primary purpose was to promote their books. Such "lifestyle" interviews (e.g., afternoon talk shows as well as late night comedy shows) differ significantly from accountability interviews, which are the focus of this chapter's analysis, in terms of goals, topics and the relationship between interlocutors (for a typology of interview types, see Montgomery, 2008). Indeed, the fact that the "lifestyle" interview format characterizes the bulk of interviews considered in Daniel O'Connell & Sabine Kowal's two studies has important consequences for their findings on laughter. That is, because the majority of interviews were centered on topics related

to the Clintons' personal lives, most occurrences of laughter could be characterized as affiliative responses to "humorous" talk.

In both studies, O'Connell & Kowal argue that laughter is *perspectival*—"a nonverbal, vocal communication of personal views" (2004: 465). However, their "exploratory" and "preliminary" discussion of both Hillary Rodham and Bill Clinton's laughter (2004: 467) only reports the following: the relative frequency of occurrence of laughter from the two IEs and their respective IRs, in both TV and radio interviews; the topics that they claim elicit laughter; and the occurrence of two types of laughter, namely, what they call the "ha-ha type" (i.e., laughter as an autonomous form or unit) and within-speech laughter. Specifically, the authors find that Hillary Rodham Clinton's laughter was mostly concentrated during IRs' talk rather than her own while the opposite was true for Bill Clinton's laughter (i.e., he produced more within-speech laughter than the "ha-ha" type). They further observe that the most frequently laughed-about topic in Hillary Rodham Clinton's interviews was a possible presidential candidacy, whereas "Bill Clinton laughed mainly about his personal problems and his personal life" (O'Connell & Kowal, 2005: 275). Because O'Connell & Kowal do not offer a sequential analysis of laughter, important details that help to understand the function of laughter in any particular instance are not provided (e.g., what form the laughter takes, where in the course of the unfolding sequence of action the laughter occurs, what else is going on visually in terms of whether and how the relevance of laughing responses may be established, etc.). Therefore, although they conclude that laughter "manifests some sort of position-taking on the part of the laugher" (O'Connell & Kowal, 2005: 476), the

authors do not offer any further insight into precisely *what sort of positions or perspectives are displayed through laughing*. Indeed, being able to do so requires attention to the sequential organization of laughter in the course of larger actions and activities, and both the vocal *and* non-vocal components that combine to construct and make interpretable those actions and activities. It is precisely this kind of analysis of IE laughter within the broadcast news interview that is the focus of the remainder of this chapter.

3.3 What we don't know about laughter: Interviewee laughter in broadcast news interviews

IE laughter has not previously been investigated from a CA perspective within the broadcast news interview. The following analysis first outlines the sequential environments in which it occurs, and then focuses in on its deployment in the course of "serious" question-answer sequences. Particular attention is paid not only to the sequential organization of laughter in the course of larger actions and activities, but also to the vocal and non-vocal components that combine to construct and make interpretable those actions and activities. Before turning attention to the analysis, however, let me first say a few words about the data on which the subsequent analysis is based.

3.4 The data

The principal corpus for this chapter includes video recordings and transcripts²⁷ of 50 BNIs recorded between 2007-2010, comprising over 13 hours of interactional data. The resulting collection of news interviews represents an effort to gather representative interactional data from five of the major U.S. commercial television networks (ABC; CBS; CNN; FOX; NBC), which feature the five Sunday morning talk shows (*This Week*; *Face The Nation*; *Late Edition*²⁸; *Fox News Sunday*; *Meet The Press*, respectively).²⁹ The collection includes other news interviews from these five networks but is restricted to those that were broadcast live and thus are free of signs of post-production editing or cutting. Regarding the type of broadcast, half of the interviews occurred with co-present participants, and half occurred via satellite. In terms of the participants, the majority of IEs were political candidates for public office at the time of the interview (though in a very small number of cases some were already elected officials). With regards to their political orientation, the distribution of Democrats to Republicans is roughly equal (14 and 16, respectively). In terms of the gender of participants, not surprisingly, there are

²⁷ All transcripts presented in Chapters 3 and 4 have been produced by the author (unless stated otherwise). The symbols used in the transcriptions in this dissertation to represent verbal and vocal actions follow the notation system developed by Gail Jefferson (see, for example, Jefferson, 2004) for conversation analytic research (see Appendix A). However, some symbols from more recent work have been incorporated (e.g., Ford & Fox, 2010; Hepburn & Bolden, 2012). Note that for qualities related to laugh (e.g., breathiness, smile voice), beginnings and endings are not discrete and clearly bounded in the talk itself. Following Ford & Fox (2010), approximate beginnings and endings are marked, that is, where these laugh relevant sounds begin to be evident and a point after which they are no longer evident. Punctuation marks are used to give an approximate indication of intonation; however, it is clear that there is still work to be done in terms of developing a better system of prosodic transcription (see, for example, Roberts & Robinson, 2004; Walker, 2012). It is important to keep in mind that transcripts are presented as a written *representation* of the talk. Given that the analysis was carried out using the video recordings alongside these written representations, the transcripts are not to be understood as the data per se.

²⁸ *Late Edition with Wolf Blitzer* was cancelled in January 2009 and was replaced with the program *State of the Union with Candy Crowley*. The corpus does not contain any interviews from this current program.

²⁹ Ultimately, this database was collected for comparison with my other core database of news interviews featuring Hillary Rodham Clinton, which is the focus of analysis in Chapter 4.

fewer women than men IRs and IEs—interestingly, proportions correspond roughly to women’s representation in network television and in the national legislature, where women comprise less than one quarter of the total representation (see Table 3.1).³⁰

Table 3.1: Distribution of participants by gender

	Interviewers	Interviewees
Women	3	6
Men	15	24
Total	18	30

To understand the nature of IE laughter in BNIs, I collected all instances of both IR- and IE-initiated laughter. In accordance with the principles of CA, the findings reported here are based on a comprehensive analysis of all the instances in the collection. Although the practices identified in what follows are specific to the institutional setting of BNIs and the particular television networks and interview participants therein, they may well have generic properties that extend beyond this particular setting to a wide range of other interactional contexts. Of course, the distribution of these practices and their specific import across other contexts may vary.

3.5 Overview of interviewee laughter

Table 3.2 reports the total number of both IR- and IE-initiated laughter in the collection of 50 news interviews (n = 161). Such laughter is further characterized as *invited* by the IR (where its relevance is established by something the IR says or does) or *volunteered*

³⁰ See Appendix B for a complete list of interviews and participants.

(where it is produced on a voluntary basis), examples of which will be considered in more detail below.

Table 3.2: Distribution of Interviewer- and Interviewee-initiated laughter (50 BNIs)

	Interviewer N (Percent)	Interviewee N (Percent)
Invited	7 (44%)	21 (14%)
Volunteered	9 (56%)	124 (86%)
<i>Total laughs</i>	16/161 (10%)	145/161 (90%)

Not surprisingly, IEs laugh more often than IRs, however the degree to which this is the case is rather striking (IE laughter occurred 9 times more often than that of IRs). The proportion of laughter by IEs as compared IRs is consistent with findings reported for other institutional settings, such as doctor-patient interactions and other types of interviews. For example, both Candace West (1984) and Markku Haakana (1999) found that patients laugh more than physicians do. Specifically, West (1984) found that doctor's declinations to join patient-initiated laughter occurred more frequently than patients' declinations to join doctor-initiated laughter. And, Lavin & Maynard (2002) found that respondents in telephone survey interviews, like patients, initiate much more laughter than do the survey IRs with whom they interact. Thus, it appears that the relative frequency of interactional resources such as laughter are indicative of one of the ways that specific practices of speaking are reflected in the institutional roles/identities of the participants (an issue I will return to in the conclusions of this dissertation in Chapter

6). However, since IE laughter is the primary focus of the ensuing analysis, I will not say any more about IR-initiated laughter here.

Focusing just on those instances of IE laughter ($n=145$), then, Table 3.3 presents the distribution of such laughter in terms of the environments where it can occur during talk conducted within the broadcast news interview: either during IE talk or during IR talk. Laughter during IE talk can be further characterized as either occurring *within-speech* (i.e., contiguously with their own turn-at-talk), or at the completion of their own turn or TCU, *post-completion* laughter. In this corpus, IEs produce laughter in the former environment approximately two thirds of the time ($n = 48/73$), while laughter in the latter environment occurs roughly one third of the time ($n = 25/73$). Laughter may also occur during IR talk, and, in those cases, two sequential positions are possible: laughter during the IR's questioning turn (which accounts for approximately three quarters of all instances; $n = 52/72$), and laughter at completion of the IR's turn (which accounts for the remaining one quarter of cases). Each environment and the possible configurations within them will be exemplified briefly in what follows.

Table 3.3: Distribution of Interviewee-initiated laughter by sequential position

Laughter during IE talk		Laughter during IR talk	
Within-speech	48 (66%)	During IR question	52 (72%)
Post-(TCU) completion	25 (34%)	At question completion	20 (28%)
<i>Total</i>	73 (100%)	<i>Total</i>	72 (100%)
<i>Grand Total</i>	73/145 (50%)	<i>Grand Total</i>	72/145 (50%)

3.6 Environments for interviewee laughter

In this section, I outline the environments where IE laughter can occur during talk conducted within the broadcast news interview. First, I offer representative cases of IE laughter that is *invited* by the IR, in the Jeffersonian (1979) sense, although this notion of “invitation” can be accomplished by several means (Haakana, 2002). For example, IRs can laugh first, or produce possibly laugh relevant items such as interpolated particles of aspiration (IPAs) within their talk; IRs can produce talk that is evidently humorous; or they can—at the very least—establish the relevance of a laughing response through visual means (so as to convey actions such as being ironic). Then, I move to a consideration of IE laughter that is *volunteered* rather than invited (where a participant produces laughter on a voluntary basis). In such cases, volunteered laughter can occur *during the IE’s talk* or *during the IR’s talk*. When laughter is produced on a voluntary basis in relation to the IE’s own talk, such laughter may either be embedded within it (*within-speech laughter*) or can occur at its completion (*post-completion laughter*). Examples of each of these configurations will be presented in turn.

3.6.1 Interviewee laughter that is invited

The most common way for a speaker to invite laughter from a recipient is to laugh first, something that happens recurrently in ordinary conversation (Jefferson, 1979). While this practice is no doubt possible for journalists in theory, there is not a single instance in my corpus in which the IR invites responsive laughter from an IE solely by means of laughing first. However, IRs can and certainly do invite laughter, or at least establish the

relevance of a laughing response from IEs, by producing possibly laugh relevant items such as IPAs within their talk, or more obviously, by producing talk that is evidently humorous. Excerpt (3.1) exhibits the second of these possibilities.

(3.1) 12-2007-09-19-CBS_FaceTheNation-2: Rabbit

IR: Bob Schieffer; IE: Mike Huckabee

01 IE: I could raise (.) twenty million dollars
 02 o:vernight. (.) if uh everyone watching this
 03 show just simply went and said I'll make a
 04 hundred dollar contribution, .h The point
 05 i[s that things can change [so]rapidly.=
 06 IR: [But heh heh heh [Gov'nr,]
 07 IR: =That's kind of a big if, I mean y'know they
 08 always say y'know the do:g coulda caught the
 09 rabbit i[f h]e hadn'ta stopped tuh=
 10 IE: [Yeah]
 11 IR: =make that phone c[all. but (.) uh: (.) I mean
 12 IE: [heh heh huh huh huh huh .hh
 13 IR: =uh heh heh fI mean (l:-)f <reality is reality.>
 14 .h Uh you're gonna have to have a: treMEndous
 15 sum of money tuh e:ven have a chance.=I'm not
 16 saying that's fai:r,
 17 IE: Sure,
 18 IR: But it's simply the golf course that uh:
 19 politics is played on these days.=An- an' I
 20 just i- it's- it's not clear to me how you can
 21 get from there to here,

In discussing Republican presidential contender Mike Huckabee's dim fundraising situation compared to his opponents (at the time, Huckabee had raised only a half a million dollars compared with Romney's 23 million and Giuliani's 15 million), Huckabee offers a hypothetical situation that could substantially alter his prospects (lines 1-4). The IR, Bob Schieffer, however, orients to the suggestion as exaggerated by first laughing in the post-transition space (line 6) and then describing it as such: "That's kind of a big if" (line 7) (this brief unit of laughter by the IR, however, does not receive any immediate uptake from Huckabee; it is the IR's subsequent talk that apparently does so).

He further paints Huckabee's response as exaggerated by likening it to the exaggerated expression, "The dog coulda caught the rabbit if he hadn'ta stopped to make that phone call" (lines 6-10). This expression takes the form of a joke wherein the humour lies at the delivery of the punch line, which, in combination with the personification of the dog, establishes the relevance of laughter by pointing to the ridiculousness of the claim. This remark generates a laughing response by the IE at line 12, which ratifies the IR's talk as laughable and displays Huckabee's appreciation of the humour within it. However, examples such as this are quite rare in BNIs with political candidates, as the majority of question-and-answer sequences focus on "serious" matters (such as fundraising in election campaigns). And, when cases like this do occur, unlike in ordinary conversation where participants often extend such affiliative sequences of laughter by "stepping it up" (see, for example, Glenn, 1991/92), the IR regularly returns to the business-at-hand rather abruptly via "serious" treatment of what initially generated the laughing display. In this instance, following minimal expansion of the laughter by Schieffer at line 13, he quickly shifts to a "serious" restart of his turn following a self-repair initiated via the "I mean" preface (on I mean-prefaced utterances used in this way, see Maynard, 2013; see also, Schiffrin, 1987: 295ff.) and the hearable cut off on what presumably was on its way to "look" ("I mean I:-), thereby in some sense sequentially deleting his responsive laughter. In fact, in both instances where Schieffer laughs (lines 6; 13), his continuation to serious questioning is marked with "I mean" prefaces, which is an explicit way of marking what will come next as relevant and of cancelling the relevance of what has come before (i.e., his laughter). In the second instance, Schieffer's restart is further marked as a shift to

“serious” talk by being produced seriously (i.e., without any hearable smile voice articulation), unlike his previous incomplete TCU, and by its content; that is, Schieffer goes on to underscore the “reality” of Huckabee’s grim prospects (lines 13-21).

Sometimes, the laughable or humorous potential of an IR’s utterance may not be apparent, but a laughing response by the IE can nevertheless be invited through non-vocal means, as is the case in (3.2; Figure 3.1) below.

(3.2) 29-2008-05-04-NBC_MeetThePress-1: Understatement
IR: Tim Russert; IE: Barack Obama

01 IR: Senator Obama welcome back to Meet the Press.
02 IE: Thank you so much for having me.
03 IR: On Friday you said (.) it’s been a rough (.)
04 couple wee[ks.=
05 IE: [.hh=
06 IE: =Heh heh heh heh heh [heh °heh heh heh°]
07 IR: [An understatement.]=
08 =.h What ha:s the controversy over Reverend
09 Jeremiah Wright done to your campaign.
10 IE: Well hh obviously it’s distracted us. I mean we
11 ended up spending a lot of time talkin’ about
12 Reverend Wright instead of talkin’ about (.)
13 gas prices ‘n (.) food prices ‘n .h (.) uh: the
14 situation in Iraq, [...]

Following the interview’s opening (lines 1-2), the IR begins by reporting prior talk by then Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama, “it’s been a rough couple weeks” (lines 3-4). What this reported speech indexes is the controversy over the sermons of Obama’s then pastor, Reverend Jeremiah Wright, the subject of intense media scrutiny at the time. Looking at the transcript alone makes it difficult to understand why Obama responds with an extended laugh unit (line 6). Considering what happens non-vocally, however, helps to explain the occurrence of laughter at the precise moment in which it occurs. What Figure 3.1 below shows is the significance of facial expressions in

conveying the non-serious import of an utterance despite its “serious” content. That is, when the IR begins reporting Obama’s speech, he is looking down as he reads the quotation itself (“you said...”). The IR then continues, emphasizing “rough” but then pauses briefly, at which point he lifts his head and gazes toward the IE. And, it is on producing the final component of Obama’s prior talk that the IR produces a broad smile, which in combination with his euphemistic understatement and gaze invites not only a response from Obama (Stivers & Rossano, 2010), but also arguably, a laughing one. This response is mobilized through the understated way the IR characterizes what was in fact a firestorm of news coverage, and its import is conveyed through non-vocal, rather than verbal, means.

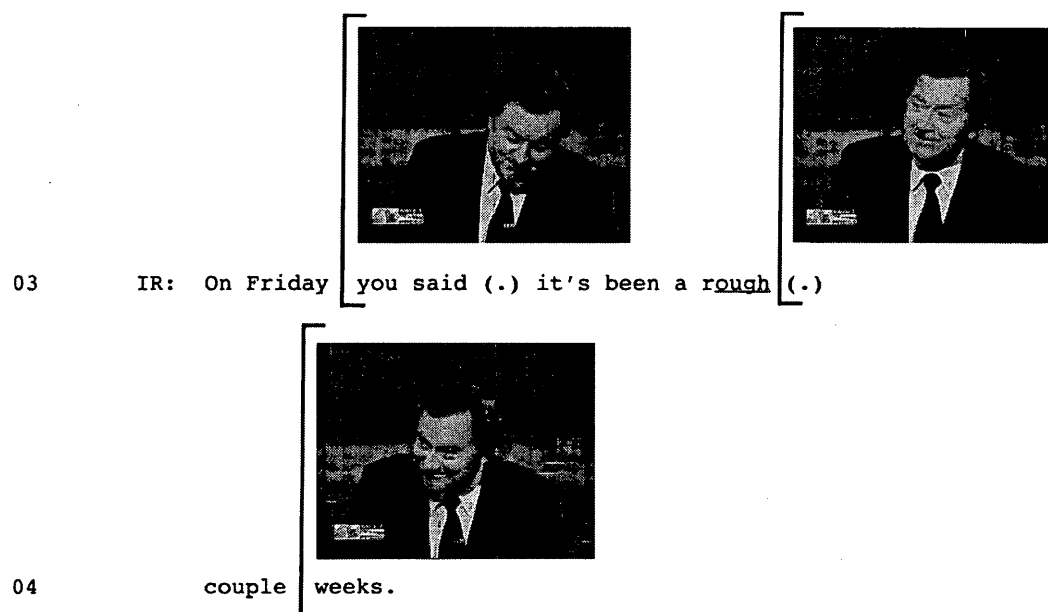


Figure 3.1: Interviewer invites laughing response

Immediately following the IR's smile—which marks the talk as ironic—Obama begins to laugh. In this way, the relevance of laughter can be understood as having been established non-vocally through the IR's facial display and where that display occurs in relation to the IR's talk.

In examples (3.1) – (3.2), the relevance of a laughing response by the IE is established vis-à-vis something the IR does, either vocally, non-vocally or both. In some cases, IRs invite laughter by producing evidently humorous remarks whereas in others such laughter is invited through non-verbal means such as smiling. Thus, both the content of talk and the embodied behaviour of the IR (e.g., facial expressions, gaze) provide important cues for how that talk should be understood and responded to by IEs. In the context of the broadcast news interview, it appears that IRs refrain from inviting laughter from the IE except in cases like those outlined above (e.g., saying something humorous, displaying an ironic stance). Invited IE laughter, then, occurs much less frequently than do instances of volunteered laughter—the focus of the remainder of this chapter.

3.6.2 Interviewee laughter during the interviewee's own talk

Before turning attention to the type of laughter that the forthcoming analysis is based on, there are two other environments for volunteered laughter by IEs that occurs within the course of their own remarks. In such cases, IPAs and tokens of laughter (e.g., 'ha', 'hi', 'huh') are recurrently embedded within and between words, as exemplified in (3.3) – (3.4). In (3.3), Republican presidential candidate Ron Paul is being interviewed by

George Stephanopoulos. In responding to charges of being “an isolationist” Paul contends that then president George Bush’s foreign policies have isolated the United States from the rest of the world. This leads the IR to follow-up with a question that presupposes Paul *is* an isolationist (line 14).

(3.3) 09-2007-07-08-ABC_This Week-5: Isolationist

IR: George Stephanopolous; IE: Ron Paul

14 IR: [...] Aren't you proud of being an isolationist?
 15 IE: I don't like the word.
 16 IE: [(0.2) [I don't want ()
 17 IR: [You'd also [pull out of the: United Na:tions,=
 18 =you'd pull out of the: International Monetary
 19 fund, you'd pull out of the World Ba[nk,]
 20 IE: [Ye:]ah=
 21 =but (.) George Washington wasn't for all those
 22 issf=Un(h)ion gro(h)ups e:ither .hh We didn't
 23 have a president for that until after W(h)orld
 24 War two£ .h so I don't think that's isolation=I
 25 wanna tra:de with people.

When Paul takes issue with the term at line 15, the IR then offers a series of proposed actions in the form of a three-part list, all of which offer evidence of Paul’s isolationist views (lines 17-19). By invoking George Washington in his response, Paul suggests that the country was not founded on the principles of such large-scale organizations. And, by characterizing these international organizations as “union groups”—a potentially problematic action—both the IPAs and Paul’s production of this component of his talk using smile voice allow him to mark this formulation as potentially problematic or contentious. Examples like these suggest the utility of Potter and Hepburn’s (2010) terminology IPAs, over “laugh particles,” since it is not necessarily always the case that *laughter* is what is specifically relevant. Example (3.4) however is a clear case of within-

speech laughter, since it includes unambiguous laugh tokens in addition to IPAs and smile voice.

In the following excerpt involving Tim Russert and then Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney, Russert has just quoted from Sunstone magazine—published by a nonprofit organization that discusses Mormonism through scholarship and literature—reporting a meeting Romney had in 2005 with Mormon president Gordon Bitner Hinckley regarding his potential candidacy. When Romney is asked to account for the potential influence of this meeting on his candidacy (lines 12-15), he asserts that the decision to run was his alone (lines 16-18). Upon noting that some of the more general advice Romney has been offered has been ‘unsolicited’, Romney begins to smile and produces a TCU through laughing, “fa(h)s y(h)ou m(h)ight i(h)ma(h)g(hi)ne” (lines 20-21).

(3.4) 2007-12-16-NBC_MeetThePress-1: Sam Stone
IR: Tim Russert; IE: Mitt Romney

12 IR: [...] Should voters be concer:ned that you were
13 seeking input from the leader of the Mormon
14 church as to whether or not you should run for
15 president.
16 IE: .pt Well the decision about running for
17 president was one that I made entirely by
18 myself. .h Uh: and I got a lot of advice. (.)
19 from a lot of people, some solicited, .hh
20 some (.) not solicited=**fa(h)s y(h)ou m(h)ight**
21 **i(h)ma(h)g(hi)ne. Huh=And uhf** uh th- the
22 decision was made (.) by my son:s, and
23 daughters-in-law:, and my wife and myself
24 uh:: in December of- of la:st year, [...]

In both cases (3.3) and (3.4), IEs produce laugh particles and IPAs in the course of their unfolding responses as opposed to at the boundaries of their turns at talk. And, clearly

such instances of IE laughter or possibly laughter relevant items such as IPAs do not occur in relation to the IR's talk but instead offer some form of commentary or contribute to some form of stance taking on their own talk.

Just as IEs can embed laughter or laugh particles within or between words in the course of their remarks, they may also produce such sounds at the completion of a TCU. Excerpts (3.5) – (3.6) illustrate what Jefferson (1979) referred to as *post-utterance completion laughter* (or post-completion laughter, for short). In (3.5), then Democratic presidential candidate Mike Gravel and Wolf Blitzer discuss what Gravel would do as president regarding U.S. nuclear defense systems (lines 1-2). In response to this hypothetical question, Gravel's response "they'd be out" is ambiguous since it is neither clear what the referent "they" is nor what "out" may refer to. Blitzer then reformulates the IE's response as a candidate hearing at line 4 ("you'd destroy a:ll U.S. nukes), which Gravel explicitly rejects through his repeated use of "no" (line 5). Following this explicit rejection, Gravel offers a self-assessment that implicitly characterizes the IR's reformulation as "foolish". It is on the completion of this TCU that the IE produces a single laugh particle (line 5), before shifting to describe what is in his view a more realistic goal—reducing the number of U.S. nuclear devices.

(3.5) 7-2007-5-18-CNN_TheSituationRoom-2: Nukes
IR: Wolf Blitzer; IE: Mike Gravel

01 IR: So if you're president of the: United States
02 what do you do. You'[d-
03 IE: [They'd be out.
04 IR: Ya y- you'd destroy a:ll U.S. nukes,
05 IE: Uh no no. No no no: no,=I:m not foolish. heh
06 .hh No. We'd bring it down. We'd try tuh give
07 example to th' rest of the world .hh that- the
08 world ha:s to get off of nukes,

Excerpt (3.6) exemplifies two other instances of IE laughter occupying the position of post-utterance completion. It comes from an interview following John McCain's overwhelming success in the Super Tuesday Republican primaries of 2008 (in which the largest number of state primary elections, 24, occurred in the history of U.S. primaries). Earlier on in the primary season, McCain had reported being superstitious but when the IR characterizes him as such (line 1), McCain resists endorsing that description by first laughing (line 2) and then re-characterizing himself as "the luckiest man" (line 4). In accounting for this resistance to the word "superstitious", McCain then explains a desire for things that make him luckier, at the completion of which he produces a single laugh particle (line 7). Following the IR's next question regarding when McCain first believed he would clinch the nomination (lines 8-10), McCain's response at line 11 denies that such a moment has yet occurred, appending that denial with two post-completion laugh particles.

(3.6) 2008-02-17-ABC_ThisWeek-2: Lucky

IR: George Stephanopoulos; IE: John McCain

01 IR: You're a superstitious man.
 02 IE: Eh heh heh .hhh
 03 IR: You [got the lucky penny,]
 04 IE: [Like I said I'm-]I'm<I'm the luckiest man.
 05 Y'know I don't like to use superstitious=I'm just-
 06 feel that I'm very lucky and I like to have things
 07 thet .hh make me luckier. Heh[h
 08 IR: [So when was the
 09 first moment you let yourself belie:ve (0.2) "I'm
 10 gonna be the nominee."
 11 IE: I haven't yet. Heh heh .hh [...]

Examples (3.5) – (3.6), then, illustrate another common environment for volunteered IE laughter that is not responsive to the IR's talk but instead modulates the

IE's own talk, post-utterance completion. Recall that Schegloff (1996: 90) describes such instances as one type of "post-completion stance marker," markers that do not extend the prior talk but instead offer some retrospective alignment toward it, thereby guiding recipients to interpret what was said previously in a certain way (e.g., in both Gravel's and McCain's cases, their subsequent verbal responses in some way reject the IRs' candidate understanding of or presupposition about their respective position—in (3.5), that Gravel would destroy *all* U.S. nuclear devices; in (3.6), that McCain has accepted that he *will* be the nominee—and appending laugh particles following their rejections mitigate the force of their import).

So far, I have introduced two types of IE laughter that occurs during talk in the broadcast news interview: laughter that is—in some sense, be it verbally or non-verbally—*invited* by the IR and laughter that is *volunteered*. And, when volunteered laughter occurs during an IE's unfolding talk, it may occur in the course of some particular element(s) of that talk (*within-speech laughter*), or at the completion of some portion of that talk (*post-completion laughter*). While both invited laughter, and laughter during the IE's talk, are interesting in and of themselves, they are not the focus of the following analysis. Given that the purpose of this chapter is to provide for a comparative analysis with Hillary Rodham Clinton's laughter in new interviews, what follows is a focus on a specific type of laughter—that produced on a voluntary basis but that also occurs during the IR's talk—that became the subject of much media attention during Clinton's campaign for the Democratic nomination.

3.6.3 Interviewee laughter during the interviewer's talk

The following analysis of IE laughter focuses on that which is heard as *responsive* to the IR's first-pair part (i.e., a question), or some aspect of it, as opposed to laughter that occurs within the IE's own turn at talk and may be heard as at oneself. Crucially, these questions are not observably designed or keyed as "humourous" but rather are designed as "serious". As Holt (2010) has described regarding ordinary conversation, "laughter can follow turns that are not designed as potential *laughables*". Indeed, in the context of BNIs, IR questions are predominantly designed as "serious", thereby establishing the relevance of "serious" answers. Further, the analytic focus in this section is on cases of *volunteered* rather than *invited* laughter: that is, the laughter occurs in environments where the IR is not constructing talk that is evidently "humourous," nor is the relevance of responsive laughter established via other common practices for constructing such talk as laughable (e.g., IR laughter, or other possibly laugh relevant items such as smiling or IPAs, etc.). The case will be made that for an IE to volunteer laughter after a "serious" question has been delivered, or during its production, is a *disaffiliative* interactional move. Consistent with Clayman's (1992) definition of disaffiliation (see Chapter 2), I will argue that these instances of IE laughter are *disaffiliative* in terms of their retrospective indexing of the prior action or action-in-progress as something they do not agree with/endorse. Drawing on Glenn's (1995, 2003) "keys"—specifically addressing the nature of what is being laughed at, how the laughter is responded to and what happens following its occurrence—two sequential environments in which such laughter occurs will be explored:

1. at the completion of an IR's question, and thus as prefatory to a verbal response;
and,
2. within the IR's talk-in-progress (i.e., questioning turn).

In both environments, IE laughter disaffiliates from what is being proposed by the IR as a "serious" matter or inquiry while simultaneously projecting a disaffiliative verbal response, although the analysis will consider the differential ways in which this is accomplished in these distinct sequential positions. One of the main objectives is to show how IE laughter can accomplish disaffiliation, how that laughter is organized vis-à-vis the ongoing sequential organization of action, and what kinds of actions are vulnerable to such forms of disaffiliation. In what follows, I unpack these issues regarding IE laughter first when it occurs post-question completion and then when it occurs during the IR's question.

3.6.3.1 Interviewee laughter at question completion

The first set of examples illustrates IE laughter that occurs in response to an IR's question and prior to offering a verbal response. In these examples, IEs laugh in response to "serious" opinion-seeking questions, which are not formulated in an adversarial way, and which are not about the IE. In this environment, the laughter acts as an implicit commentary on the question, undercutting its legitimacy as a question to be taken seriously. In terms of its referent (i.e., what the laughter is about), the laughter operates on the propositional meaning of the IR's question by retrospectively casting it as laughable. At the same time, laughter may also project a further responsive action (i.e.,

an explicit verbalization) that is disaffiliative in nature as well. And, by laughing in response to a question, IEs also effectively delay providing such a response.

In the following example, David Gregory is interviewing New York Democratic Senator Chuck Schumer. Prior to where excerpt (3.7) begins, Schumer was asked to comment on Senator John McCain's opposition to a proposed investigation by the attorney general on alleged torture in the Bush administration (hence, a "serious" matter). Following Schumer's response, which highlights the importance of "looking forward" but also assesses the attorney general's actions as an important "right", the IR follows up with his next question. Notice the laughter that the IE produces at its completion (line 12).

(3.7) 2009Jul12-MSNBC-MeetThePress-1: Sarah Palin

IR: David Gregory; IE: Chuck Schumer

11 IR: Is Sarah Palin the future of the Republican Party,
 12 IE: .hh hh=w(h)el(h)heh heh heh .hhuh I guess I shouldn't
 13 judge and let them ff(h)ight among themselves.f
 14 hn [hehhheh]
 15 IR: [What do] you think though.=
 16 IE: =.h[h
 17 IR: [D'you think she's qualified to be president?
 18 IE: .hh Well y'know, I- I- I think the: American people
 19 saw her. (0.2) and they saw:, (.) problems
 20 [in terms of preparation and knowledge of things,]
 21 but y'know. uh: four years away is a lo- three and
 22 a half years away is a long time away so I'm not
 23 gonna make [a judgment.
 24 IR: [Yer hedging your bets.[...]

The IR's yes-no interrogative at line 11 is delivered as a "serious" question: the IR does not "invite" a laughing response in any hearable or visual way (e.g., he is not smiling and

the talk is produced without any hearable IPAs).³¹ And yet, immediately following its completion, the IE produces a substantial laugh unit across the production of the turn-initial component “well” before offering a verbal response (lines 12-13). Features of the IE’s response suggest that Schumer is not laughing at Sarah Palin per se, but rather he is disaffiliating from the proposition embodied in the question (i.e., Sarah Palin being the future of the Republican Party). By formulating the question in the way he does without any prefatory material, the IR presumes Schumer is an authoritative source for this information, and thus, that he should offer his position. After laughing, instead of offering a verbal assessment of Sarah Palin, Schumer resists the idea that he is willing to comment on this (“I guess I shouldn’t judge”), and constructs himself as an outsider with respect to the Republican Party in a way that also implies that whatever he would have to say would be negative (“let them fight amongst themselves”; lines 12-13). By responding in this way, Schumer undercuts the question as a legitimate one for him, and thus avoids providing an explicit answer although, to some extent, his laughter projects an answer already. That is, Schumer does not provide what Geoffrey Raymond (2003) calls a type-conforming response by answering “yes” or “no”, but instead only implicates a “no” by laughing through a component that often indicates non-straightforwardness

³¹ When I have presented this example in various contexts, many people have commented on their “feeling” that this question is in some sense bold, strong or provocative, and thus, perhaps invites a “big” response (on bold, overdone statements inviting laughter see, for example, Ford & Fox, 2010; Holt 2011). Upon simply reading the question from a transcript it may appear as such, however, I would still hold that there is nothing in its delivery—either verbally (e.g., prosody) or non-vocally (e.g., facial expressions or gaze behaviour of the IR)—that evidences this interpretation. While many more liberal-minded people may find Sarah Palin as the future of the Republican Party to be a laughable matter, and certainly some conservatives might share that view, John McCain’s selection of Palin for the Vice-Presidential ticket in 2008 was also widely perceived by many as igniting the Republican Party. Thus, I would maintain that both the design and delivery of the question and the IR’s subsequent behaviour treats this as a legitimate, “serious” inquiry, and, in that sense, does not establish the relevance of *laughter* as a relevant response, although it does certainly invite a grandiose favourable assessment of Palin.

when produced in response to questions, namely “well” (Schegloff & Lerner, 2009; Schiffrin, 1987). However, the IR does not treat this response as an answer to his question. In overlap with three post-completion laugh particles from the IE (line 14), the IR pursues a “serious” answer but in a way that retreats from what the initial question sought: that is, while the initial yes-no interrogative invited a favourable assessment of Palin, the form of the pursuit merely seeks Schumer’s opinion in a more open-ended way, “What do you think though” (line 15) (on IRs’ pursuits of answers in the context of broadcast talk, Romaniuk, 2013). Following this downgraded pursuit of the initial question, the IR then reformulates that opinion-seeking question in terms of Palin’s qualifications for president (line 17). In terms of the IR’s responsive behaviour, then, Gregory refuses to align with Schumer’s laugh, and his account for not answering the question, not only by *not* smiling and *not* laughing in response but in fact by pursuing a “serious” answer. At the beginning of this “serious” pursuit of topical matters, Schumer’s facial expressions clearly convey a laughing stance, but once the IR completes the first component of his pursuit, Schumer’s facial expressions shift dramatically. First, he withdraws his gaze as he takes a hearable inbreath and then licks his lips, transitioning from the broad smile and laughing (end of line 14; Figure 3.2) to bringing his lips together (start of line 16; Figure 3.2). During this transitioning on Schumer’s part, the IR reformulates his pursuit of the initial question in terms of whether Schumer believes Palin is qualified to be president, and at its completion, Schumer begins to produce a “serious” dispreferred response (start of line 18; Figure 3.2), whose status had already been projected to some extent by his laughter.

13 IE: I guess I shouldn't judge and let them f(h)ight

14 among themselves.f hnh hehhheh

15 IR: What do you think though.=

16 IE: =.h h

17 IR: D'you think she's qualified to be President?

18 IE: .hh Well y'know, I- I- I think the: American people [...]

Figure 3.2: Interviewee's shift from "joke" to "serious"

Here too Schumer does not supply a type conforming "yes" or "no" but again indicates non-straightforwardness ("well"; line 18), and then proceeds to frame his answer in terms of what "the American people" thought of her as opposed to expressing his own point of view (which is in fact what the question sought).

The next example is another case of responsive laughter at the completion of an IR's question, this time involving Republican Governor of South Carolina, Mark Sanford. In answering a question about the state of the Republican Party after the 2008 election, at the beginning of excerpt 3.8, Sanford cites three people he sees as the future of the Republican Party (lines 11-25). The IR then produces a follow-up question in lines 26-28 that gets responded to with laughter.

(3.8) 2008Nov24-Fox-Hannity&Colmes-2: Republican Party
 IR: Alan Colmes; IE: Mark Sanford

11 IE: .h I ↑think the real question though is not where
 12 we've been as a Party, but where are we gonna go.
 13 .h And if you look at the Bobby Jinda:ls of the
 14 world, who:'s the governor of Louisiana? or look
 15 at Rick Perry in Texas, er (.) .h Mitch Daniels
 16 up in Indiana? .h there are a lot of governors,
 17 there are a lot of folks at the precinct level,
 18 at the county level, who are working very hard to
 19 bring back the: (.) the: the: the: conservatism
 20 in Republican Pa:rtý? in other words, .h the
 21 problem with the Party is, in many cases, they
 22 ran on one theme but governed on something else.
 23 And that notion of (.) not walking the walk in the
 24 world of politics, I think can be deadly, as we've
 25 seen a couple of Tuesdays ago.=
 26 IR: =Who else would you put in that category:, Who=what
 27 other names('d) you a:dd as the future of the Party
 28 Sarah Palin for example,
 29 IE: [hh heh heh heh huh .hh (0.3)]=
 30 IR: [((IR remains po-faced))-----]
 31 IE: =Uh: ↑certainly, she's among the ↑mi:x, uh:::: I- y'know
 32 I- I think (it) a broad swath it literally goes from
 33 Jin- Jim Douglas, who won in the most blue of blue
 34 states there in Vermont, .h uh come Tuesday a couple
 35 a Tuesdays ago, .h or <it is indeed> somebody [who's
 36 (IR): [(h-)
 37 IE: like a young rising star, [like Bobby Jindal,]
 38 IR: [(Hey Governor?)]
 39 IE: .h It is somebody like Sonny Perdue there in Georgia,=
 40 =who's been working on a lotta neat reforms,
 41 It's a broad swath of different folks.[...]

The IR's WH-question concerning "what other names" Sanford would offer for the future of the Republican Party subsequently offers Sarah Palin as a candidate example (lines 26-28). And, again, it is designed as a "serious" opinion-seeking question. Interestingly, it is formatted as a declarative question, thereby inviting the IE's confirmation that Palin is another name to add to the future of the Party (Heritage, 2010). However, in response, the IE produces a substantial stretch of laughter consisting of five particles (line 29). Thus, instead of answering "yes" or "no", the IE laugh projects a non-type conforming

response. And, at the same time, it retrospectively casts the candidate example the IR offers as a laughable matter. Notably the IR remains what Drew (1987) calls “po-faced” (lines 30, Figure 3.3), which he achieves by retaining an overtly serious face throughout Sanford’s laughing display and not producing any reciprocal laughter. By doing so, the IR disaligns with the IE’s stance toward the question thereby treating it as inadequate.

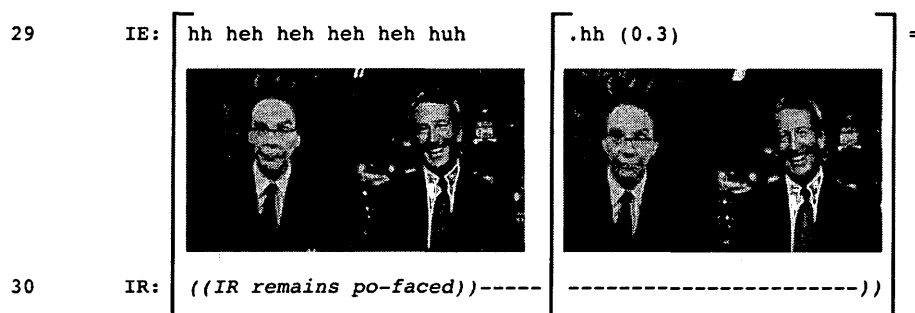


Figure 3.3: “Po-faced” interviewer

Perhaps in recognition of the IR’s lack of affiliative uptake of Sanford’s laughter, and after exhibiting some hesitation (lines 28, 30), Sanford markedly shifts his stance from “joke” to “serious” (Schegloff, 2001). That is, his laughter first suggests a non-serious treatment of the question, but his subsequent verbal response treats the question seriously by providing an explicit answer (“certainly”). While “certainly” constitutes a preferred response, there are a few issues concerning what happens before, during and after its production that suggest dispreferredness. First, the very fact that his laughter delays the production of a verbal response suggests that “certainly” was not the immediately forthcoming response in mind. Second, the response token “certainly” is produced with hesitation and a tentative-sounding voice quality. Third, by stating “she’s among the mix” (line 31), he acknowledges Palin’s presence in the political arena, but the remainder

of his response shifts focus away from her per se. Specifically, after stumbling slightly in making this shift, Sanford reformulates the likely contenders as a “broad swath”, listing three other viable candidates (lines 33-39). By *not* including Sarah Palin among this “mix”, he implies that she is not “a young rising star” like those he does name (line 37). Of course, Mark Sanford is a Republican governor and so he is in the delicate position of being asked to take up a position about a member of his own party whom he clearly resists endorsing. While his initial vocal response displays his treatment of the IR’s question as laughable, thereby disaffiliating from the proposition embodied in the IR’s question, Sanford then modulates that position when the IR visually sustains his treatment of the question as a “serious” one.

The third and final example of IE laughter at the completion of an IR’s question comes from an interview with Democratic U.S. Representative, Charles Rangel. Excerpt (3.9) begins following some discussion of then President Bush’s uncompromising position on Iraq, and the fact that he had just vetoed a bill that called for a timetabled withdrawal of U.S. troops. In response to a follow-up question concerning Congress’ next steps (lines 7-16), Rangel prefaces his verbal response with laughter (line 17).

(3.9) 2007-05-13-CBS_FaceTheNation-2: Congress
IR: Bob Schieffer; IE: Charles Rangel

07 IR: [...] Do you think that the- that the Congress
08 will: send back to the president a bill that
09 ha:s some conditions on it uh what about that
10 the: (.) Iraqi’s have to meet these uh
11 benchmarks that are being talked about if
12 they’re to get the: aid. Would you have
13 something like that in the bill, .hh
14 [Or will it] ju:st be a bill that uh::=
15 IE: [()]
16 IR: =uh calls fer it=to continue funding the wa:r.
17 IE: **He:h he:huh**: fit would be ridic’lous to think
18 that we’re going tof just drop this fi:ght,

Also, like the other examples, the question that Rangel is responding to is not delivered in an adversarial way nor does it make the IE the subject of inquiry. What follows Rangel's laughter is a response that explicitly marks what this laughing display is meant to convey: that is, the ridiculousness of the suggestion that the Democrats would simply permit continued funding of the war unconditionally or that they would punish the Iraqis (lines 17-18). In this instance, then, the IE's verbal response makes explicit what the laughter had only implicitly conveyed—that the IR's suggestion of doing nothing is “ridiculous”. Also, in addition to delaying answering, the laughter also projects a disaffiliative verbal responsive action. Here, Rangel does not select one of the two alternatives regarding the Democrats' intentions in his response, but instead displays resistance to both of these options as legitimate ones to be taken seriously.

So far, we have seen IEs laughing in response to primarily opinion-seeking IR questions, which are not formulated in an adversarial way, are not about the IE, but are in fact constructed as “serious” interview questions. Although these questions are formatted in such a way as to presume their relevance for those IEs, by prefacing their verbal responses with laughter, these IEs provide an implicit commentary on those questions, challenging their legitimacy as “serious”. Moreover, rather than straightforwardly answering “yes” or “no”, laughing in turn-initial position can prefigure a dispreferred response, both in avoiding offering an explicit “on record” verbal response and in delaying providing that response as well. In the second sequential environment of IE laughter—that which occurs in the course of IR's questions—IEs appear to be orienting to a somewhat different set of interactional contingencies.

3.6.3.2 Interviewee laughter during interviewer questions

Cases in which IEs laugh once an IR's question has been brought to completion—the focus of the previous section—are actually quite rare in the context of BNIs (n=20/145). More commonly, IEs laugh earlier on in the IR's questioning turn (n=52/145), specifically, during question components (usually prefaces) that are also designed as “serious”. However, unlike the type of questions in examples (3.6) – (3.9), these question components are in some sense adversarial, in that the IR is offering some form of critical commentary *about* the IE, their position, or a situation related to them. That said, because IRs are expected to project a formally neutral or “neutralistic” posture (Clayman, 2010b), they often formulate such critical commentary by attributing it to some third party, be it an individual, group or the general populace (Clayman, 1988, 1992b, 2002, 2007). Thus, when IE laughter occurs during critical question-prefaces, it also is occurring when that talk is constructed as being on behalf of others. In this way, IEs are not heard or understood as laughing at the IR, or at what the IR says, but as laughing at what the IR is reporting someone else has said. As outlined in Chapter 1, news interview talk is characterized by a participation framework (Goffman, 1981) that differs from ordinary conversation. Importantly, it includes an overhearing audience as the “primary, though unaddressed, recipients of the talk” (Heritage, 1985: 100). What this means is that, while an IE's laughter is clearly responsive to critical components of an IR's question-preface, it is also a means of displaying the IE's orientation toward that talk for the benefit of the overhearing audience.

Another key feature of BNIs that is relevant in considering how IE laughter is

produced, heard, and understood in this context concerns the organization of turn taking. Unlike ordinary conversation, the turn-taking system of BNIs pre-allocates specific types of turns to speakers with particular institutional identities, so that the IR and IE are expected to restrict themselves to questioning and answering, respectively (Greatbatch, 1988). Correspondingly, the doing of “interview” is constituted and realized, for the most part, through the participants’ orientations to the IR doing questions and the IE doing answers (Schegloff, 1988/89). As Schegloff (1988/89: 221-222) describes, “the designated questioner’s turn is not ‘over’ in a sequentially relevant sense, and it is not its recipient’s turn to talk, until a question has been asked. And it *is* over, and it *is* the other’s turn to talk, when a question *has* been asked” (emphasis in original). When IEs abide by this normative interactional framework, they withhold taking the floor until a question has been brought to completion (i.e., until a transition relevance place, henceforth TRP). The question is: how does IE laughter figure in this normative framework of question-answer sequences in BNIs?

As discussed in Chapter 2 (section 2.3.1), because laughter is an acoustic phenomenon and not a linguistic one, it lacks readily identifiable semantic and syntactic features. Accordingly, a recipient’s production of laughter during a speaker’s talk is usually not heard nor treated as interruptive in the same way that a linguistic construction (i.e., a lexical, phrasal, or clausal TCU) would be heard or treated. In this sense, laughter transcends the normative interactional preference for “one party talking at a time” (Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson, 1974). That is, because laughter is not turn organized (Sacks, 1992 [1964-1972] [Fall 1967]: 745), it is not restricted to particular places, like post-

question completion, as answers generally are in the context of BNIs. Thus, IEs are able to negotiate both the turn-taking constraints of this interactional context and the norm of one party talking at a time through their use of laughter during the IR's turn.

Specifically, IE laughter in an environment in which the IR has exclusive rights to talk enables an IE to construct an audible orientation to that talk while it is being produced, while still technically abiding by the normative interactional framework for BNIs (Romaniuk, 2009). This audible orientation, in combination with other semiotic resources (e.g., eye and head movements, facial expressions; see, for example, Ekström, 2012; Hualpa, 2011, respectively) offers a public display of the IE's stance toward the IR's talk-in-progress, usually one that expresses disaffiliation or disagreement with the criticisms being put forward.³² Further, I would suggest that the degree to which an IE can produce such displays ranges on a continuum in terms of the degree of explicitness (see Figure 3.5), so that non-vocal displays such as withdrawing gaze might fall on the more implicit end of the spectrum, while verbal interjections (e.g., "no, no, no"; see example 3.12) would clearly represent the more explicit end, and vocal displays such as laughter may lie somewhere in between, since they are in some sense more explicit than non-vocal ones (for example, vocalizations are more likely to disrupt the trajectory of the talk and/or cause explicit orientations by co-participants in ways that non-vocal displays

³² The work of Charles Goodwin and Marjorie Harness Goodwin has long investigated the relationship between verbal and vocal resources, gaze, gestures and body orientation in the construction of recipient stance displays toward emergent talk in the context of ordinary conversation (e.g., C. Goodwin, 2000, 2007; C. Goodwin & Goodwin, 1987; M. H. Goodwin, 1980); however, to the best of my knowledge, they do not use the term (dis)affiliation in their work. Following Elizabeth Couper-Kuhlen (2009: 96), the term *display* is not being used here in the sense of "reveal" (i.e., it is not meant to imply that some inner psychological state is being outwardly expressed), but in the sense of "make publicly available" (a phrase attributable to Charles Goodwin), and in the context of BNIs, this means being made available for the listening and viewing audience.

such as gaze practices may not).³³ Further, the solid line around non-vocal displays such as eye rolls or head movements (e.g., nodding, lateral headshakes) is meant to capture the fact that these are more conventionalized markers of stance, whereas the dotted line around smiling and laughter is meant to convey their relatively underdeterminacy in meaning.

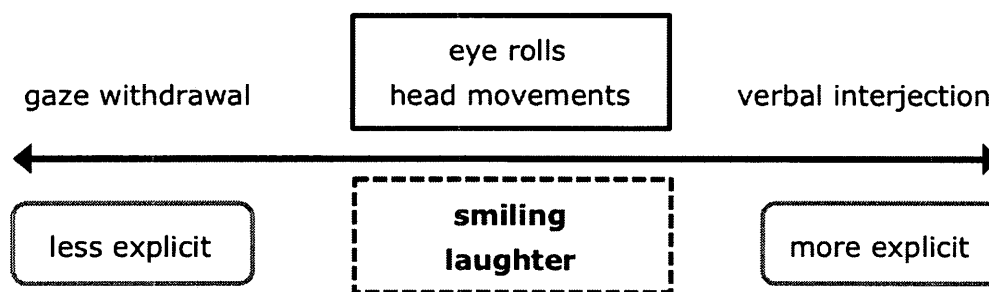


Figure 3.5: Degree of explicitness in disaffiliative displays during Interviewer talk

Most IE displays in BNIs fall on the subtle (i.e., less explicit) to moderate end of the spectrum. And, considering precisely where these displays occur helps determine what sort of stance is being offered. In the following three representative cases, the IEs' laughing displays—in concert with other resources—disaffiliates from what is being conveyed in the IR's action-in-progress, thereby working to disarm that action while it is being produced and undermining it as something to be taken seriously.

³³ These examples, and their relative position, are meant to be suggestive rather than exhaustive. Further work is needed to examine any possible order to their explicitness, perhaps in terms of the degree to which they are treated and understood as accountable actions. In terms of their deployment in the construction of action, *multiple* resources—vocal and non-vocal—can be combined and produced simultaneously (for a recent illustration of this argument regarding laughter, see Ford & Fox, 2010; and on the construction of action, more generally, see C. Goodwin, 2011). Indeed, IEs often do so to formulate and display their stance toward the IR's talk (e.g., by withdrawing gaze while shaking one's head or producing a verbal interjection, as in excerpt 3.12, for example).

In an example representing the more implicit end of the continuum, Christine O'Donnell—a Tea Party favorite who defeated a nine-term Republican U.S. Representative and former governor—is being interviewed following her unexpected victory in the Delaware Senate primary in September 2010. At the beginning of excerpt (3.10), the IR and O'Donnell had just talked about what message her victory sends to what O'Donnell called “establishment Republicans” (lines 4-13). Note the onset of her smiling and subsequent laughter in the course of the IR's next question (beginning at line 14).


(3.10) 2010Sep14-CNN-National Republicans
IR: Jessica Yellin; IE: Christine O'Donnell


04 IE: Hi Anderson, I'm here with Christine O'Donnell: who
05 has been uh: greeting supporters all night long.=
06 =First of all, .h what message do you think your
07 victory here sends to: you've called them establishment
08 Republicans who are cannibalizing the Party.
09 IE: That we the people want our voice heard again:.
10 And y'know it's no:t always about power it's about
11 principles.=And there's a lot of work to do .h to
12 get our country back on track,=And I think that voters
13 are craving candidates who will stand for something.
14 IR: >Uh<-we've already been told this evening tha:t the:
15 National Republicans, the Party organization that
16 often f:unds campaigns like yours is not going to
17 fund [yours. [.hh=
18 IE: [(smiles--)]heh
19 IR: =Uh: [and that many national Republicans have said]=
20 IE: [[(laughs)]-----]
21 IR: [=simply: (0.2) you cannot win in November.]
22 IE: [((raises eyebrows; continues smiling))-----]
23 IR: D'you need their money? Can you win without: it?
24 IE: Well, go:od=They don't have a winning track(h)
25 r(h)ec(h)ord heh huh .hh=b't y'know[...]


In lines 14-21, the IR delivers a question preface that announces two rounds of bad news regarding O'Donnell's candidacy for the general election: first, that she will not receive

financial support from the National Republicans, and second, that many of those same people doubt her ability to win. Precisely at the point where she is told her campaign will not be funded, O'Donnell begins to smile (line 18; Figure 3.6). Then, at a hearable break in the IR's turn-in-progress (marked by the pre-continuation inbreath at line 17), the IE produces a single laugh particle but continues laughing³⁴ (lines 20; 22; Figure 3.6) as the IR proceeds to report the speech of the National Republicans: "you cannot win in November" (line 21). Although we do not have visual access to the IR in this case, and therefore cannot say too much about her response, it is at least hearably evident that O'Donnell's display does not disrupt the IR's delivery of the question preface, and by proceeding with serious pursuit of the question proper the IR not only declines producing responsive laughter but also terminates its relevance at that point. Throughout the IR's delivery of both negative components of this question preface, however, the IE's embodied stance display disaffiliates from the National Republicans' position as formulated by the IR.

³⁴ The transcript indicates rather than represents the laughter here since the IE's laugh is not audible at this point, which is likely a consequence of the fact that the IR has a hand-held microphone and is not holding it toward the IE as she produces the question. (This is further evidence that participants – at least IRs – orient to the specialized turn-taking system of BNIs whereby an IE response is not relevant until the IR has completed the question.)

15 IR: [...] the Party organization that
 16 often fu:nds campaigns like yours is not going to
 17 fund yours. [.hh=


 18 IE: ((smiles)) [heh
 19 IR: Uh: and that many National Republicans have]


 20 IE: ((laughs))-----]
 21 IR: said simply: (0.2) you cannot win in November.)


 22 IE: ((raises eyebrows; continues smiling))-----]

Figure 3.6: Interviewee's smiling and laughter

What evidence is there that her smiling and laughter are disaffiliative? Before responding to the IR's summative yes-no interrogatives, "Do you need their money? Can you win without it? (line 23), O'Donnell's verbal response violates the preference for contiguity (Sacks, 1987) by first addressing the National Republicans' criticisms introduced in the preface in a way that reveals her negative stance toward their position. First, her "Well good" offers a positive assessment in contrast to what has been offered as "bad" news, showing herself essentially not to care; and, second, she immediately

counters their ideas by offering a negative assessment of her own that discredits them, “They don’t have a winning track record” (lines 24-25). Crucially, this criticism is interpolated with particles of aspiration and further laughter, which suggests that this negative stance is the same one she began with smiling and laughing during the question preface. In this example, then, smiling, momentarily laughing, and then continuing to laugh visibly, though to a lesser extent audibly (for reasons outlined in footnote 33), allows this IE to take up a position toward her critics that disaffiliates from their critique as it is being produced on their behalf by the IR. Indeed, O’Donnell (at least visually) projects this position to the viewing audience well before she is actually provided an opportunity to respond verbally.

The IE’s laughter in (3.11) is a somewhat more explicit case than (3.10), partly because it is audible throughout, although it still represents the less explicit end of the continuum since some of the laughter is produced *sotto voce*. At the time of this interview (the beginning of May), then Democratic candidates for the Presidential nomination, Obama and Clinton, were still participating in the remaining primaries and caucuses. Despite Obama’s lead in pledged delegates, Hillary Rodham Clinton had vowed to continue campaigning until all of the primaries and caucuses were complete, and even though many pundits had declared the primaries effectively over on April 22, the final day of primary contests was not until June 3. Prior to where excerpt (3.11) begins, the IR, Tim Russert, had just presented the elected pledged delegate counts (1,492 and 1,338) and super delegate counts (253 and 274) for Obama and Clinton, respectively. From this, he provides the approximation of Obama’s lead (133) and the number of

uncommitted super delegates remaining (268). Russert then shows a clip of Obama speaking at a political rally in which he makes the point that because he has won the most delegates from voters he should be made the nominee. This is the context for the IR's lengthy question, beginning at line 1.

(3.11) 2008-05-04-NBC_MeetThePress-5: Delegates
IR: Tim Russert; IE: Barack Obama

01 IR: It doesn't appear math'matically possible that
02 Senator Clinton can overcom:e (.) your lead
03 with elected delegates.
04 IE: °Mm hm°
05 IR: .hhh If the su:per delegates got together.
06 (0.6) the: undecided super delegaes- delegates
07 and said y'know .hhh Senator Obama we think
08 that Hillary Clinton's a stro:nger cand'date
09 against John McCain,=Here are the latest poll:s
10 and the swing states, .h the: overall nat'nal
11 polls, .h you've run a (.) w- wonder[ful race,=
12 IE: [°h:eh heh=
13 IR: =[(.) [but [we're gon[na go [with Senator]=
14 IE: [heh he[h [heh heh [°heh heh° [((smiling))]=
15 IR: =[Clinton as our nom[inee, [(0.6)=
16 IE: =[.hhhhh [>°right.°< [.hhh =
17 IR: [What would you do.]
18 IE: [((smiling))-----]
19 IE: [I don't think that's gonna happen.]
20 IE: [((smiling))-----] I- >I- b-<
21 >le- le-< lemme say at the: outset. (.) I want
22 a: Democrat to win in November. [...]

This question is designed as a hypothetical scenario involving the super delegates that would be detrimental to Obama's candidacy (lines 5-17). Specifically, Russert animates a series of assertions on behalf of these hypothetical undecided super delegates, in which Clinton is depicted as “a stronger candidate against John McCain” (lines 7-11). Obama begins to laugh at a recognition point: that is, when it is apparent that the IR is constructing a scenario in which Obama comes out the loser (“you’ve run a wonder- [ful...”]; line 11, Figure 3.7).

11 IR: [...] .h you've run a (.) w- wonder ful race,=
 12 IE: °h:eh heh=
 13 IR: = (.) [but we're gon[na go with Senator]=

14 IE: heh he[h heh heh [°heh heh° ((smiling))]=
 15 IR: =Clinton as our nom[inee, [...]

Figure 3.7: “Serious” hypothetical; Non-serious treatment

The onset of laughter precisely at this point and Obama's continued vocal display throughout the hypothetical decision—i.e., “but we’re gonna go with Senator Clinton”; line 13—treats this scenario as laughable. Despite Obama’s treatment of it as such, Russert continues with his “serious” delivery of this scenario unfettered by Obama’s laughter, without producing any reciprocal laughter or acknowledging it in any visual way (e.g., by smiling). While Obama observes this “serious” pursuit of topical matters, he then acknowledges it as a genuine topic (“right”; line 16), but nevertheless continues to smile broadly as the IR proceeds with the question proper: “What would you do?” (line 17). Not surprisingly, Obama does not respond to this question in a way that endorses the likelihood of this hypothetical scenario. Instead, he explicitly rejects it as a possibility: “I don’t think that’s gonna happen” (line 19). Thus, in this instance (and others like it), the

IE's verbal response explicitly deals with what is particularly at issue with the question (i.e., Obama does not view it as a likely scenario) while the laughter during its construction offers a way of alluding to this perspective in an implicit way.

In examples (3.10) and (3.11), we have seen how laughter allows IEs to display their stance toward early components of an IR's questioning turn, and in some way disaffiliate from the content of that turn or disarm the action under way before the question is delivered. But there is another dimension to the precise placement of laughter in these last two examples that warrants mention. In both cases, the IEs' laughter is responsive to specific components of question prefaces: that is, statements that occur prefatory to the question proper and whose apparent function is to contextualize and provide the relevance for the question that follows (Clayman & Heritage, 2002). However, prefatory statements can also be used by journalists to set more complex, constraining or problematic agendas of their questions (Clayman & Heritage, 2002), and this is precisely what happens in the last two examples. In (3.10), the IR produces two prefatory statements that are problematic for the IE (O'Donnell), who has just won a primary election: her state campaign won't be funded and her own party doesn't believe she can win. In (3.11), the IR's prefatory remarks describe the IE's (Obama's) principal opponent as the stronger candidate for the general election. In both examples, then, these prefaces contain particularly problematic propositional content that is then presupposed in the question proper, which makes them significant components to try and counter from the IEs' perspective. Thus, by laughing while these prefaces are being produced, the IEs foreground those problematic elements as something more prominent than they would be

otherwise, and accordingly, as elements significant enough to be responded to in their own right. And, in both IEs' subsequent verbal responses, neither in fact actually answers the question (since that would require them to confirm the truth of those unfavourable propositions), and instead they both address the content of the question preface. In (3.10), O'Donnell's "Well good they don't have a winning track record" takes issue with the National Republicans, whose position was put forward in the IR's question preface, while in (3.11), Obama's "I don't think that's gonna happen" counters the possibility of the hypothetical scenario constructed in the IR's preface. In each case, then, the IEs' laughter in response to those components of the IRs' questioning turn helps license their subsequent verbal response, which, in both cases, addresses the preface and not the question.

The third and final example of IE laughter during an IR question represents the more explicit end of the continuum, both in terms of the IE's series of (non-)verbal stance displays that are taken up toward the IR's talk-in-progress, but also in terms of the verbal interjections that actually disrupt that talk and elicit explicit orientations from the IR as a result. Of course it is important to keep in mind that the range of this IE's displays and the sheer amount of time spent laughing in this example are in fact quite rare in the context of BNIs, at least in the U.S. context. In excerpt (3.12), over the course of an elaborate question preface, the IR, Tim Russert, develops a portrait of Republican presidential candidate at the time, Rudolph Giuliani, as having questionable ties to undesirable political leaders.

(3.12) 2007Dec09-Meet The Press-Serious accusations

IR: Tim Russert; IE: Rudolph Giuliani

01 IR: People are calling into question yer judgment,=
02 =they a:lso (.) c[ite that yer law: firm, (0.2)
03 IE: [hT°(h)im°
04 your law firm, uh did (.) w-work for: Hugo Chavez.
05 (0.2) the head of Venezuela.=
06 IE: =[**(th-)hhehh T(h)im**]
07 IR: =[They-they've now-] they've now quit that,
08 but they [did represent=
09 IE: [()
10 IR: =CIT[GO,
11 IE: [**hi hu [huh huh °huh°]°huh huh°[Hahh]**
12 IR: [which is ru]n by Hu [go C]ha:vez,=
13 IE: =fT(h)im th(h)at's a st(h)re(h)tch, f hh
14 IR: It's no:t-
15 IE: It's-No=no=no, there's (o:ft'n)-
16 IR: A:n->no one more and then I'm gonna give you
17 [a chance [on this,< [One more, a Las Vegas [developer,=
18 IE: [**hi hi [hi hi [hi °hi hi hi° [((claps))**
19 IR: =that you: (.) worked with=
20 IE: =heh=he[h
21 IR: [who had a close
22 partnership (.) uh: with Hong Kong billionaire (0.2)
23 who was close tuh Kim Jong I:l.
24 IE: **Khhh=heh heh heh**
25 IR: These are a:ll accusations. [(0.2) being made] in a
26 IE: [(shakes head))-]
27 very serious way [about-
28 IE: [°Th-they're not]ser[ious Tim.°
29 IE: [(shakes head))-]
30 IR: [about your business.
31 IE: Right.
32 IR: So in order to deal with all this (0.2) why not say
33 to the: American people, (0.2) "The:se are all my
34 clients. (0.2) This is who I work for, (.) s[o you=
35 IE: [Okay lemme=
36 IR: =can know: (.) who I've been involved with and who might
37 be trying to influence [me
38 IE: [Okay=
39 IR: =if I ever became president."
40 IE: Fi-first lemme say I can address bo-uh both of those.[...]

At line 1, Russert introduces a general criticism leveled against the candidate, "people are calling into question your judgment" (which gets responded to with a breathy address term from Giuliani), and then begins citing a specific example of questionable

associations. The first unequivocal, and thus explicit, burst of laughter occurs at the completion of this specific example, namely that Giuliani's law firm worked for Hugo Chavez, whose status is offered incrementally (i.e., "the head of Venezuela"), perhaps for the benefit of the overhearing audience.³⁵ Being a vocal critic of US foreign policy and an ally of Castro's socialist Cuba, Chavez is not someone a presidential candidate like Giuliani would like to be associated with. Thus, it is precisely at the point where this association is made that the IE produces a single breathy pulse of laughter, followed by another address term through a single laugh particle (line 6). Although the IR retreats somewhat from his initial formulation of this association ("they've now quit that"; line 7), which is to some extent hearable as orienting to the IE's response, he nevertheless provides a justification for it (i.e., "your law firm did work for Hugo Chavez" becomes "they did represent CITGO, which is run by Hugo Chavez"; lines 8-12), thereby holding to the criticism. However, because laughter is not turn organized (Sacks, 1992 [1964-1972] [Fall 1967]: 745), the IE manages to laugh throughout this modified description of his affiliation with Chavez (lines 9, 11), treating it as a joke rather than a serious criticism. Note also that when the IR comes to syntactic completion, the IE immediately offers a negative assessment of this criticism through a series of laugh particles ("Tim that's a stretch"; line 13), which counters the IR's characterization and challenges its authenticity. This negative assessment accomplishes a similar action to the responsive one O'Donnell delivered in excerpt (3.10), which was also interpolated with particles of

³⁵ Although the IE produces another address term at line 3, it is delivered *sotto voce* and there is no visual access to the IE at that point, so it is difficult to say unequivocally that he is laughing per se. At the very least, its production is audibly breathy.

aspiration, and, in both cases, the assessments mitigate the force of the critique. It is also noteworthy that the IE's turn at line 13 is prefaced by a turn-initial address term, which is a common environment for disaligning actions such as non-type conforming ones (Clayman, 2010a).

Following a brief back and forth regarding this overt challenge and an attempt by the IE to halt the IR's action-in-progress (i.e., "no=no=no", line 15; on multiple sayings like this, see Stivers, 2004), the IR disattends to Giuliani's subsequent laughter by continuing to speak unfettered through "one more" example of questionable ties, this time to North Korean leader, Kim Jong Il. At this point, the IE produces an extended stretch of laughter that cuts across most of the IR's second example within this preface, at the completion of which, the IE again produces three more laugh particles (lines 17-24). And yet, with no audible indication of either smiling or laughing in response, the IR sustains the trajectory of his talk, completing his question preface by characterizing these examples as "accusations" of a "serious" nature (lines 25, 27). Such an orientation by the IR works to counter the humorous stance that Giuliani has made relevant by laughing through the specific criticisms as they were being produced. As in the other examples, Giuliani's subsequent verbal response again provides the grounds for understanding the embodied displays up to that point as disaffiliative, and thus, as prefiguring disagreement. That is, Giuliani first indicates his disagreement with the accusations non-vocally (by shaking his head when the IR labels his examples "accusations"; lines 26, 29; Figure 3.8), and then verbally ("they're not serious, Tim"; line 28), providing further evidence that his

embodied behaviour up to that point sought to undermine the status of those accusations as “serious”, and more generally, to disarm the action-in-progress.

25 IR: These are a:ll accusations. (0.2) being made

26 IE:

27 IR: In a very serious way about-

28 IE: Th- They're not serious Tim. [...]

Figure 3.8: Non-vocal display of disagreement (lateral head shakes)

To briefly summarize the practice of IEs laughing during IR questions, in the last three examples (3.10) – (3.12), IE laughter occurred during the IR’s talk at points of action recognition, that is, at points where criticisms had been leveled against the IEs or where a problematic situation from the perspective of the IE is recognizable: in (3.10), after O’Donnell is told her campaign will not be funded by the National Republicans; in (3.11), once a scenario in which Obama comes out the loser is constructed; and in (3.12), after Giuliani’s questionable associations with controversial figures are reported. In each of these instances, the IEs oriented to the recognizability of the action-in-progress (i.e., actions that depict them in negative or problematic ways), and by laughing during those specific moments, they treated them as matters to be laughed at, and hence, not ones to be

taken seriously. This allows the IE to treat such potentially damaging remarks as laughable, thereby engaging in a form of “damage control” (Romaniuk, 2010) by disarming the action, as it is in progress. And, the IE’s use of laughter combined with other semiotic resources (e.g., smiles, lateral head shakes) form embodied stance displays that simultaneously operate on the IR’s talk but can also project a responsive action that is also disaffiliative—a responsive action that often follows.

3.7 Summary: What we now know

This chapter has presented an overview of IE laughter in the broadcast news interview. In outlining previous research on laughter in broadcast interactions, I first described how the majority of studies—with Clayman’s (1992) investigation of audience responses being the exception—only consider examples of laughter as an *affiliative* response to what is constructed by participants as “humorous”. This coincides with the commonly held widespread but incorrect assumption that the source of laughter is necessarily “humorous” in some way. However, in line with a great deal of other CA work that has shown laughter to be far more complex and recurrent than simply a response to humour (e.g., Glenn, 2003; Haakana, 1999; Holt, in press), this chapter has revealed some of the other possibilities that exist by having outlined the various environments where IE laughter may occur.

Specifically, I began by offering an overview of *invited* laughter: that is, when the relevance of a laughing response is established through either the content of the IR’s talk or by some visual means. Next, I provided representative cases of *volunteered* laughter,

first, in relation to the IE's own turn-at-talk (*within-speech* laughter or *post-completion* laughter), and then in relation to the IR's questioning turn. This latter type of laughter in two sequential positions—at question completion or prefatory to a verbal response, and during the IR's questioning turn—became the remaining focus of the chapter's analysis. This is because it was this kind of laughter in these two sequential environments that became the subject of much media attention during Hillary Rodham Clinton's campaign for the Democratic nomination. Since the production of laughter in question-answer sequences has not previously been systematically investigated in either ordinary conversation or the broadcast news interview using CA, one of the principal goals of this chapter was to examine its role in the organization of actions and the larger activities constituted by those actions. In the context of "serious" questions, then, IE laughter appears to be systematically deployed within and constitutive of courses of dispreferred actions in which disaffiliation is enacted. Accounting for the disaffiliative status of laughter in such cases involved examining the local, sequential context of each instance with respect to Glenn's (1995, 2003) "keys" (i.e., considering the question of what is being laughed at, how the IR responds to the laughter, and what happens following its occurrence). What the analysis reveals is that IE laughter that is volunteered rather than invited, that occurs in relation to the IR's "serious" questioning turn, and is responsive to it, constitutes a disaffiliative move on the IE's part.

Ultimately, the preceding discussion of IE laughter in these two sequential environments is meant to serve as a basis for comparison with the laughter of Hillary Rodham Clinton in BNIs. Since the larger argument of this dissertation concerns Hillary

Rodham Clinton's laughter and the ways in which it was subsequently represented by the media, a logical first step was to see whether and how other IEs laugh in the course of BNIs and what such laughter accomplishes. Indeed, a systematic investigation of all instances of IE laughter in this corpus of 50 news interviews indicates that laughing in the course of question-answer sequences is not some idiosyncratic attribute of Hillary Rodham Clinton but in fact a generic interactional practice. And, it is a practice that gets deployed by IEs in organized ways in order to assist them in negotiating the constraints of the specific interactional context of BNIs. Now that we have seen the various ways in which IEs can and do laugh, and I have provided an analytic account of what cases of disaffiliative laughter look like, we can turn to the corpus of BNIs featuring Hillary Rodham Clinton and investigate whether she laughs in similar or distinct ways. This comparative analysis is the subject of Chapter 4.

Chapter 4 – Hillary Rodham Clinton’s Laughter in Broadcast News Interviews

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents an analysis of Hillary Rodham Clinton’s (HRC) laughter in broadcast news interviews (BNIs). Its principal aim is to query whether her laughter is consistent with that of other politicians as interviewees (IEs) in terms of where it occurs and what kinds of actions it accomplishes. First, I provide an overview of her laughter during her own talk, but then offer a more detailed analysis of her laughter during interviewer (IR) talk in two specific sequential environments, namely, 1) at the completion of an IR’s “serious” question, and 2) during “serious” IR questions-in-progress. The discussion in this chapter focuses primarily on laughter that accomplishes disaffiliation precisely because it was this type of laughter that was subsequently reported on by various media outlets, the analysis of which is the subject of Chapter 5.

4.2 The data

On September 23, 2007, HRC participated in what has been coined the *full Ginsburg*³⁶—that is, she appeared on all five major U.S. Sunday-morning interview shows on the same day: ABC’s *This Week*, CNN’s *Late Edition*,³⁷ CBS’s *Face the Nation*, FOX’s *Fox News*

³⁶ The term was coined after William H. Ginsburg—Monica Lewinsky’s lawyer during the sexual conduct scandal involving President Bill Clinton—the first person to be interviewed on all five programs on the same day, February 1, 1998.

³⁷ It was not until January 2009 that *Late Edition* was replaced with the program, *State of the Union*.

Sunday, and NBC's *Meet the Press*.³⁸ The initial collection comprised these five interviews; however, in an effort to obtain a more comprehensive picture of her interview appearances—and correspondingly, of her laughter—over time, other news interviews from the same five commercial television networks were included, although only those that were broadcast live and thus free of signs of post-production editing or cutting. The resulting corpus of data on which the subsequent analysis is based consists of video recordings and transcripts of 25 BNIs that HRC participated in between September 2007-September 2009, during and following her bid for the Democratic nomination, and it amounts to just over 5 hours of interactional data. Consistent with the type of broadcasts in the IE corpus, roughly half of the interviews occurred with co-present IRs (n= 11/25), and half occurred via satellite (n= 14/25). As for the gender of IRs, again consistent with the IE corpus, only one quarter of those who interviewed HRC were women (n = 5/20).³⁹

In order to investigate HRC's laughter and determine the degree to which it is deployed in similar sequential environments and to similar ends as other politicians in the role of IEs, I collected all instances of her laughter, both during her own and the IR's talk. As in Chapter 3, the findings reported here are based on a comprehensive analysis of all of the instances in the collection, in accordance with the principles of Conversation Analysis (CA).

³⁸ Prior to HRC, only one political candidate had ever accomplished such a feat, namely, Senator John Edwards (as the Democratic nominee for Vice President of the United States in the 2004 Presidential election).

³⁹ See Appendix C for a complete list of interviews and participants.

4.3 An overview of Hillary Rodham Clinton's laughter in news interviews

Table 4.1 reports the total number of both HRC- and IR-initiated laughter in the collection of 25 news interviews ($n = 58$). To compare the frequencies of occurrence with the findings of Chapter 3, laughter is further categorized as *invited* or *volunteered*. Like the IEs described in Chapter 3, HRC laughed more often than IRs, and, her laughter occurred 9 times more often than IR laughter. Given that HRC's laughter is the primary focus of the ensuing analysis, however, I will not say any more about IR-initiated laughter here.

Table 4.1: Distribution of Clinton- and Interviewer-initiated laughter (25 BNIs)

	Interviewer N (Percent)	Interviewee N (Percent)
Invited	5 (100%)	11 (21%)
Volunteered	0 (0%)	42 (79%)
<i>Total laughs</i>	5/58 (9%)	53/58 (91%)

Focusing on instances of HRC's laughter, Table 4.2 presents its distribution in terms of the environments where it occurs during talk conducted within the broadcast news interview.

Table 4.2: Distribution of HRC-initiated laughter by sequential position

Laughter during HRC's talk		Laughter during IR's talk	
Within-speech	11 (65%)	During IR question	28 (78%)
Post-(TCU) completion	6 (35%)	At question completion	8 (22%)
<i>Total</i>	17 (100%)	<i>Total</i>	36 (100%)
<i>Grand Total</i>	17/53 (32%)	<i>Grand Total</i>	36/53 (68%)

Notably, this distribution is the same as that found for other IEs in Chapter 3. In what follows, representative cases of its occurrence in each of these configurations will be presented. One of the reasons for doing so is to illustrate that her laughter appears in the same sequential environments as that of other IEs. Before presenting these examples, however, there are a few points of comparison between the two interactional corpora worth noting.

First, in comparing the percentage of total laughs that occur during both HRC's own talk and the IRs', we find that HRC was found laughing in the former context 32% of the time and the latter context 68% of the time. This means that HRC's laughter occurred during the IRs' talk approximately two thirds of the time. Recall that in the IE corpus, the percentages of laughter during the IEs' own turn at talk and the IRs' talk, was roughly equal (73/145 and 72/145, respectively). Thus, it appears that HRC laughs more frequently during IRs' talk than her own, and to a somewhat more frequent degree than other IEs. This finding is consistent with what O'Connell and Kowal (2004: 468) reported in their corpus of HRC's laughter in media interviews; that is, about two thirds of her laughter overall was initiated during the IRs' talk (n=41/68; 60%). Despite the

slight difference in the total percentage of occurrences of laughter by HRC and other IEs during their own and IR turns-at-talk, it is striking how similar the breakdowns are in terms of the distribution within each category. That is, for laughter that occurs during one's own turn at talk, HRC's *within-speech* laughs account for 65% of the cases (n=11/17), while *post-completion* laughs account for the remaining 35% of cases (n=6/17). Compare this with the IE corpus, where *within-speech* laughs accounted for 66% of all instances (n=48/73), and *post-completion* laughs, 34% (n=25/73). As for laughter during IR talk, HRC laughed during the IR question 78% of the time (n=28/36), and at question completion 22% of the time (n=8/36), while other IEs' laughs occurred 72% of the time (n=52/72) during the IR question, and at question completion 28% of the time (n=20/72). So, even though HRC was more likely to laugh during IR turns-at-talk than other IEs, the frequency with which she laughed within the specific environments where such laughter can occur both during that talk and her own talk was entirely consistent with that of other IEs. While the distributional information reported above gives us some sense of just how often HRC's laughs occur in the various sequential environments where such laughter may do so, it does not give us any indication of the kinds of turns that are designed and responded to with laughter and whether they are similar to what was described for other IEs in the last chapter. Such a picture can only come into view by looking within particular instances of her laughter within those environments, both in terms of the actions being accomplished and what else may be going on in those precise interactional moments.

4.4 Environments for Hillary Rodham Clinton's laughter

In the previous chapter, I outlined the various environments where IE laughter can occur during talk conducted within the broadcast news interview. In this chapter, I provide representative cases of HRC's laughter. First, I present examples of those cases which are *invited*, in some sense, by the IR and then, of those that are *volunteered*. As is the case with other politicians in the role of IEs, volunteered laughter can occur *during HRC's own talk* or *during the IR's talk*, but since only the latter type became the focus of media attention, it is the central analytic focus of this chapter. However, for the purposes of comparison, examples of each of the possible configurations will first be exemplified.

4.4.1 Laughter that is invited

For a journalist to invite laughter at all is rare in the context of BNIs. In the IE corpus, for example, recall that there is not a single instance in which the IR invited responsive laughter from an IE in the canonical way of doing so (i.e., solely by means of laughing first). In the HRC corpus, there is only *one* instance in which an IR hearably laughs first and in such a way as to be heard as establishing the relevance of responsive laughter.

However, it is an example in which the IR also produces arguably laughable talk.

Consider excerpt (4.1).

(4.1) 12-2007-04-20-FOX_OReillyFactor-4: Polarizing
IR: Bill O'Reilly; IE: Hillary Rodham Clinton

01 IR: Some people say th=it's no:t a big difference
02 between you and Barack Obama, (.) o:verall
03 phil'sophy=overall .hh uh: outlook, it's a
04 Democratic liberal li:ne, He's more lib'ral
05 than you:, but it's the same thing and it's a
06 personality run. (.) .h which is why before

07 Reverend Wright derailed h'm, .hh Barack
08 Obama ha:d (.) some moment'm, because you're a
09 more polarizing personality than HE is. (.)
10 Would you agree with that.
11 IE: .hh Well I [would-] I:=
12 IR: [()] = perceived as a nicer
13 guy.
14 IE: We:ll, I've been around a lo:ng time. (0.2)
15 Y'know I bear a lo:t of the sca:r[s'v the:=
16 IR: [Ye:s. =
17 IE: =i:deological, and the political ba:ttles,
18 .h I stand up for what I believe in. (.) I
19 believe for example=universal healthca:re
20 is (.) somethin' we have to achieve in
21 th[is country,]
22 IR: [So does he.]
23 IE: So::, .h No he doesn't actually.=His plan is
24 no:t a univer[sal healthcare plan.]
25 IR: [(No) but it's the s]a:me
26 thi:[ng,
27 IE: [But no- but my point is I've been doing
28 that for fifteen years, .h so: the people who
29 disagree with me? (.) y'know it's fair,
30 [this is] the way our system is they take=
31 IR: [But you-]
32 IE: =sho[ts at me.
33 IR: [Look.
34 IE: You know when I started running in New Y:ork,
35 people didn't think I could win=and then I
36 came back and won with sixty seven per[cent =
37 IR: [Look.=
38 IE: =of [the vo:tes .h [And the [reason is
39 IR: [You've done- [You've done [go:od= in New
40 Y:or[k,
41 IE: [because I: reached across party lines=I:'m
42 the one with the record of bipartisanship,
43 IR: But you're a more polarizing persona:lity=
44 =yer like I am, and I hate to say that. (.)
45 **Hehh**[h with all due res- [but you A::[RE
46 IE: [heh hah hah hah ↑hah [↑hah °↑hah° [.hh
47 IR: =an- an Obama ('s perce-) 's a ni:ce guy::
48 [and tha:t's what [this is a:ll [about,
49 IE: [Y'kn[ow I:- [Bill I- I [happen tuh
50 think if you wanna take on the health insurance
51 (.) companies, the drug comp[anies,
52 IR: [You gotta be
53 tough.=
54 IE: =the: oil companies, you gotta be tough.

This is a rather extended sequence that builds over the course of multiple turns-at-talk.

Without getting into too much detail, the IR produces a lengthy question preface that puts

forward an unfavorable proposition about HRC, namely that she is “a more polarizing personality” than her political opponent, Barack Obama (lines 1-9), a proposition which he sets up for her confirmation at line 10. When HRC begins to indicate a non-straightforward response, the IR rephrases what he seeks confirmation of: this time, the characterization of Obama as being “perceived as a nicer guy” (lines 12-13). Over the course of many subsequent turns (lines 14-42), HRC tries to push back against this characterization first by highlighting her experience (thereby implicitly providing an account for this perspective of her; lines 14-32), and then by offering evidence to the contrary (i.e., she is the one “with a record of bipartisanship”; lines 34-42). However, the IR again counters by reiterating his initial characterization of her as “a more polarizing person”. The way the IR’s reiteration is accounted for provides the possible relevance of laughter: first, he adds “yer like I am”, then he offers up, “and I hate to say that” in a conciliatory tone. To some extent, both of these incremental bits of talk are laughable in and of themselves. However, HRC does not in fact begin laughing on or following the end of either of them, but only after the IR first produces a single, extended post-completion laugh particle (at the beginning of line 45). In this way, her laughter can be interpreted as responsive to the IR’s laughter, which established that display as relevant at that precise moment. However, once she actually begins extending the laughter, O’Reilly responds to it as though she has conveyed her disagreement with his proposition (“but you A::RE”; line 45). In so doing, he not only declines in laughing along but also terminates the relevance of her further laughter by countering the disagreeing stance her laughter projects.

While it is certainly rare for IRs to invite responsive laughter by laughing first, it is somewhat more common for IRs to construct talk that invites humorous uptake. This is exemplified in excerpt (4.2), which comes from the same interview on one of Fox's news programs, *The O'Reilly Factor* (HRC's first appearance on the show and an interview that lasted 30 minutes).

(4.2) 18-20080-04-30-OReillyFactor-6: Questioning
IR: Bill O'Reilly; IE: Hillary Rodham Clinton

01 IR: Last line of questioning. (0.6) **That's good**
02 [right, ((smiles))
03 IE: [Heh hah hah ↑hah °heh°
04 (.)
05 IR: .h=
06 IE: =.hhh=
07 IR: =I believe the Bush administration's done a
08 good job in protecting Americans after nine
09 eleven. [...]

The excerpt comes from the same interview as excerpt (4.11), an interview in which the IR had frequently interjected into HRC's answering turns and had asserted a number of problematic statements, from her point of view, as though simply "facts". It begins following a series of question-answer sequences where the IR characterizes his incipient talk as the "last line of questioning" at line 1. At this point, HRC does not produce any hearable uptake (e.g., a minimal receipt token), despite the IR's (0.6) silence and gaze toward her (line 1; Figure 4.1).⁴⁰ He then adds the assessment "that's good" with the post positioned tag "right" that explicitly seeks confirmation. What I am suggesting is that HRC's laughter is not *volunteered* but rather is *invited* through this incremental bit of talk on the IR's part. Specifically, he proposes that reaching the final round of questioning is a good thing, the humorous import of which lies in the implication that HRC would be

⁴⁰ At this point in the interaction, there is no visible access to HRC so there is no way of knowing whether what the IR does subsequently is in any way responsive to what she may have been expressing visually.

pleased for it to come to an end. And, HRC begins laughing at the point in which this assessment has been made, thereby ratifying the proposition as laughable. While we have seen that an IR's smile alone can be enough to establish the relevance of a laughing response, in this excerpt the onset of O'Reilly's smile does not precede HRC's laughter (which could therefore be seen as invitational) but in fact occurs immediately following its production: that is, following the tag question "right" and the onset of her laughter (line 3; Figure 4.1). It is possible, at least to some extent, that O'Reilly's eyebrow flash on the production of "good" (Figure 4.1) works in combination with the content of his talk to establish a laughing response, although I would not want to suggest that this visible display alone invites laughter. In fact, there is not a single case of an IR inviting laughter from HRC solely through visual means, though we did see this possibility with other news interview participants in Chapter 3 (see excerpt 3.2).

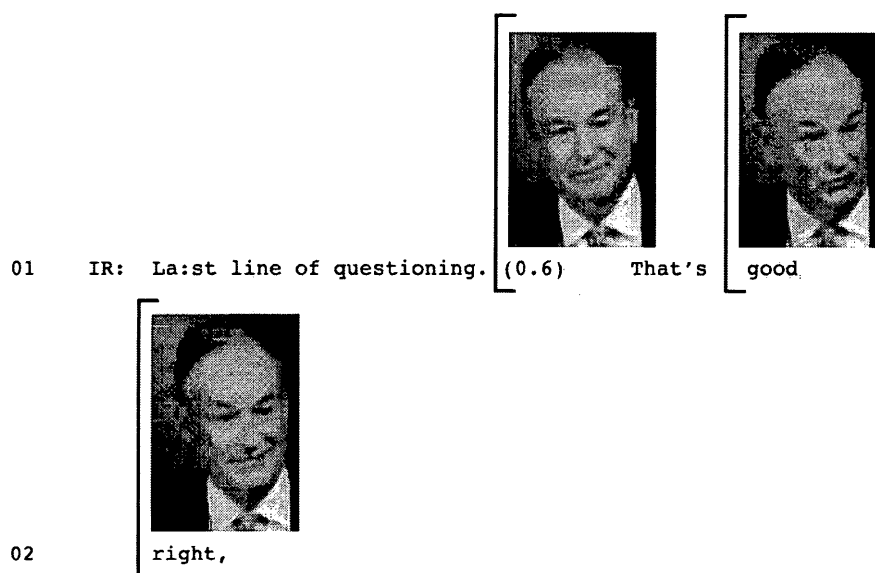


Figure 4.1: Interviewer's visual displays

Given the fact that BNIs are a public environment for scrutinizing politicians on their policies, their viewpoints and their records, it is not surprising that IRs do not frequently invite laughter. However, examples (4.1) – (4.2) illustrate how some instances of HRC's laughter, like that of other IEs, can be heard and understood as having been established vis-à-vis something the IR does to invite laughter. In these cases, the IR accomplishes this either through vocal means (i.e. laughing first), verbal means (i.e., producing humorous talk) or both. As is also the case for other IEs, HRC's laughter occurs more frequently as *volunteered* rather than invited, either during her own talk or the IRs'. Examples of such cases are the remaining focus of this chapter.

4.4.2 Laughter during Hillary Rodham Clinton's own talk

One of the most frequent environments for the occurrence of laughter and other laugh-relevant items (e.g., IPAs, smile voice) by both HRC and other IEs is that which occurs within the course of their own remarks. Recall that in such cases of *within-speech* laughter, laugh tokens (e.g., “ha”, “hi”, “huh”) and IPAs are recurrently embedded within and between words. Examples (4.3) – (4.4) are illustrative of HRC's use of laughter in this environment. In (4.3), HRC is being interviewed by ABC news correspondent Kate Snow at a time when Obama had already been declared the Democratic nominee, when he had selected Joe Biden as his vice-presidential running mate, and when Biden had just participated in a debate with Republican vice-presidential candidate, Sarah Palin. In responding to a yes-no question as to whether HRC thinks Sarah Palin is held to a

“different standard” by the media (lines 1-15), HRC first produces a non-type conforming response which suggests that she does not know (line 16).

(4.3) 21-2008-10-13_ABCNews-2: Standards

IR: Kate Snow; IE: Hillary Rodham Clinton

01 IR: I wanna ask you about a column that was written
 02 in the Washington Post, uh:m (.) It- they were
 03 talking about uh the Palin Biden vice
 04 presidential debate. .hhh and this columnist
 05 said. (.) if you=if Senator Clinton. (.) had
 06 done this “Hi ya sailor wink.” (0.2) And said
 07 [some of thuh [th- [>this is literall[y what=
 08 IE: [Hi Heh heh [heh [heh heh heh [heh
 09 IR: =[this person [wrote< .h if you had done that,
 10 IE: =[heh heh [heh. hh
 11 IR: and if you had said some of the things that
 12 Governor Palin said in that debate, you would
 13 have been (.) criticized. (.) by the press.
 14 Do you think she’s being treated by a different
 15 sta:ndard,
 16 IE: .h O:h I don’t know:, I think that uh(m) (0.2)
 17 each of us gets plenty of ~~f~~cri(h)tic(h)ism by
 18 the press I think that kind of goes with the
 19 territory .hh but I thought Joe Biden did a
 20 great jo:b in that debate. I think he: came
 21 acro:ss with the .hh gra:vitas that I know:
 22 he (.) possesses and which he gets from a
 23 deep well of experience having served for so
 24 long, [...]

In further qualifying her answer, HRC then adds a comment that slightly pushes back on the suggestion that Palin is being held to a different standard. And, it is the portion of this comment that suggests she is also the target of criticisms—hearable as a complaint—that is interpolated with particles of aspiration and a smile voice pronunciation: “each of us gets plenty of ~~f~~cri(h)tic(h)ism by the press”; lines 17-18).

The next example comes from an interview between HRC and NBC correspondent Keith Olberman on the day of the 2008 Democratic primary in Pennsylvania, an event considered a “must-win” for HRC. At the time, HRC had

received an endorsement from the *Pittsburgh Tribune Review*, one of Pittsburgh's daily newspapers owned by staunch conservative, Richard Mellon Scaife. Prior to where excerpt (4.4) begins, Olberman had produced a lengthy question preface regarding Scaife's vitriolic treatment of the Clintons' in the 1990s, and had characterized Scaife as "one of the few utterly unforgiveable individuals" among the "vast right-wing conspiracy" (not shown). This serves as the backdrop to his question proper, which seeks an account of why HRC had recently met with Scaife and accepted his endorsement (lines 20-24).

(4.4) 17-2008-04-22_NBC-4: Richard Mellon Scaife
IR: Keith Olberman; IE: Hillary Rodham Clinton

20 IR: I realize you have a primary to: win but- but
21 why on earth did you meet (0.2) with Richard
22 Mellon Scaife, and why: .h did you accept >or
23 at least not< reject his endorsement of you
24 over the weekend.
25 (1.0)
26 IE: .hhh Well Keith nobody was more surpris:ed than
27 I: uh::m (0.2) when uh- .h I was invited to the
28 Editorial Boa:rd and .h y'know I am very open
29 to: uh meeting and frankly I was kinda
30 curious.=I'd only met uh .h the gentleman once
31 in my life. >y'know< in a receiving li:ne an'
32 y'know just in a matter of seconds .hh uh
33 obviously I was on the receiving end of
34 quite a bit of uh his activities during fthe
35 ninetiesf .hh uhm: (0.3) much to: uh everyone's
36 uh dismay, most certainly mi:ne. .hh Uh but I
37 was curious. (.) a::nd uh he has a lot of .h
38 interesting people who write for that paper and
39 work for him .hh uh: and uh it was a
40 fascinating discussion=a lot of give and
41 take=they fc(heh)ert(h)ainly d(h)on't ag(h)ree
42 with mef on .hh many of my positions .hh uh
43 fand uh: and I was uh (.) dumbfoundedf uh both
44 to: have been invited and then to have been
45 endorsed, .hh but I do believe in redemption
46 Keith, [...]

In answering this accusatory question (“Why on earth...?”; line 21), HRC first reframes her actions in terms of having accepted the editorial board’s invitation to meet (lines 26-28), and cites both her openness and curiosity as her motivations for doing so (lines 28-30). After referring to Scaife as “the gentlemen”, she further builds an account that justifies her meeting with him before moving to describe what actually took place when meeting (lines 30-39). Characterizing the discussion as “fascinating” and then suggesting its cooperative nature (lines 39-41), HRC then works to counter any inference that because they met they are now good friends by stating: “they c(heh)ertainly d(h)on’t ag(h)ree with me on many of my positions” (lines 41-42). Here, we see the production of a single laugh particle and further particles of aspiration interpolated into this component of her turn-at-talk, a component that is also articulated with smile voice. In both cases (4.3) and (4.4), then, HRC produces laugh particles, IPAs and smile voice in the course of her unfolding remarks as opposed to at the boundaries of her turns at talk. As is the case with other IEs, these instances of laughter or possibly laughter relevant items such as IPAs do not occur during the IR’s talk but instead offer some form of commentary or modulate her own talk.

As we saw with other IEs, just as laughter or laugh particles can be embedded within or between words in the course of their remarks, it can also occur at the completion of a TCU. Excerpts (4.5) – (4.6) illustrate examples of HRC’s laughter in this *post-completion* position. In excerpt (4.5), which comes from the beginning of an interview, HRC and the IR, Brian Williams, engage in a very brief question-answer sequence. In the video, Williams is pictured standing in the holding room beside HRC

when he poses his question: “How would this holding room be different if your husband and entourage were here?” (lines 1-2). HRC treats this question literally by offering a humorous response at line 3, “Well there’d be more people”, at the completion of which she appends three laugh particles.

(4.5) 15-2008-01-16-NBCNightlyNews-1: Entourage
IR: Brian Williams; IE: Hillary Rodham Clinton

01 IR: How would this holding room be different if
02 your husband (.) and entourage. (.) were here,
03 IE: .h Well there’d be more people, heh [heh heh.]
04 IR: [Yeah,]

Excerpt (4.6) exemplifies a more extended example of post-completion laughter by HRC. It comes from an interview on *Fox News Sunday* with Chris Wallace when HRC had just released her healthcare plan. Following an initial question-answer sequence on a topic unrelated to healthcare, HRC shifts focus and raises the issue of the increasing number of Americans who are uninsured (lines 1-4). At that point, the IR attempts to interject with a token request for permission to ask her a question about healthcare (lines 5-9); however, she proceeds to complete her turn-at-talk, uninterrupted (lines 7; 10). Following her completion, Wallace then begins speaking, “Lemme ask y’about health care” at which point HRC interjects with, “Ya, I’d love for you tuh ask me about health care” (lines 12-13). HRC then produces a unit of laughter at the completion of this interjection, which cuts across the IR’s attempt to deliver the question (lines 13-16).

(4.6) 2007-09-24-FoxNewsSunday-2: Health care
 IR: Chris Wallace; IE: Hillary Rodham Clinton

01 IE: [...] What I: believe is import'n is .h coming
 02 to some: (.) resolution about these problems
 03 that are no:t getting better=we now have more
 04 uninsured Americans than we did [before.
 05 IR: [Sen- Senator?
 06 Can [I ask-
 07 IE: [We have a lo:t of [hardworking Americans
 08 IR: [Senator can I ask ya
 09 a[bout [healthcare-
 10 IE: [who've [givin' up looking for work.
 11 IR: Lemme ask y'about health care [because you did
 12 IE: [Ya: I'd love
 13 for you tuh as[k me about [health care h[e ha
 14 IR: [did come [out w- [y-
 15 y[ou did come up [with a new plan this week=
 16 IE: [hah hah hah [hah hah
 17 IR: =which you say would [(.)=
 18 IE: [.hh
 19 IR: =uh in[sure the forty-seven Americans [who=
 20 IE: [fI did(h)f [f°ya°f
 21 IR: =are uninsured and let's talk about how you
 22 would pay for it [...]

Examples (4.5) – (4.6) both demonstrate how HRC also laughs in one of the common environments for *volunteered* laughter, namely, *post-completion* of a TCU. In these cases, her laughter also does not appear to be responsive to the IR's talk but instead modulates her own talk. In (4.5), the laughter registers what she had just said as tongue-in-cheek, while in (4.6) it softens what could otherwise be treated as a complaint (i.e., the IR not asking her the relevant questions).

So far, I have demonstrated how HRC laughs in both of the environments where I described IE laughter as occurring during talk in the broadcast news interview: first, when such laughter is—in some sense, be it verbally or otherwise—*invited* by the IR, and second, when such laughter is *volunteered*. As was previously outlined, volunteered laughter may occur during one's own turn-at-talk (*within-speech laughter*), or at the

completion of some portion of that talk (*post-completion laughter*). In the remainder of this chapter, I focus on a somewhat different type of HRC's laughter—laughter produced on a voluntary basis but that is responsive to the IR's talk. Indeed, it was this type of laughter that subsequently became the subject of much media coverage in which HRC was depicted in very unflattering ways, which will be discussed further in Chapter 5.

4.4.3 Laughter during the interviewer's talk

The following analysis focuses on cases of HRC's laughter that is *responsive* to an IR's "serious" first-pair part, or some aspect of it, as opposed to that which has been invited in some sense, or has occurred during her own talk. This kind of laughter can be further characterized as *volunteered* as opposed to *invited*, in the sense that it does not occur in an environment where an IR has constructed talk that is evidently "humorous," or has established the relevance of a laughing response by other means (e.g., IR laughing or smiling first). Finally, just as other IEs' voluntary laughter during or following an IR's "serious" question was characterized as *disaffiliative*, the case will be made that HRC's laughter also operates in such a way. Again, drawing on Glenn's (1995, 2003) "keys"—

- 1) What is being laughed at?
- 2) How does the IR respond to the laughter?
- 3) What happens subsequently?

—the same two sequential environments of this type of laughter will be considered: laughter that occurs at the completion of an IR's question, and thus as prefatory to a verbal response, and laughter that occurs within the IR's questioning turn. In both environments, HRC's laughter disaffiliates from what is being proposed by the IR

as a “serious” matter or inquiry and correspondingly often prefigures a disaffiliative verbal response.

4.4.3.1 Laughter at question completion

The first set of examples illustrates HRC’s laughter that occurs in response to an IR’s questioning turn and prior to offering a verbal response. In these examples, HRC, like other IEs, laughs in response to “serious” questions, but unlike the cases shown in Chapter 3, some of the questions are in some sense about her. Still, her laughter in this environment acts as an implicit commentary on the question, undercutting its legitimacy as something to be taken seriously. Further, her laughter also retrospectively casts the question-as-a-whole as laughable. At the same time, and again, as is the case with other IEs, it also projects a disaffiliative responsive action. Moreover, by initiating laughter at turn beginning, HRC also accomplishes delaying the production of such a response.

In the following example, HRC is being interviewed by George Stephanopoulos just days before the Iowa caucuses, the first election of the primary season and nominating process. Just before the beginning of excerpt (4.7), a clip was played of HRC giving a speech at a town hall meeting, and she is described as having recently been playing her trump card—experience—in the days leading up to the caucuses. The IR then begins his turn at line 1.

(4.7) 13-2007-12-30_ABC-This Week-1: Nixon
 IR: George Stephanopolous; IE: Hillary Rodham Clinton

01 IR: .h Y’know Peggy Noonan um: (.) accepts the
 02 premise of yer question >this morning in the
 03 Wall Street Journal but she goes on to say

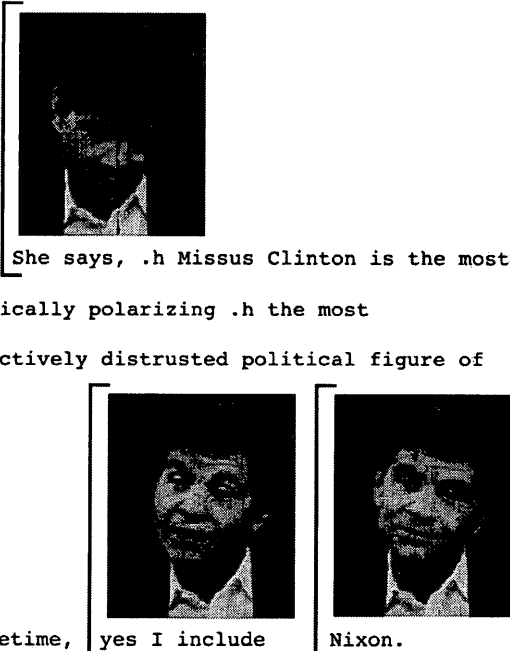
04 that's exactly the reason< .hh no:t to pick
 05 you=She says, .h Missus Clinton is the most
 06 dramatically polarizing .h the most
 07 instinctively distrusted political figure of
 08 my lifeti:me, yes I include Nixon.
 09 [(.)]
 10 IE: [((smiles))]]
 11 IE: heh heh heh ↑heh heh=We(h)ll George .hh I mean
 12 I'm not surprised are you, um: obviously, .hh
 13 I'm running a campai:gn to: try tuh keep
 14 focused on the big issues that the country
 15 faces, .hh uh: and I think that uh people in
 16 Iowa, and around the country are resonating to
 17 that, [but obvious]ly .h there are people who
 18 IR: [But this is-]
 19 IE: disagree with me=they disagree with me: (0.2)
 20 ideologically:, philosophically:, (0.2) on p-
 21 a partisan basis=that's not a surprise to me:
 22 or to you, .hh and for those who: (.) now
 23 think they're against me=I look to New York
 24 where a lot of people ended up voting for
 25 m[e who never thought [they would.
 26 IR: [But even our [polling =
 27 =he:re in Iowa shows that this issue of trust
 28 is a hurdle for you. With Democrats,
 29 IE: .h Well: that's not what I see. Y'know I: (.)
 30 trust my touch and my feel more than I trust
 31 (.) with all due respect um:: the commentary
 32 thet uh goes on. .hh and whoever becomes the
 33 Democratic nominee, .hh will face a: very high
 34 negative. because (.) we know: (.) that's what
 35 the Republicans are better at, .h including the
 36 person that uh you quoted from than anybody
 37 else,
 38 IR: On this issue of experience [...]

As in the examples involving other IEs, the IRs' talk is of a "serious" nature; however, unlike those other examples, it in fact concerns the Republican columnist, Peggy Noonan's negative perspective of HRC (specifically, that her experience makes her ill-suited for the nomination as, according to her, HRC is "the most dramatically polarizing the most instinctively distrusted political figure"; lines 5-8). Following this downwardly intoned TCU of Noonan's reported speech, HRC then produces a laugh unit prior to responding verbally. While it may at first appear as though HRC's laughter is responsive

to the notion that she is more distrusted than Nixon, her subsequent verbal response orients to the theme of the entire question (i.e., Noonan's negative commentary about HRC not being worthy of the nomination), rather than this particular element of the IR's talk. For example, she does not indicate surprise in any way (on the contrary, she displays a complete lack of surprise, "well George I mean I'm not surprised are you"; lines 11-12), nor does she say anything further about being compared to Nixon subsequently. Instead, her response makes explicit what the laughter had implicitly displayed—that Noonan's remarks are laughable. Moreover, she not only indicates verbally that such negative remarks are in fact expected, but also that they are not surprising coming from Republicans such as Noonan. Interestingly, when HRC makes indirect reference to *The Washington Post* columnist near the end of her reply (lines 35-36), her utterance is articulated with a smile voice, which provides some additional evidence that it is Noonan's remarks, in general, that were the target of her laughter.

One might be inclined to see the delay between the IR's downwardly-intoned TCU ("yes I include Nixon") and HRC's laughter as odd or, at least, remarkable; however, considering the design of the IR's turn helps to account for why HRC's response is not immediately forthcoming. First, the IR does not actually deliver a question proper even though it is clearly articulated with a final intonation contour. Second, the way he begins his turn (i.e., stating that Noonan agrees with the premise of HRC's question) suggests that there will be something further about the premise of HRC's question; however, nothing further on that subject is offered. Instead, the direct quote he produces on Noonan's behalf is presented as the information to which HRC

should respond. To some extent, then, pragmatic completion of the IR's turn is equivocal. That said, however, as he quotes Noonan, Stephanopolous is looking down (presumably at his notes), but once he produces the appended bit of talk "yes, I include Nixon", he raises his gaze toward HRC (see Figure 4.2), which can be interpretable as mobilizing response at that point (Stivers & Rossano, 2010).



05 IR: [...] She says, .h Missus Clinton is the most
 06 dramatically polarizing .h the most
 07 instinctively distrusted political figure of
 08 my lifetime, yes I include Nixon.

Figure 4.2: Mobilizing response through gaze (rather than interrogativity; lines 5-9)

As in the other examples we have seen, the IR does not produce any audible orientation to HRC's laughter, but we also do not have visual access to the IR during its occurrence, so there is no way of knowing whether he produces any visual orientation (e.g., a smile) to her laughter either. In any case, by not laughing or producing any audible orientation to the laughter, he terminates the relevance of further laughter and she proceeds with a verbal response. Also similar to other examples, HRC's laughter occurs at a point where

the dispreferred status of a response is conventionally marked (Gavioli, 1995), that is, prior to proffering a verbal response.

The next representative example of responsive laughter at the completion of an IR's question comes from the same interview as excerpt (4.4), when Olberman interviewed HRC on the day of the Pennsylvania primary in April 2008. Starting at line 1, Olberman produces an extended question preface which topicalizes an issue framed as virtually omnipresent throughout the nomination, namely, the historic nature of both HRC's and Obama's campaigns.

(4.8) 17-2008-04-22-NBC_Countdown-2: Sexism

IR: Keith Olberman; IE: Hillary Rodham Clinton

01 IR: One thing about the:- th- this has been touched
 02 on I'd say- I'd say prob'ly once an hou:r during
 03 the: entire campaign, .hh this histo:ric nature
 04 of- of both your candidacy and Senator Obama's,
 05 .hh and it has so many important and po:sitive
 06 thi:ngs for this country=but there's a- there's-
 07 there's necessarily an unfortunate ↑flipside tuh
 08 this and I've seen it in person with .h some
 09 protestors out here on the plaza: next to this
 10 very stu:dio in the last couple of weeks, .h
 11 Do you believe:, uhm: th- as some of 'em seem
 12 to: the criticism of your campaign:, .h is
 13 necessarily sexism, or largely sexism, or (.)
 14 sometimes sexism,
 15 (1.8)
 16 IE: **Heh heh heh heh heh** .hhh Well I think the:
 17 historic na:ture of the campaign is .hh causing
 18 a lot of cognitive dissonance uh:: among so many
 19 people Keith, and uh few of them are in the
 20 media I- I believe, .hh because y: no matter
 21 what happens in this election. .h the fact that
 22 Senator Obama and I are in this close race for
 23 the Democratic nomination, .hh mea:ns that
 24 <forever forward.> .hh I- every little girl, (.)
 25 and every African American child, .h will be
 26 told that yes you too can grow up to be President.
 27 .hh I think that is not just historic, I think
 28 it's wonderful. .hh Uh: but there have been and
 29 you've reported on some of them .hh y'know
 30 moments when people have said things, or:
 31 expressed opinions that .h are certainly not

32 mi:ne and certainly not Senator Oba:ma's. .hh
 33 Uh:m speaking for myself, I know thet uh .h
 34 I'm tryna break the highest and hardest glass
 35 ceiling that exists in our country, .hh Uh:
 36 I take on that challenge willingly and gladly
 37 because I think it's the right thing to do,
 38 .hh but I also believe that uhm .h y'know
 39 that people have to: .h y'know take a look at
 40 each of us individually. .h Uh: and I hope
 41 that's what we're doing. .hh Uh that they're
 42 asking themselves .h y'know who will do the
 43 best jo:b under difficult circumstances.=And
 44 .hh uh: we're going to: .h break some real
 45 barriers. as we already have in this campaign,
 46 <and I hope thet y'know .hh will push our
 47 society beyo:nd uh some of the remnants of
 48 .hh uh: discrimination on the basis of race
 49 or gender: thet uh y'know we still .h uh see
 50 from time tuh time.

Olberman first notes the positive aspects of their historic candidacies (lines 5-6) but then goes on to focus on the more “unfortunate flipside”. Notably, this preface builds in such a way that HRC cannot anticipate what unfortunate thing he may be referring to, although it is clear that it is an issue of contention (lines 8-10). Then, he initiates a yes-no interrogative that seeks HRC’s opinion as to whether the criticisms of her campaign stem from some form of sexism, “necessarily... largely or sometimes” (lines 13-14). Instead of straightforwardly answering “yes” or “no”, however, as in other cases where laughter prefaces an IE’s verbal response, HRC produces a unit consisting of five particles that in fact delays providing such a response.⁴¹ The IR does not orient to HRC’s laughter in any hearable way, as is the case with many other examples where there is no visual access to the IR during its production. In this case, I would suggest that HRC’s laughter is a way

⁴¹ The broadcast—and corresponding transcript—of this interview is in fact misleading in terms of indicating the precise timing of the onset of her laughter. As is the case in some news interviews conducted via satellite, sometimes there is a detectable production lag that affects the entire interview. In this example, the lag is exactly (1.8) seconds. As a result, HRC’s response is heard as delayed by approximately that amount of time, despite the fact that her response was likely not delayed by that amount in real time.

of pushing back on the proposition contained in the question (i.e., that *sexism* is something that can be subject to qualification). That is, HRC is in a difficult position such that she cannot explicitly orient to the problematic nature of the IR's question or characterize the criticisms of her campaign as sexist because then she risks being accused of "playing the gender card" (on this issue of "playing the gender card", see Falk, 2012). Indeed, her subsequent verbal response evidences the degree of difficulty she has in formulating an answer and the delicate interactional work she does so as not to appear as though she is complaining about a sexist bias. For example, the beginning of her response repeats the IR's description "the historic nature of the campaign" rather than actually name sexism as the root cause of the "cognitive dissonance among so many people" (line 16-19). After characterizing the nomination as "wonderful" in discussing its positive implications (lines 20-28), she simply acknowledges "moments when people have said things..." (lines 28-32). Such vague remarks are carefully placed in the domain of shared experience ("you've reported..."; line 29), and she leaves any possible examples of sexism unspecified and unattributed. Moreover, in orienting to her attempt "to break the highest and hardest glass ceiling that exists in [the] country" (lines 34-35), HRC also counteracts the possibility of being heard as complaining by adding, "I take on that challenge willingly and gladly because I think it's the right thing to do" (lines 36-37). Thus, in addition to producing multiple hesitations and taking frequent inbreaths throughout her reply (possibly indicating a difficulty in answering), HRC does not explicitly orient to sexism in any direct or explicit way but in the end only acknowledges its "remnants" are still "seen from time to time" (lines 46-50). In this way, both her

laughter and her inability to name the very thing that she has been asked to qualify (i.e., sexism) underlines just how problematic the IR's question is from her point of view.

The third and final example of HRC's laughter at the completion of an IR's question comes from an interview on Schieffer's *Face The Nation* that took place on the day following one of the early primaries in South Carolina. At the time, HRC was beginning to appear slightly behind in state polls leading up to *Super Tuesday* (the largest electoral event of the nominating process), so she left South Carolina to campaign in some of those key states, while her husband and former president, Bill Clinton, stayed to campaign on her behalf. During that time, several media sources began to raise questions about her husband's role in her campaign, particularly in light of controversial comments he had made about Senator Obama, which many argued invoked race and implied that Obama would win the state because he was black. This background information sets the stage for a sequence about HRC's husband that Schieffer initiates in his interview with her, a portion of which is reproduced in excerpt (4.9) below.

Schieffer's first question contains an extensive preface that topicalizes the controversy surrounding Bill Clinton's role in her campaign, and voices three principal concerns of "people": first, that he is "out of control"; second, that his role as an "attack dog" is exactly what HRC wants; and, third, that he unnecessarily invoked race in an attempt to marginalize Obama as "the black candidate". The question proper is delivered as an alternative-choice yes-no interrogative that presupposes her husband's behaviour has been aggressive, and asks whether such behaviour will continue or change. The first portion of HRC's response (not reproduced here) highlights both her husband's love and

commitment to her and her campaign, and her gratitude for his active campaigning on her behalf. Perhaps not surprisingly, she does not however characterize his behaviour as aggressive or out of control in any way, but instead underscores his “long and productive career”, his commitment to uniting the country, and to electing the person who “he thinks would best lead” it. Where excerpt (4.9) begins, HRC then shifts focus to her own long-standing supportive role of him and confesses that she may have “got a little bit carried away” (lines 34-39), a formulation that Schieffer recycles in his subsequent follow-up at lines 40-41.

(4.9) 16-2008-01-27-FaceTheNation-2: Bill Clinton
IR: Bob Schieffer; IE: Hillary Rodham Clinton

34 IE: [...] I know that .h uh: (.) in my own support
35 of him going back some years, I uh sometimes uh
36 got a- a little bit uh carried away I confess
37 to that, .hh uh but he: is going to continue
38 to be with me, and support me, and speak out
39 for me, and I'm very grateful for that.
40 IR: Has he gotten a lil' carried away from time to
41 time?
42 IE: Heh heh heh hah hah .hh Well I think it's human
43 nature Bob=fI think that uh .hh y'know the
44 spouses of all three of us have uh (0.2) .h
45 y'know been pa:ssionate and vigorous defenders
46 of each of us, and (.) y'know maybe: got a
47 little carried away, f b't .hh y'know that
48 comes with a- a hard fought election.=It also
49 comes with sleep deprivation. fw(h)ich .h
50 y'know I think is uh marking a:ll of us, our
51 families, our supporters, f uh but y'know I am
52 very: uhm very proud of my husband's record as
53 a leader in our country going back so many
54 years. [...]

Schieffer's probing follow-up question revisits the issue of her husband's role in her campaign and invites HRC to confirm or deny that he has “gotten a lil' carried away from time to time.” This backs HRC into a bit of a corner since saying “no” would mean

denying the widespread criticisms of his controversial remarks while a “yes” is not in her own best interests either. In this context, HRC instead laughs before offering an answer, an answer that seeks to justify her husband’s behaviour (“Well I think it’s human nature Bob”; lines 42-43). Although both participants are not co-present, the TV monitor displays both of them simultaneously throughout the delivery of Schieffer’s “serious” question and into the beginning of her response. As a result, we can see how Schieffer, like other IRs, remains po-faced throughout what has been constructed as—and is subsequently treated as—“serious”. In doing so, he terminates the relevance of laughter. Notably, HRC’s verbal response actually confirms a proposition that is different from the one she was initially invited to reply to; that is, she first invokes her opponents’ spouses as “passionate and vigorous defenders” like her husband, and then concedes, “y’know maybe got a lil’ carried away” (lines 46-47). This concession, however, is agentless (i.e. *who* got carried away?), and therefore treats “all three” spouses as if they are equally guilty of the charge. In addition to producing this portion of her talk with a smile voice articulation, HRC also makes light of the situation by proposing “sleep deprivation” as a scapegoat, but again, not just for her husband, but “all of us, our families, our supporters” (lines 48-51).

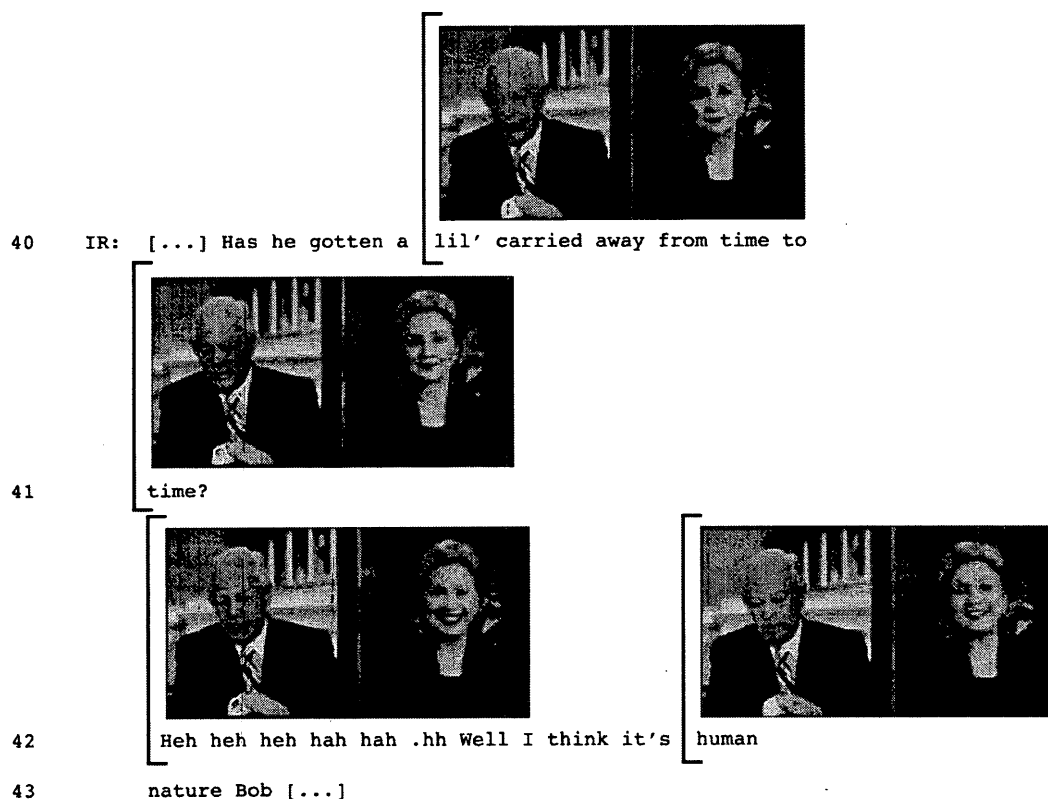


Figure 4.3: Interviewer remains po-faced (throughout Clinton's laughing display)

In examples (4.6) – (4.9), we have seen HRC laughing in response to “serious” IR questions prior to providing a verbal response. While the analysis presented in Chapter 3 showed how IE laughter in this environment tended to occur when IR questions were not formulated in an adversarial way nor did they concern the IE per se, the analysis here revealed that HRC's laughter sometimes occurred when the question put forward a proposition about her or something related to her (e.g., her husband). Despite this difference, by prefacing her verbal responses with laughter, HRC provides an implicit commentary on those questions, thereby challenging their legitimacy as “serious”. Further, as was the case with other IEs, laughing in turn-initial position can prefigure a

dispreferred response, both in avoiding offering an explicit “on record” verbal response and effectively delaying providing one as well. It should not be surprising at this point that a more common environment for laughter during the IR’s talk is when it is in-progress; I turn now to examining representative examples of HRC’s laughter in this second sequential context.

4.4.3.2 Laughter during interviewer questions

With respect to the two positions in which IEs laugh during the IRs’ talk, it is more common for both HRC and other IEs to laugh during the course of that talk, as opposed to waiting until its completion (such cases account for approximately 75% of cases). When HRC laughs in this environment, her laughter usually occurs during “serious” question prefaces that are also in some sense face threatening, in that the IRs present some form of criticism about her or something related to her. In the vast majority of cases, the IRs formulate such remarks on behalf of some third-party, in keeping with the journalistic norm of neutrality (Clayman, 2012). Thus, when HRC laughs during the IR’s talk, as other IEs do, she is not heard or understood as laughing at the IR, or at what the IR says, but as laughing at what the IR is reporting someone else has said. And, because news interview exchanges are produced for an overhearing audience, laughter allows IEs like HRC to formulate a public display of their orientation toward IR talk for the benefit of the audience.

In the examples that follow, we will see how HRC’s laughter in this environment is responsive to the same kinds of actions-in-progress that other IEs treat as laughable

and, accordingly, functions in similar ways to laughter produced by the other IEs. Like the other IEs, HRC's laughter in an environment where the IR has exclusive rights to talk enables her to construct an audible orientation to that talk while it is being produced, while still technically abiding by the normative interactional framework for BNIs (Romaniuk, 2009). Likewise, this audible orientation, in combination with other semiotic resources (e.g., eye and head movements, facial expressions) offers a public display of the IE's stance toward the IR's talk-in-progress, usually one that expresses disaffiliation or disagreement with the criticisms being put forward. Indeed, considering precisely where these displays occur helps determine the kind of stance being constructed. In the following three representative cases, HRC's laughing displays, in combination with other semiotic resources, disaffiliate from what is being conveyed in the IR's action-in-progress, thereby working to disarm that action while it is being produced and undermining it as something to be taken seriously. In Chapter 3, I suggested that the degree to which an IE can produce such displays ranges on a continuum in terms of their degree of explicitness (see Figure 4.4) and this holds for HRC's laughter as well. As is the case with other IEs, most of HRC's displays fall on the subtle to moderate end of the spectrum.

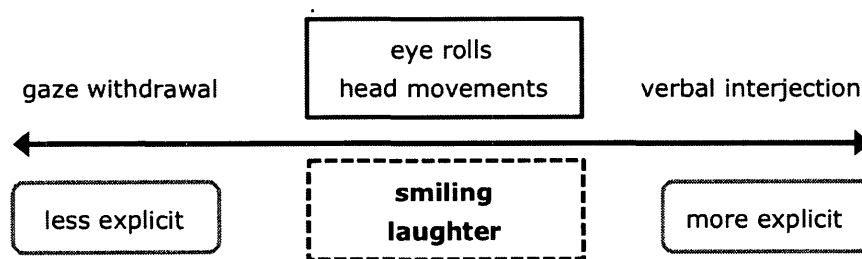


Figure 4.4: Degree of explicitness in disaffiliative displays during interviewer talk

The first example of laughter occurring in the midst of an IR's questioning turn can be considered a moderate display and it comes from an interview in December of 2007 with Harry Smith on *The Early Show*. At the time of the interview, HRC had just received an endorsement from the *Des Moines Register*, the local daily morning newspaper of Des Moines, Iowa. This was a significant moment for her campaign as Barack Obama was becoming increasingly popular in the polls, and the Iowa Caucuses—the first major electoral event of the nominating process—were scheduled for the beginning of January. Prior to where excerpt (4.10) begins, the IR had just reproduced a portion of the endorsement, explaining how it was unfortunate that many Americans still hold negative perceptions of HRC as a result of her failed attempt at health care reform in the 1990s. Smith then asked whether HRC still felt she had to overcome such perceptions; however, her response did not deal with this issue but instead focused on how she is continuing to look forward and make positive changes in peoples' lives. Given that she did not adequately address the issue of negative perceptions, Smith proceeds with the follow-up prefaced question beginning at line 16.

(4.10) 2007Dec17-CBS_TheEarlyShow-2: Rubs
 IR: Harry Smith; IE: Hillary Rodham Clinton

16 IR: Here's the thing though. So one of the rubs
 17 about your campai:gn:=they say it (.) feels
 18 like it's focus-group driven:, that it's
 19 too: run too tightly, that
 20 [.h [people in Iowa don]'t get to see=
 21 IE: [uheh[hih hih h↑ih hehheh]
 22 IR: =e[nough of the [re::al] you::,=
 23 IE: [.hh [u(h)h::]
 24 =Well th[at's cert--
 25 IR: [>to run counter to< what you just
 26 sai[d=
 27 IE: [Well that's certainly not my

28 imp(h)r^hession. (.)
 29 IR: Right (.)
 30 IE: It's not the first time I've disagreed with
 31 the p(h)ress=
 32 IR: =k[hhuh
 33 IE: [and I fp(h)robably don't think it's the
 34 last timef [...]

Beginning at line 16, the IR offers three critical perspectives on HRC's campaign but they are attributed to an anonymous third party. That is, Smith says that "they" say that "it feels like it is focus-group-driven", "that it's too run too tightly", and "that people in Iowa don't get to see enough of the re::al you," (lines 16-20; 22). But HRC does not wait until the third of these assertions is produced before initiating a vocal response; instead, she begins to laugh once he has completed the second but where the IR's continuation of a third can be anticipated (i.e., the second is produced with a continuing intonation contour and is followed by the complementizer "that" indicating that more is to come). In terms of the laughter, like other instances of laughter in this environment, it treats the IR's talk-in-progress as laughable. In this case, it does so by laughing through the third criticism, "people in Iowa don't get to see enough of the real you". Also, similar to other IEs, in many cases HRC displays a stance toward the IR's talk-in-progress not just vocally but visually as well. In this example, once the IR completes the first criticism, "focus-group driven:", HRC begins to signal her disagreement by shaking her head and continues to do so throughout the entire course of the second criticism "that it's too run too tightly". Thus, like other IEs, HRC's embodied behaviour during the IR's talk displays her treatment of that talk, as it is in-progress.

Now, in this co-present interview we have the benefit of seeing both interactants simultaneously and so we have visual access to the embodied way that the IR terminates the relevance of responsive laughter by temporarily withdrawing his bodily alignment from the interaction precisely when HRC starts to laugh. When HRC produces the first distinct laugh particle at line 21, the IR's gaze is directed at her (they are in mutual gaze) and he is physically attentive to this response (see Figure 4.5). After this particle is produced and he continues with "people", he withdraws his gaze and physically begins to withdraw his head as well. By the time he is describing the people he is talking about, that is, those "in Iowa", he raises his arm as a form of physical deixis referencing other Iowans. Once this reference is physically made, he begins to return to HRC's direction, but still does not return his gaze until her laughter has come to its end. This physical action marks a significant embodied withdrawal, and thus, active termination of the relevance of his responsive laughter. Recall from earlier discussion that an important part of terminating the relevance of laughter requires more than the recipient's restraint from laughing; a recipient also has to do something to terminate the relevance of laughter (Jefferson, 1979).

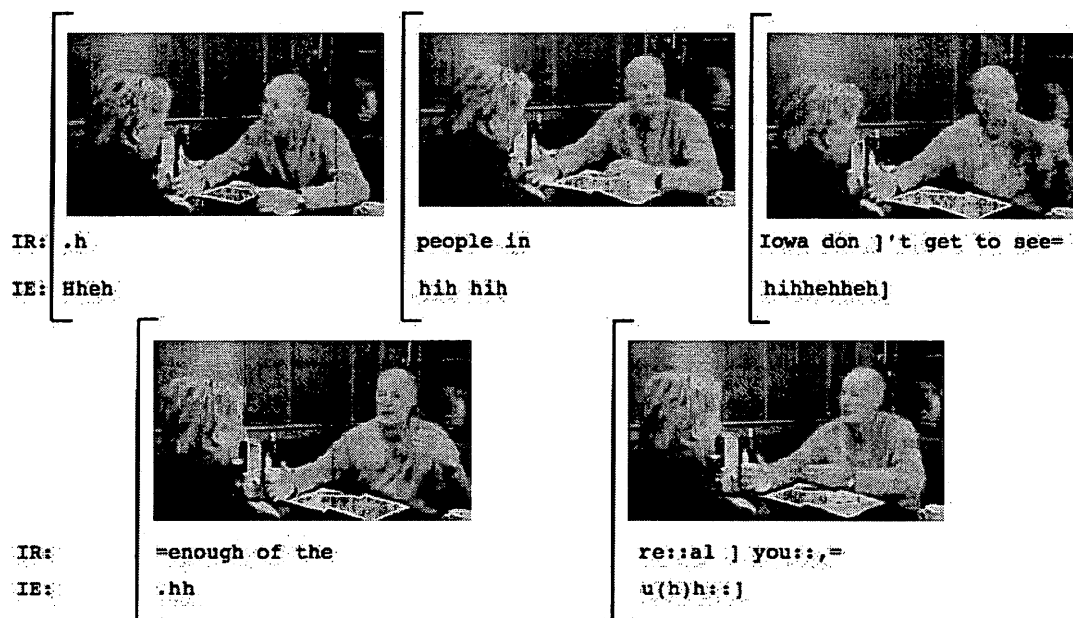


Figure 4.5: IR's embodied withdrawal; termination of laughter's relevance (lines 20-23)

In this particular segment, Smith does not align with HRC by producing laughter himself; rather, he, in fact, terminates the relevance of responsive laughter by physically removing himself from the interaction at precisely the point in which she seeks alignment. During this physical withdrawal, he clearly pursues the topical trajectory of his question preface as a “serious” matter throughout her laughter. In this way, the IR terminates the relevance of responsive laughter and remains neutral.

Upon completion of Smith's question, Clinton's verbal response first projects dispreferredness and then explicitly disagrees with the substance of the question preface (lines 27-28). Notably, however, her disagreement is not framed as being directed toward the IR but instead toward “the press” (line 31), which is not surprising given that the IR designed his turn in a way that simply voiced other peoples' concerns. Thus, HRC's laughter, in combination with other embodied displays (e.g., head shakes), allows her to

take up a position of disagreement toward the IR's talk while it is in progress instead of interrupting his talk with a more "on record" or explicit verbal response. In deploying a resource often associated with affiliation, in some sense the laughter invites the overhearing audience to laugh along with HRC in treating the IR's talk as non-serious.

The interview that the next example comes from occurred the same morning as the one with Harry Smith shown in (4.10), when HRC had just received the endorsement from *The Des Moines Register*. Before the beginning of excerpt (4.11), the IR, David Gregory, began his line of questioning by suggesting that HRC's campaign had lost momentum over the previous six weeks, quoting her husband as saying that it would be a "miracle" for her to win the Iowa caucuses. In her response, HRC disagrees with the idea that her campaign has lost energy and enthusiasm and shifts focus to the endorsement. However, this does not seem to be the direction Gregory wishes to take, as evidenced by his follow-up, beginning at line 1.

(4.11) 2007Dec17-TheTodayShow-1: All boys' network
 IR: David Gregory; IE: Hillary Rodham Clinton

01 IR: So Senator if-if people look at the la:st (.)
 02 six weeks and they might question how Hillary
 03 Clinton responds to a crisis .hh or how she
 04 handles pressure. (.) .hh and they might
 05 >point to the fact that you complain:ed about
 06 the:< .h all boys network [of presidential
 07 IE: [((clears throat))]
 08 IR: politics in the wake of the Philadelphia
 09 debate, .hh they [would se- [they would see uh]
 10 IE: [hehhehheh [huh huh °huh huh°]
 11 IR: yer==yer husband complaining about me:dia
 12 coverage of you<[They'd see your campaign] .h
 13 IE: [((rolls eyes-----))]
 14 IR: raise the past [drug] issue (.) and [use] by
 15 IE: [Uh-] [Uh-]
 16 IR: Barack Obama or question him for .h his ambition
 17 (.) an' they might say well this is what we
 18 really don't li:ke about politics<Is that fair:?

19 (1.5)
 20 IE: .hhh Well I fdon't think that's at all a:ccurate
 21 representation of my campaign:f [...]

In this excerpt, HRC is on the receiving end of a lengthy prefatory statement by the IR that offers critical interpretations of recent issues related to her campaign that invokes her as the principal target (lines 1-16). At a quick glance, such criticisms appear to be attributed to a third party (“people” in line 1; repeated use of “they”, lines 2, 4, 9, 12, 17). However, there is an important structural difference between the design of this utterance and those that put forth the views of others, as in (4.10) above. For example, in excerpt (4.10), Smith clearly presents the views of others on their behalf in his remarks, “One of the rubs about your campai:gn:=they say it feels like it’s focus-group driven...” (lines 16-18). The subject of the verb is not the IR but some indefinite third party “they”; thus, the IR is clearly stating something someone else has said and not expressing his own opinion. In this excerpt, Gregory’s question preface begins with the conjunction “if” (“If people look at the last six weeks they might question how Hillary Clinton responds to a crisis...”), marking the clause as a conditional. Although the subject of the verb in this case is “people”, the conditional presents the information as hypothetical, so the IR is offering an opinion of what people “might” think/do. The idea that the IR is offering his own opinion is also strengthened by the shift in footing from the third person reference to his IE as “Hillary Clinton” (lines 2-3) to second person forms (“you”, “yer husband” and “your campaign”; lines 11-12).

Once the IR has begun to launch this direct form of criticism “they might point to the fact that you complain:ed about the all boys network of presidential politics in the

wake of the Philadelphia debate” (lines 4-9), he signals his intention to continue with an inbreath and begins offering a second critical interpretation by making reference to the same subject, namely “they” (line 9). At this point, HRC begins to laugh, producing a brief unit consisting of seven particles, simultaneous with a small portion of the IR’s talk.⁴² Here, her laughter, again in combination with other embodied displays, works to undercut specific aspects of the IR’s negative depiction of her campaign (see Figure 4.6). Specifically, she first visibly withholds her laughter to the point that she has to clear her throat once the IR has characterized her as complaining (line 7), and, following both her laughter and accompanying smiles at its onset and end, she then tilts her head and rolls her eyes in a way that visibly treats the IR’s talk as lengthy (line 9). Each of these diverse embodied displays does not have any intrinsic meaning in isolation; rather, understanding them as disaffiliative requires attention to their precise placement in the course of the IR’s unfolding talk. And, given that what he produces is essentially a litany of negative propositions related to her campaign—a “serious” matter indeed—these displays clearly convey her disagreement with them. Indeed, because these displays occur while his question is being formulated, they work to challenge that formulation during its production instead of waiting until it is brought to completion. And yet, such displays do not interrupt the turn-in-progress nor do they make a bid for the

⁴² There is also a detectable production lag in this example, that is just beyond one second (1.0). As a result, HRC’s response is heard as delayed by approximately one second, despite the fact that her response was likely not delayed by that amount in real time. At this point in the interaction, then, it seems probable that her laughter is responsive to the portion of the IR’s TCU regarding her complaining about the “all boys network of presidential politics”. Even though the precise onset of her laughter cannot be identified conclusively, it is nevertheless clear that she is not laughing at a relevant transition place, since pragmatically, a question has not been asked, and prosodically, the IR’s TCU clearly projects this as the first item in a list of complaints.

conversational floor; however, the full repetition of the start of Gregory's second item in overlap with HRC's laughter does indicate that he is in some sense disrupted by its occurrence ("would se-they would see uh yer..."; line 9).

06	IR: the:< all boys network of	presidential]
07	IE:	((clears throat))]

12	IR: coverage of you<	They'd see your campaign] .h
13	IE:	((rolls eyes))-----]

Figure 4.6: Clinton's embodied displays of disaffiliation

In this instance though, as in countless others, the IR does not provide any explicit orientation to her laughter, and without smiling or producing reciprocal laughter, he instead proceeds in delivering the question proper, "is that fair:?" (line 18). Also, while her laughter may certainly invite responsive laughter from the overhearing audience, it is even less likely that she actually expects the IR to affiliate by producing responsive laughter himself, especially considering the views expressed are presented as his own.

Regarding the design of the IR's question, it is interesting to note that the final question component "Is that fair:?" invites HRC to *agree* rather than disagree with the

proposition of fairness. Although the preferred response is agreement, for HRC to provide an affirmative response would be to acknowledge the criticisms leveled against her, her husband, and her campaign in general. Instead of providing a type-conforming response by answering “yes” or “no”, HRC orients to the dispreferred status of her response first by beginning with the turn-initial component “well” (Schegloff & Lerner, 2009; Schiffrin, 1987), and then by articulating her verbal disagreement with a smile voice pronunciation that preserves a laughing quality, “I don’t think that’s at all accurate representation of my campaign:” (lines 20-21).

Both the structure and content of this disagreement are strikingly similar to not only other non-conforming responses produced by her but also other IEs, as shown in Chapter 3. Similarly, in this example, laughing before producing a dispreferred response also marks it as a preliminary to “doing” disagreement. HRC’s laughter and embodied stance displays retrospectively cast Gregory’s question-in-progress as embodying a perspective to be laughed at and disagreed with (e.g., that she has complained about the “all boys’ network of presidential politics”), and thus, work to undermine the criticisms it embodies. At the same time, her laughter also provides for the relevance of responsive laughter, at least from the overhearing audience, since it seems unlikely that the IR would laugh at a question he not only constructs as “serious” but also in some ways indicates his own point of view. While the overhearing audience may nevertheless align with HRC and “laugh along”, the IR terminates the relevance of further laughter by actively pursuing the remainder of the question.

The third and final example of HRC's laughter during an IR question is representative of the more explicit end of the continuum, both in terms of the escalation of her laughter during the IR's talk and the fact that it achieves responsive laughter—albeit brief—from the IR. It comes from an interview with Bob Schieffer, one week after Clinton had announced her universal healthcare plan. In excerpt (4.12), Schieffer introduces a question preface in order to set the agenda and provide important background information for the overhearing audience, “last week...you rolled out your new: health care plan” (lines 2-4). When the IR begins to introduce a critical remark about her plan, he first attributes it to a specific third party and group of principal opponents, namely, “the Republicans”. Once he begins to offer their characterization of her plan as something they had a response to, HRC begins to laugh (“something the uh (.) uh Republicans immediately said is going to lead to...” (lines 4-7).

(4.12) 2007Sep18-FaceTheNation-1: Healthcare
 IR: Bob Schieffer; IE: Hillary Rodham Clinton

01 IR: And we're back now with Senator Hillary Rodham
 02 Clinton=Last week was a big one for you Senator,
 03 in that you uh rolled out your new: health care
 04 plan, (.) uh: something the: uh (.) uh: Republicans
 05 immediately said is going to lea:d
 06 [to socialized [medicine,]=
 07 IE: [he he he he [hehehehe]=
 08 IR: =[(.) U]h: [it woul]d [require among uh] (.) (h)heh=
 09 IE: =[he he] [.hh] [↑Heh he he he °he°]=
 10 IR: =[it would re]quire among [other [things=thet=
 11 IE: [.hh] [hheh [heh ↑heh =
 12 IR: =[every American [(.)] would have t[o: (.)=
 13 IE: =[I'm sorry Bob =[Hehehe] [.hh =
 14 IR: =would ha[ve tuh] buy: (.) health insurance.=
 15 IE: [Uh::-]
 16 IR: =You're proposing to pay for it- [by] rolling
 17 IE: [Right]
 18 IR: back some of the Bush=uh tax cuts .h H↑ow do you
 19 force people to buy health insurance Senator,
 20 IE: .hh (0.2) W'll lemme descri:be briefly what it is

21 I'm trying tuh do Bob, because (.) fthis is not
 22 government run health care, we don't create any
 23 new bureaucracy,f .hh but we do: have (.) shared
 24 responsibility. (.) in order to achieve quality
 25 affordable healthcare for every American. .hh uh:
 26 people do have to take responsibility. but we're
 27 gonna make it affordable. [...]

In this particular example, HRC's laughter occurs in the turn recognition space, that is, the IR has not yet produced the criticism so she laughs here in anticipation of a negative action (i.e., the Republicans' response to her health plan). Since Schieffer is about to offer a critical perspective that the Republicans hold, by laughing at this juncture, it seems probable that she seeks alignment with him—and the overhearing audience—in treating these views as something not to be taken seriously. At the same time, her laughter also functions as an implicit commentary on whatever the Republicans might have to say about her health care plan, one that orients to their remarks as laughable. The first full burst of laughter can be seen across lines 7-9 (“he he he he he he he he .hh h h ↑eh he he he °he°”), where Schieffer describes the Republicans' proposition that HRC's plan will lead to “socialized medicine” (line 6). This unit of laughter may also be divided into two distinct units (“he he he he he he he he + .hh h h ↑Heh he he he °he°”). The onset of the second unit is marked by an inbreath, and subsequent prosody indicating an upgrade to the first unit as she continues to pursue uptake, while the unit-completion is marked by decreased amplitude on the final particle. This division is important for identifying the precise position in which she receives responsive laughter—albeit brief—from the IR.

Schieffer first begins to display a mild acknowledgement of her laughter by smiling, a facial display that often accompanies a recipient's responsive laughter (Haakana, 2010). He then produces a marked inbreath and corresponding outbreath through a single laugh particle (line 11), as he briefly looks down, away from the viewer (see Figure 4.7). It is immediately following her second burst of laughter that this single laugh particle is produced. In addition to causing Schieffer's temporary suspension of his neutralistic posture, HRC's laughter also disrupts the trajectory of his turn. Prior to his responsive laughter, the IR had begun to describe the requirements of her healthcare plan ("it would require...", line 8) for the duration of her second unit of laughter (line 9). This second unit causes such a disruption that the IR is forced to restart his turn. At line 10, Schieffer successfully reiterates what he had begun at line 8 ("it would require among other things..."), which is hearable *as* a reiteration due to its syntactic parallelism (Clayman, 2007). During this reiteration, HRC then produces another marked inbreath before beginning to produce another unit of laughter. What is striking is that Schieffer laughed following the original formulation in line 8, and it is precisely at that same point in the reiteration at line 10 that HRC begins to laugh again (line 11). Having already successfully achieved uptake at this exact point, she tries again, though this time she is not successful. As Schieffer regains composure, he lifts his face and returns his gaze outward (see Figure 4.7), immediately pursuing the topical issue of his question preface.





		
08 IR:	=[(.) U]h: it woul]d] [require among uh] (.) (h)heh=	
09 IE:	=[he he] .hh] [↑Heh he he he °he°]	
		
10 IR:	=it would re]quire	among [other [things=thet=
11 IE:	.hh]	[hheh [heh [heh =

Figure 4.7: Interviewer's temporarily alignment

At this point, seeing that she has not received additional uptake, HRC then offers an apology, "I'm sorry Bob". Interestingly, this apology indicates her orientation to the improper interactional move she has conducted by disrupting the trajectory of the IR's turn before he had finished. Again, she refers to the IR by first name, in this case reasserting the familiar terms they are operating under (Clayman, 2010). She then produces what appears to be a laugh terminal inbreath at the end of line 13, in overlap with a repeated portion of Schieffer's utterance ("would have to", line 14). Following this, he is able to continue with the question proper, "how do you force people to buy health insurance Senator?" (lines 18-19). Since the question is framed as being motivated by "the Republicans" response, it is to some extent conceivable that HRC's laughter seeks an affiliative response, not just from the overhearing audience but also from the IR,

thereby aligning with her treatment of the Republicans as laughable. By doing so, she not only challenges the Republicans' perspective as "serious", but she also receives momentary feedback from the IR, which indicates at least his temporary alignment with her.

Laughing during IR questions is the most frequent way HRC deployed laughter in my corpus of BNIs. A recurrent sequential slot for this type of laughter is when IRs are in the process of producing some form of criticism, recurrently on behalf of some third-party. In examples (4.10) – (4.12), HRC's laughter, like that of other IEs, occurred during the IR's talk at points of action recognition, that is, at points where criticisms were in the course of being leveled against her: in (4.10), HRC laughs when the third item in a list of complaints is projected; in (4.11), she laughs when the first item in such a list has been produced; and in (4.12), it is the mere mention of some of her principal opposition "the Republicans" and what they may have to say about her healthcare plan that generates laughter. In each of these "serious" contexts, HRC oriented to the recognizability of the action-in-progress (i.e., actions that depict her or aspects of her campaign in negative or problematic ways), and by laughing during those precise moments, she treated them as laughable, formulating that stance as a public display of her orientation toward those actions for the overhearing audience. This accomplishes at least three things: first, laughing while another proposes some action to be taken seriously works to disarm it while it is being produced and it also formulates that display as relevant, thereby undercutting the IRs' grounds for asking such questions in the first place. Since such laughter is overlaid on another's talk, it can also actually work to audibly obscure what is

being said (Jefferson, 1983). Second, by treating criticisms in progress as laughable, HRC—again, like other IEs—shows that she is in a position to take them lightly. In doing so, she not only proposes that she does not regard these issues as “serious”, but she also encourages the overhearing audience to publicly ratify her treatment of these questions in nonserious terms. However, while inviting such displays of affiliation from the audience, she nevertheless simultaneously accomplishes disaffiliating from what is being proposed as “serious” in the content of the IRs’ talk. Third, it is not just through phonetic practices that HRC, like other IEs, treat something as laughable; rather, it is through the deployment of a combination of mutually elaborating semiotic resources that courses of action get constructed in that way and are recognizable as such (Ford & Fox, 2010; Goodwin, 2000, 2011). A deeper understanding of what laughter does in any particular instance that it occurs, then, requires a holistic approach that considers not only the sequential organization of action but also the simultaneous and associated embodied visual practices that combine with phonetic/acoustic ones.

4.5 Summary

This chapter has presented an overview of HRC’s laughter in the broadcast news interview. I began by offering a brief comparison of the two interactional corpora—the HRC corpus and the IE corpus of BNIs—in terms of the overall frequencies of occurrence of the various environments in which laughter can occur. This comparison revealed how HRC not only laughs in the same sequential environments as other politicians in the role of IEs, but also that the frequency with which she laughs in those

specific environments is consistent with that of other IEs. One notable finding is that she did produce more laughter during the IR's talk than did other IEs (approximately two thirds of all laughter occurred in that environment as opposed to roughly half of all IE laughter occurred in that environment), on average, a finding that may help account for the fact that her laughter in that specific interactional context was picked up and subsequently reported on by the media. For the purposes of comparison, I also provided an overview of these distinct environments, in order to illustrate how HRC's laughter is similar to that of other IEs. Specifically, examples of *invited* laughter were presented, that is, when the relevance of a laughing response is established through either the content of the IR's talk or by some visual means. In addition, representative cases of *volunteered* laughter, first, during HRC's own talk (*within-speech* laughter or *post-completion* laughter), and then during the IR's questioning turn, were provided. This latter type of laughter in two distinct sequential positions—at question completion or prefatory to a verbal response, and during the IR's questioning turn—became the remaining focus of the chapter's analysis. The rationale for narrowing in on her laughter in these two sequential slots came from the fact that such laughter became the subject of subsequent representations of Hillary Rodham Clinton's laughter. My analysis showed that the practice of HRC laughing during, and in response to, IR questions designed as "serious" accomplished disaffiliative interactional work. Importantly, in conjunction with the findings of Chapter 3, this chapter demonstrated that HRC's use of this practice is just one instance of a generic interactional practice employed by IEs more generally in the context of BNIs, rather than some idiosyncratic feature of HRC. As is the case for

other politicians in the role of IEs, it is a practice that gets deployed in organized ways in order to assist them in dealing with the challenges that journalists' questions can pose for them, and in negotiating the constraints of the specific interactional context of BNIs.

What I hope is clear at this stage is that this generic practice is not oriented to as gendered in any of the source interactions nor by any of the participants. And yet, subsequent representations of HRC's laughter by various news media nevertheless treated it as though it was not only a unique character trait but also, indeed, a negative, gendered one.

This is the focus of the third and final empirical chapter, Chapter 5.

Chapter 5 – On the Gendered Nature of Media Representations of Clinton’s Laughter

Every utterance has a history of (ab)use, interpretation, and evaluation, and this history sticks to the utterance. (Blommaert, 2005: 46)

5.1 Introduction

The news media play an important role in the circulation of gender ideologies, and, in this chapter, I will make the case that Clinton’s laughter is but one example of this process. In Chapters 3 and 4, I showed how IE laughter that disaffiliates from the IR’s question, or some aspect of it, is in fact a generic interactional practice rather than some idiosyncratic feature of Clinton’s discursive repertoire and a practice that is not oriented to as gendered in any of the news interviews nor by any of the participants. However, as outlined in Chapter 1, gender—or, more precisely, “the cultural intelligibility of gendered meanings” (Ehrlich, 2007)—can become a relevant feature of other contexts in which talk is represented despite the absence of any explicit orientations to gender in the talk itself (see also, Blommaert, 2005; Ehrlich, 2002). Given that broadcast interactions such as the news interview are speech events characterized by a unique participation framework (Goffman, 1981), news media representations of those interactions are in fact one possible venue where such orientations may be realized. That is, interview participants conduct these interactions in relation to their co-participants but also in relation to the larger listening and viewing audience (“ratified overhearers” in Goffman’s terms), made up not just of citizens of the electorate but also of members of news media organizations who are responsible for reporting on those interactions, or as is more often

the case, on selected pieces or quotable segments of them. Consequently, although Clinton's laughter was not oriented to as a gendered practice by any of the participants in the broadcast interactions in which it occurred, in this chapter I make the case that the practice *became gendered* in *post-hoc* recontextualizations (Blommaert, 2005) of those interactions, in this case, in news media representations of her laughter that followed those interactions.

In general, political discourse is replete with key phrases that lend themselves to recontextualization (Hodges, 2008). Indeed, slogans, soundbites and talking points are all examples of aspects of politicians' words that are taken up by news media (Hodges, 2008). Media coverage of politics, in particular, construct catchy phrases or soundbites to characterize portions of politicians' talk and other conduct that are extracted from the originating contexts (e.g., the news interview) and recontextualized in media coverage (Talbot, Atkinson, & Atkinson, 2003). In the case of Clinton's laughter, while there was certainly a range of media responses to it, the characterization that obtained special status (i.e., what became the focus of subsequent representations) was one that described the quality of her laugh, captured in the key phrase, *The Clinton Cackle*. As this phrase, and corresponding representations of it, entered into circulation in the news cycle, they formed the basis of an intertextual series (Hodges 2011), i.e., a "text" that reoccurs across multiple, overlapping contexts (Spitulnik, 2001). As Adam Hodges (2011: 16) writes, "While reiteration of prior text may maintain fidelity to a meaning already established, it may also introduce 'a signification opposed to that of the other's word' (Kristeva, 1980: 73)". That is, new meanings may be introduced. In this chapter, I examine various

aspects of the recontextualization of Clinton's laughter to illustrate how the news media effectively reshaped the kinds of meanings and values attached to it and concomitantly (re)produced and reinforced a negative, and crucially, gendered (i.e., stereotypical, misogynist), perception of her.

I begin by providing some important theoretical background on intertextuality and on the interrelated processes of decontextualization and recontextualization and outlining the data on which the following analysis is based. The analytic portion of the chapter is divided into three main sections: First, I focus on the recontextualization process itself, starting with a description of how the "cackle" representation came into existence. In examining the "first" media reports, I consider how Clinton's laughter was decontextualized from its originating contexts as it "travelled" across contexts (Blommaert, 2005) and was recontextualized in new discursive spaces. In the second analytic section, I show how the recontextualized version of Clinton's laughter is linked to gender via a series of indexical relations. Then, in the third and final analytic section of the chapter, I compare the representations of Clinton's laughter with that of another (male) political candidate for the Presidential nomination: Republican Presidential candidate Rudolph Giuliani during the 2007-2008 nominating process. Each section works in a step-wise fashion to develop the overarching claim of the chapter—that in the case of Clinton's laughter, or *The Clinton Cackle*, gender emerged as relevant and procedurally consequential in these post-hoc recontextualizations of it by the news media.

5.2 Theoretical Background

The notion of *intertextuality* is meant to capture the way in which our words refer to and build on the words of others. As Mikhail Bakhtin (1986: 89) writes: “Our speech, that is, all our utterances, is filled with others’ words, varying degrees of otherness or varying degrees of “our-own-ness”, [...] carry[ing] with them their own expression, their own evaluative tone, which we assimilate, rework and re-accentuate”. The concept is often described as rooted in Bakhtin’s (1981, 1986) *dialogism*—his view of language as socially and historically constituted—but the term itself was coined and elaborated by Bulgarian-French scholar Julia Kristeva (e.g., 1980, 1986).⁴³ Richard Bauman (2005) explains how in adopting the term *intertextuality*, Kristeva intended to shift the focus away from *dialogue*, and thus, away from the *utterance* to *text*. The concept of *intertextuality* is particularly useful for the analysis of media discourse because it emphasizes the connections that exist between texts, where representations are (re-)produced (see, for example, the work of Fairclough, 1992, 1995).⁴⁴

⁴³ Although Bakhtin wrote in the period of the 1920s-1940s, his work did not become known in the West until Kristeva’s work in the 1960s, and the English translations of his work in the 1980s (Johnstone, 2008).

⁴⁴ Despite Kristeva’s more specific use of the term, Hodges (2011: 9-10) observes an important terminological distinction among different kinds of discourse scholars with regards to *intertextuality* and the term *interdiscursivity*. On the one hand, Norman Fairclough (1992: 104), who works within a Critical Discourse Analysis framework, uses *intertextuality* as the general term, and then offers finer level distinctions in what he calls *manifest intertextuality* (refers to texts that are explicitly marked in the text in question) and *constitutive intertextuality* (refers to the confluence of discourse conventions—genres, voices and other types of discourse—that form a text), which he also calls *interdiscursivity*. On the other hand, there seems to be consensus, at least among linguistic anthropologists, in adopting the term *interdiscursivity* as the more inclusive and broader term (i.e., including other discursive forms than the written ones that “text” implies), while reserving *intertextuality* for issues having to do with written texts specifically (see the papers in Agha & Wortham, 2005). Following Hodges (2011), I adopt the term *intertextuality* to avoid confusion with scholars of discourse who may have different understandings of the term, *interdiscursivity*. Given the widely recognized understanding of a “text”—written or spoken—within sociocultural linguistics as a product of discursive action, this seems an apt choice.

According to Bakhtin, any use of language is effectively implicated in a wider dialogue such that texts are not only related to preceding but also subsequent links in a chain of connections (Bakhtin, 1981, 1986). Thus, when broadcast interactions, or components of them, are taken up and recontextualized in news media discourse they enter into this chain. These intertextual connections involve *entextualization*, a concept that Jan Blommaert (2005) describes as turning intertextuality into an empirical research program. Entextualization refers to the process whereby a (fragment of) discourse is lifted from one interactional setting (i.e., is decontextualized) and is inserted into another setting and is bounded as a *text-artifact* (i.e., is metadiscursively recontextualized) (cf. Bauman & Briggs, 1990; Blommaert, 2005; Silverstein & Urban, 1996). As Blommaert (2005: 47) explains, “‘original’ pieces of discourse—socially, culturally, and historically situated unique events—are lifted out of their original context and transmitted, by quoting or echoing them, by writing them down, by inserting them into another discourse, by using them as ‘examples’”.⁴⁵ So, as texts “travel” across contexts (Blommaert, 2005), they are not simply repeated, but are inevitably reshaped, “re-worked and re-accentuated”—to re-use Bakhtin’s words—in the process. For example, they may carry aspects of their “original” or earlier contexts, but may also be transformed as they are transplanted into new ones (Ehrlich, 2012). The resulting “text”, then, is not only associated with a new context, it may also be accompanied by a particular metadiscourse that provides a “preferred reading” for it (Blommaert 2005: 47). In this sense, the

⁴⁵ While the term, “entextualization” has generally been applied to examples such as reported speech, I am suggesting that a representation of some “original” also constitutes an entextualized “text”. In the case of the “cackle” re-presentation, then, Clinton’s laughter is “lifted out of its original context” (i.e., out of the originating contexts of occurrence described in Chapter 4) and “re-worked and re-accentuated” in a way that assesses it in evaluative terms and turns this evaluation into a “text” (i.e., “The Clinton Cackle”).

process of entextualization “is [...] an act of control” (Bauman & Briggs 1990: 76). Indeed, lifting discourse from its originating context and recontextualizing it in a new one has the potential to reinscribe it with new meanings. And, “all texts are not created equal” (Silverstein & Urban 1996: 12) which is to say that all recontextualizations within a given *text trajectory* (a term ascribed to Blommaert) do not necessarily carry the same value or legitimacy (cf. Bauman & Briggs 1990; Ehrlich 2012).

Both intertextuality and entextualization are key components of what Michael Silverstein and Greg Urban (1996) call the “natural history of discourse”. Such a framework grounds discourse analysis into “histories of use—histories that are social, cultural, and political, and which allow the synchronic use of particular expressions to acquire powerful social, cultural, and political effects”, and allows the analyst “to look beyond the boundaries of particular communicative events to see where the expressions that are used actually come from, what their sources are, whom they speak for, how they relate to traditions of use [...] [and to uncover] the indexical links between signs and interpretations” (Blommaert, 2005: 46-47). Given that any piece of discourse has a life beyond a singular bounded event, tracing its intertextual connections provides insight into the discursive re-construction and re-presentation of specific interactional events. Thus, in what follows, I move beyond the “bounded events” of broadcast news interviews and particular interactional sequences in which Clinton’s laughter occurred (the focus of Chapter 4) and into other discursive contexts in which her laughter was recontextualized as *The Clinton Cackle*. This requires looking at other kinds of data—in this case, media discourse data—which I briefly describe below.

5.3 The data

The analysis put forward in this chapter is based on a corpus of media discourse data collected using two electronic research databases of news sources, *Factiva* and *LexisNexis*. *Factiva* is a research and information tool owned by Dow Jones & Company that aggregates media content from licensed and free sources, including newspapers, magazines, and television (ABC, CBS, NBC) and radio transcripts, and *LexisNexis Academic* is owned by Reed Elsevier and offers a searchable database of news articles. I conducted a search of all English language print news media references to Clinton's laughter and the key word "cackle" (and possible variations, e.g., "cackles", "cackled", "cackling") in both databases from the period in which she announced her nomination (January 2007) until the U.S. Presidential election in November 2008. These searches were subsequently cross-referenced with an additional search for all references to Clinton's laughter and "cackle" using the *Google News Archive*, which searches content from major newspapers and magazines, web-based publications such as blogs, and news and legal archives.⁴⁶ The resulting collection of print news media, which constitutes the primary corpus of data for this chapter, includes a total of 82 newspaper articles, 55 of which appeared in American publications (13 nationals: e.g., *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*; and 42 dailies: e.g., *The Boston Globe*, *The San Francisco Chronicle*), and 27 of which appeared outside the U.S., for example, in Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia and India (10 nationals: e.g., *The Globe & Mail*; *The Independent*; and 17

⁴⁶ Although my searches using *Factiva* and *LexisNexis* were conducted in 2009 and 2010, my search using the *Google News Archive* was conducted in 2011 and 2012. Accordingly, the more recent search included all "cackle"-related references to Clinton's laughter up until August 2012; however, in the interest of reducing the scope of analysis, the primary corpus of data incorporates those references from print news media (i.e., newspapers) exclusively.

dailies: e.g., *The Toronto Star*, *The Irish Times*). I also draw on a secondary corpus of data that consists of other news media (i.e., non-print news) references to Clinton's laughter, including radio (e.g., *National Public Radio*), television (e.g., *Fox News*) and Internet communications (e.g., *Slate.com*), particularly in terms of tracing the origins of the phrase, "The Clinton Cackle".⁴⁷

5.4 From laughing to cackling: The de-/recontextualization of Clinton's laughter

At the beginning of Chapter 4, I explained how on September 23 2007, Clinton participated in what is known as a "full Ginsberg" by appearing on all five of the Sunday morning news programs on the same day. It was around the time of her appearance on these five political interview programs—ABC's *This Week*, CBS's *Face the Nation*, CNN's *Late Edition*, FOX's *Fox News Sunday*, and NBC's *Meet the Press*—that Clinton's laughter became the subject of intense media scrutiny, and the "cackle" characterization of her laughter entered the news cycle. Figure 5.1 reports the number of media references made to Clinton's laughter in the month of September, when coverage began to appear. Three points are significant. First, the earliest reference to Clinton's laughter as a "cackle" occurred during a radio broadcast on September 13. Second, there is not a single reference to Clinton's laughter ("cackle", or otherwise) in the *print* news media prior to a newspaper article devoted to the topic by Patrick Healy in *The New York Times* (NYT) on September 28; however, in the period between the first reference and the first print news reference, a total of 10 additional radio and television sources also

⁴⁷ See Appendix D for a complete list of media discourse data cited in this chapter.

discussed Clinton's laughter. Third, following the publication of Healy's article, coverage by broadcast news media began to subside while print news coverage began to soar, the significance of which will be made clear in what follows. In this section, then, I focus briefly on each of these points, beginning with a discussion of the earliest reference to Clinton's laughter as a "cackle" since it was this particular re-presentation that quickly took hold as it travelled across contexts and became firmly established as the dominant way to characterize her laughter. Then I outline additional commentary that appeared prior to Healy's article, which offer some insight into the intertextual (and ideological) processes at work in de- and re-contextualizing Clinton's laughter. Following this, I take a cursory look at the "The Cackle" re-presentation provided by the NYT, which forms the basis of all subsequent print news reportage—coverage that further recontextualizes her laughter, firmly establishes the "cackle" characterization as the "authoritative entextualization" (Silverstein & Urban, 1996: 11) and circulates widely across contexts and continents.

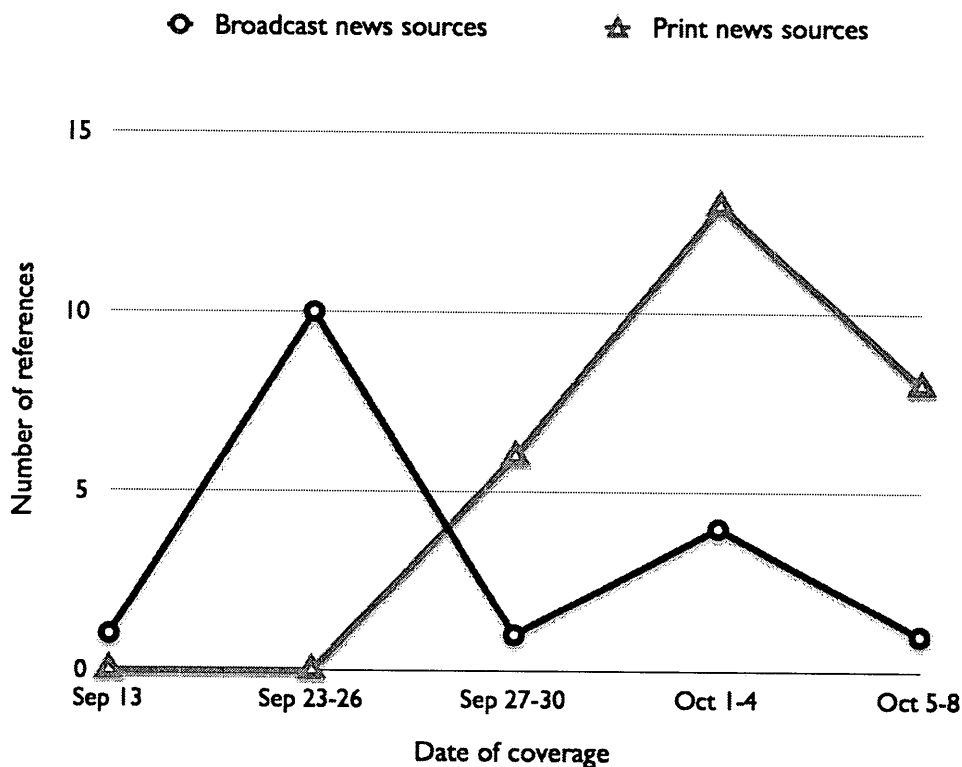


Figure 5.1: Number of media references to Clinton's laughter by date and news source

As mentioned above, Figure 5.1 indicates that the earliest reference to Clinton's laughter occurred on September 13, when, perhaps not surprisingly, conservative political commentator, Rush Limbaugh talked about Clinton on his nationally syndicated talk radio show (what continues to be the highest-rated talk radio show in the United States). Excerpt (5.1) is a transcript of the relevant portion of his show, posted on the program's website following the broadcast. Limbaugh's commentary was in response to a clip from *The Yahoo! Democratic Candidate Mashup*, an online debate (co-sponsored by *The Huffington Post*, and *Slate*) that took place that same day. It constitutes the first reference

to Clinton's laughter as a "cackle", and thus, the source of this key phrase. In this and other examples in this chapter, I highlight key components of excerpts in boldface.

Excerpt (5.1) (*The Rush Limbaugh Show*, September 13, 2007)

RUSH: Mrs. Clinton got the next question from Bill Maher. ((Plays clip of a question-answer sequence from the debate, featuring Bill Maher)) ((BILL)): "Senator Clinton, all the Senators here except Senator Obama voted for the Iraq war resolution in 2002 saying their decision was based on intelligence they believed to be accurate at the time. In other words, George Bush fooled you. Why should Americans vote for somebody who can be fooled by George Bush?"

HILLARY: **(Cackling)**. "Well, Bill, it was a little more complicated than that. I sought out expert opinions from a wide variety of sources, people inside and outside the government, people in my husband's administration, and I think it is fair to say that at the time I made it very clear I was against a preemptive war. And I believed that giving the president authority to go back to the United Nations and put in inspectors was an appropriate designation of authority."

RUSH: That's just at variance with the truth, folks. The use-of-force resolution did not say anything about bombing the United Nations. That is just disingenuous. **And how about that cackle?** You know, if I were Bill Maher, **that cackle, she did not want that question. She's the smartest woman in the world.**

First of all, it is worth noting that in the question-answer sequence that is transcribed, Clinton's laughter is represented in a way that is inconsistent with the general practice of standardizing transcripts for publication on the web; that is, instead of writing ((*laughing*)) or ((*laughs*)), Clinton's laughter is transcribed as ((*cackling*)). As Mary Bucholtz (2000: 1446) describes, representational choices concerning the practice of transcription are always ideological since they "shape how speakers (and speech) [...] are understood by readers". In this case, the lexical choice "cackle" as opposed to "laugh" carries with it an evaluative assessment of the *quality* of her laughter (and arguably a

particularly negative and gendered one, as will be discussed further in section 5.5)—as opposed to the common and more neutral practice of stating simply *that* she laughed. Such a choice demonstrates what Mishler (1991) calls “the rhetoric of transcription”; that is, the persuasive effect representational choices can have on audiences (cited in Bucholtz, 2000: 1445). Secondly, after characterizing Clinton’s response to Maher’s question as “disingenuous”, Limbaugh poses the question, “And how about **that cackle?**”. This time the characterization of Clinton’s laugh as a “cackle” is spoken as opposed to written, but it again provides a simplified evaluative assessment of one aspect of her laughter, namely, its quality, and, highlights that aspect of representation at the expense of other possibilities. Additionally, Limbaugh associates her laughter with the idea of being strategic or calculated (an association commonly invoked in subsequent news reports, including Healy’s), in that “she’s the smartest woman in the world” *because* she laughed when not wanting to answer that question (as though *she* is the only politician to ever do so!). Both Clinton’s laughter, and her subsequent verbal response in this excerpt, is consistent with other examples of laughter in this sequential environment (i.e., at question completion, as shown in Chapters 3 and 4), and in response to the kind of question Maher constructs. That is, rather than answer his question as to why Americans should “vote for somebody who can be fooled by George Bush”, Clinton first laughs, thereby treating the question as embodying a perspective to be laughed at, and thus, provides the grounds for her subsequent disagreement with its overstated nature (“Well Bill it was a little more complicated than that”, articulated with a smile voice pronunciation, which is again, consistent with her own and other politicians’ verbal

responses following laughter). Thus, it is not *because* she “did not want that question” that she laughed, but because she sought to challenge or undermine the negative presupposition embodied within it (i.e., that she was “fooled by George Bush”).

Following Limbaugh’s comments on September 13, no other media commentary on Clinton’s laughter emerged until September 23, the day of her Sunday interview appearances. These five interviews constituted over an hour and a half of interview content; however, in subsequent coverage by the press, these interviews were never broadcast in their entirety, let alone any substantial portion(s). Instead, what the majority of the public heard—as is usually the case in subsequent reportage of broadcast interactions—were selected pieces of quotable segments or sound bites recycled again and again. And, the frequency and intensity of this coverage is constructed almost exclusively based on *two* selected segments of *two* of her interview appearances, both of which appear in very condensed forms of re-presentation.⁴⁸ These two segments are cited in the first published commentary on Clinton’s laughter following the completion of her interview appearances, her 20-minute interview with Chris Wallace on *Fox News Sunday* and a 16-minute interview with Bob Schieffer on *Face the Nation*. Perhaps not surprisingly, it comes from the Republican National Committee (RNC), who issued a press release less than one hour before Clinton concluded her final interview, with the following headline: “Hillary, no laughing matter: On Sunday morning shows, when not

⁴⁸ In all of the subsequent news reporting on Clinton’s laughter, none of the other three interviews Clinton participated in are mentioned (except to report, inaccurately, that she laughed on all five programs). Her 12-minute interview with ABC’s George Stephanopolous (*This Week*) contained one example of her laughter, as did her 10-minute interview with CNN’s Wolf Blitzer (*The Situation Room*); however, Clinton’s 30-minute interview with NBC’s Tim Russert (*Meet The Press*), the longest of all the interviews that morning, did not contain a single example of her laughter, despite claims to the contrary.

laughing off important questions, Hillary hides from the facts and her own record". The content of this briefing is reported in Table 5.1 (No. 1), which contains a sample of some of the post-Limbaugh but pre-news print press coverage.

Table 5.1: Sample coverage of Clinton's laughter (September 23-28, 2007)

No.	Sample of Report	Source	Type	Date
1	Fox's <i>Fox News Sunday</i> : In response to a question about her and her husband's partisan nature, Hillary laughs at interviewer: Click here to view. ((links to clip)) CBS' <i>Face The Nation</i> : When asked whether her plan is a step toward socialized medicine, Hillary giggles uncontrollably . ((links to clip))	<i>RNC</i>	Press Briefing	Sept. 23
2	In an article on her TV appearances, Ben Smith of <i>Politico.com</i> describes her as having responded to Chris Wallace with her " signature cackle ".	<i>Fox News Sunday</i>	Television (FOX)	Sept. 23
3	Limbaugh aired a compilation of audio clips of her laughter from the two interviews mentioned in the RNC's press release suggesting it was "the most newsworthy, noteworthy thing to come out of all of her appearances" [...] "If you want four years of that (referring to decontextualized clips of her laughter, devoid of any context), you need to stop and think seriously about what's ahead."	<i>The Rush Limbaugh Show</i>	Radio	Sept. 24
4	Hannity replayed just one audio clip of Clinton's laughter (devoid of any interactional context from <i>Fox News Sunday</i>) 13 times over the course of one segment, and calls it " frightening ".	<i>Hannity</i>	Radio	Sept. 24
5	Fox News "body language expert" Tonya Reiman characterized Clinton's laughter as " evil ". After O'Reilly played a portion of her appearance on <i>Fox News Sunday</i> , Fox News contributor and nationally syndicated columnist Dick Morris said, "I thought you were going to put on the laugh, the cackle ".	<i>The O'Reilly Factor</i>	Television (FOX)	Sept. 24
6	Headline: "Hillary's true colors unfold on FOX News". The authors suggested that Clinton's "loud, inappropriate and mirthless laugh – a scary sound [...] somewhere between a cackle and a screech" reveals a contrived political identity. They went on to say: "at the beginning and the end of the Wallace interview, Hillary sounded just like a laughing hyena . [...] It's part of the Hillary defense. Just as Hillary's answers are scripted, so is her " spontaneous " laughter. This is truly learned behavior — laughing — or pretending to laugh at will."	<i>Dick Morris & Eileen McGann</i>	Internet (Fox News.com)	Sept. 27

Limbaugh's initial commentary, and these other descriptions of Clinton's laughter construct—both individually and collectively—a decontextualized version of it. Additionally, each reference diverts attention away from the substantive content of the interviews in which she participated and the serious local and international issues discussed therein (e.g., the Iraq war and Clinton's foreign policy credentials, healthcare reform and her universal healthcare plan) and shifts focus to a negative, gendered representation of her laugh. In doing so, such commentaries also serve to reinforce gender stereotypes by focusing on matters of style over substance.

Turning to newspaper reporting, in the first article to reference Clinton's laughter, it is made the sole subject of the full-length report. The article appeared in *The New York Times* "On the Trail" section (meaning, on the campaign trail) and was published by political correspondent Patrick Healy on September 28, 2007, roughly two weeks following the first mention of Clinton's laughter by Limbaugh. This first newspaper article formed the basis for the vast majority of the other 81 subsequent print news reports that wrote about "the cackle" (i.e., all subsequent reports arguably fed off this text in some way). In the opening paragraph of this piece, Healy traces his first encounter with Clinton's laughter to an anecdotal instance in January 2005 in which she purportedly: "let loose a hearty belly laugh that lasted a few seconds" in response to being "grilled" about her position on abortion. Healy's recollection of this event—an event that occurred over three years earlier—is shown in excerpt (5.2).

Excerpt (5.2) (*The New York Times*, September 28 2007)

It was January 2005, and Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton had just

finished a solemn speech about abortion rights -- urging all sides to find "common ground" on the issue and referring to abortion as "a sad, even tragic choice to many, many women." Stepping offstage, she took questions from reporters, and found herself being grilled about whether she was moderating her own pro-choice position. And suddenly it happened: Mrs. Clinton let loose a hearty belly laugh that lasted a few seconds. Reporters glanced at one another as if we'd missed the joke. This was my first encounter with Senator Clinton, and with **The Cackle**.

As the first reference to Clinton's laughter as a "cackle" in the print news media, I wish to register several significant observations concerning the way this re-presentation is framed. Reporting speech (or, as is the case here, speech and laughter) is not a neutral activity; that is, when an individual reports on something someone else has said, s/he is also in some sense assessing or evaluating it (Buttny, 1998; see also Clift & Holt, 2007). By characterizing his "first encounter" with Clinton's laugh as a "cackle", Healy's description reinforces a simplified evaluative assessment of the quality of her laughter, in the same way that Limbaugh's initial formulation, and subsequent radio and television commentary did. Texts can bear intertextual traces of other texts in many ways and one way intertextual relations can be formed is through wording that presupposes a prior text (Fairclough, 1992). In this instance, Healy's use of the definite article "the" in characterizing Clinton's laughter as a "cackle" hypostatizes it as such; that is, it presupposes some previous talk/discussion in which it was established that such an object—with all the negative connotations it implies, the subject of section 5.5.5—actually exists (the truth of which is assumed). Further, through the stylistics of capitalization, Clinton's laughter is transformed into a proper noun, "The Cackle". This not only reifies her laughter as an object in its own right—one that unquestionably and

commonsensically exists—it also suggests that it is a distinctive and idiosyncratic attribute of Clinton. Moreover, through indirect reported speech frames and the absence of any direct quotes, Healy goes on to reconstruct an interactional scene of the laugh's occurrence from memory, decontextualizing it from its distinctive temporal and sequential unfolding. That is, Healy does not portray precisely where in the course of “being grilled” by journalists Clinton's laughter occurred and what type of actions were contained in the question (or question component) that it was responsive to. Of course, what Healy vernacularly (and very generally) describes here is the generic interactional practice I illustrated through conversation analytic procedures in Chapters 3 and 4.

“Reporters glanced at one another as though we'd missed the joke” orients to the notion that her laughter occurred in response to a “serious” question (or line of questioning). As I demonstrated in my analysis of laughter in this environment, such laughter disaffiliates from some proposition contained in the question or from the question as a whole. And, it is not a practice that is unique to Clinton, as Healy's description suggests, but one that countless other politicians as interviewees deploy in the face of hostile questioning. In recounting his “first encounter” with “The Cackle”, then, Healy's re-presentation decontextualizes Clinton's laughter from its originating context and recontextualizes it in a way that brings a negative evaluative assessment to the fore.

Having established this “new” frame for the subject of his article (i.e., Clinton's laughter as “The Cackle”), Healy then proceeds to offer possible interpretations of it, interpretations that paint an inaccurate and even misleading picture. For example, in outlining some of the strategies Clinton—as then leading candidate for the Democratic

presidential nomination—adopted for responding to attacks and criticisms without appearing defensive or “brittle”, Healy goes on to write: “less often, but more notably, she copes with the pressure by using what **friends have come to call** The Cackle”. One of the questions that arises from this formulation is whose friends are being talked about—are they Healy’s friends? Clinton’s? That is, who, according to Healy, has “come to” characterize Clinton’s laughter in this way? While Rush Limbaugh, notorious for his vitriolic and misogynist treatment of Clinton, was the first to link Clinton’s laughter to the “cackle” characterization, nowhere in Healy’s 915-word article—nor in *any* other subsequent reportage—is the source of this phrase attributed to him (nor to any other of the many conservative commentators mentioned above). Instead, the only specific person Healy refers to is political satirist Jon Stewart, who is cited as having “skewered” Mrs. Clinton on a segment that aired on *The Daily Show* on September 25.⁴⁹ The problem, however, is that by suggesting that Stewart’s segment constituted the first report of Clinton’s laughter by members of the “news” media, the multiple (and largely conservative) voices responsible for topicalizing Clinton’s laughter as a subject worthy of discussion, in the first instance, and bringing about this particular negative characterization of it, are obscured to the point of erasure. Why does this matter?

As I mentioned previously, Healy’s piece was the first newspaper report to discuss Clinton’s laughter and an overwhelming amount of subsequent news coverage drew upon it as an authoritative source. There is a certain cachet associated with *The*

⁴⁹ Although broadcast on *The Comedy Network*, and thus, not belonging to the category of hard “news”, Stewart’s program has gained acclaim as an incisive, satirical critique of personality-driven media shows, in particular those of American media networks such as CNN, Fox News Channel and MSNBC (all of which had aired commentary on Clinton’s laugh before *The Daily Show* segment).

New York Times, America's third largest daily newspaper, in part due to a sense of responsible—albeit, liberal-minded—journalism. Arguably, if Healy had attributed the “cackle” characterization to right-wing commentators such as Rush Limbaugh or members of the Fox News team (as opposed to only making reference to a more “liberal” political commentator such as Jon Stewart), for example, this re-presentation would not be afforded the same value or legitimacy. However, given the absence of such sources from his report, the account is taken to be a reputable one. Thus, the re-presentation of Clinton's laughter as a “cackle” is unproblematically adopted and, as a result, this severely impoverished, decontextualized re-presentation of Clinton's laughter as a “cackle” is circulated across the country and overseas in subsequent reportage, where it was subject to further misrepresentation and decontextualization. Excerpts (5.3) – (5.7) are illustrative (note that boldface, in these instances, is used to highlight portions taken from Healy's article).

Excerpt (5.3) (*The Independent*, UK, October 1, 2007)

They call it the Clinton cackle. It comes out of the blue, **lasts a few seconds**, and leaves those who witnessed it wondering if they have missed a joke. Hillary Clinton's **deployment of the full belly laugh** is the latest weapon used by **the leading Democratic presidential candidate** when she is being pummeled by reporters or rivals. **Friends say** the cackle is her way of **deflecting aggressive questioning**.

Excerpt (5.4) (*The Washington Post*, October 2, 2007)

Hahahaha—Here's a funny one. **Jon Stewart is now setting the agenda for presidential campaign coverage. No Joke!** The pack has been following him in recent days. That's either because he's sharper than your average MSMer when it comes to video analysis, or because he's got a small army of kids poring over the TiVo for ridicule-worthy sound bites.

Thus it was that the “Daily Show” strung together clips of Hillary Rodham Clinton laughing—loudly, uproariously and sometimes oddly—during the full Ginsburg of Sunday show interviews last week. (There was also a great bit depicting her as a robot.)

Excerpt (5.5) (*The Washington Post*, October 3, 2007)

Forget the cleavage. It’s now about the cackle. No joke: Hillary Clinton’s laugh is now being analyzed, scrutinized and, yes, mocked as if it were a sound barrier on her glide path to the Democratic presidential nomination: is it real? Is it fake? Is it the diabolically clever attempt to portray her as a human being? What a hoot. **Jon Stewart’s setting the pace for political journalism**, kicked things off last week by assembling a grab bag of **giggling and guffawing** when the senator appeared on all five Sunday talk shows, from a barn outside her Chappaqua N.Y. home.

Excerpt (5.6) (*The Age*, Australia, October 3, 2007)

Hillary Clinton has been accused of being too aloof or too serious, but now she is under attack about her laugh. **Satirist Jon Stewart has run clips of the presidential hopeful’s trademark belly laughs** on his Daily Show on cable television station Comedy Central. On Sunday *The New York Times* wrote about “the cackle”. By Monday night, her laugh had made the evening news and was being analyzed by so-called serious political shows.

Excerpt (5.7) (*The Oklahoman*, October 5, 2007)

Currently the focus is on her throat—or rather what comes forth from that region during town meetings and media interviews. It’s her laugh. **When Clinton is asked a question she doesn’t want to answer, she responds with** a vocal outburst that has been variously described as a guffaw, a caterwaul, a bray, or most commonly, **a cackle**. A video was posted on YouTube under the title, “The cackle that killed 1,000 ears.” **Comedy Central’s Daily Show with Jon Stewart presented a “laugh track” of examples of Clinton cackles**. Radio hosts play sound recordings on their shows. [...] Even *The New York Times* was critical. An article by Patrick Healy described how she laughed her way through recent interviews on all five major Sunday morning talk shows.

There are a series of issues that these representative examples illustrate about the dominant re-presentation of Clinton's laughter as a "cackle", as it travelled across contexts and around the world. First, each representation does not critically examine the characterization of her laughter as a "cackle", but instead uncritically adopts and reproduces that characterization in their report (e.g., "The Clinton cackle", "the cackle", "a cackle"). The only journalistic practice that provides some degree of distance from the term is the use of scare quotes (as in excerpt 5.6, notably, from an Australian newspaper) though this practice is rarely adopted in print news reportage (but see section 5.5.5 with regards to coverage later on in the campaign). Second, Clinton's laughter is also further decontextualized, as certain aspects of earlier reports are also entextualized in later ones. As but one example of this process, excerpt (5.3) draws heavily on Healy's article in reconstructing a picture of the taken-for-granted characterization of Clinton's laughter as a "cackle". What is presented is a description of her laughter that further decontextualizes Healy's anecdotal description of January 2005 (see excerpt 5.2), when Clinton laughed in responding to a specific question about abortion, and her laughter is then recontextualized as a political "weapon". This particular description aptly illustrates the kinds of re-presentations characteristic of subsequent news coverage, which focuses on Clinton's "cackle" as a political strategy and reinforces the idea that it is a unique character trait. Not once do such re-presentations propose that laughing in response to questions is something that other politicians—or human beings more generally—might do. Third, the incorrect attribution of the source of this commentary is reinforced as being either Jon Stewart's or Healy's coverage, and this misattribution is recycled again

and again. By highlighting the commentary of more liberal-minded folks without any mention of the initial remarks by right-wing commentators, precisely where readers might expect an overtly sexist, or at the very least, critical evaluation is erased from the re-presentation. The “preferred reading” of this re-presentation of Clinton’s laughter, then, is one of legitimate critique (e.g., if it is in *The New York Times*, it must be worth taking seriously; or, if Stewart is talking about it, it cannot be a right-wing and/or sexist attack), whereas it would arguably be discounted or dismissed out of hand if the “cackle” characterization were (properly) attributed to Conservative commentators (like Rush Limbaugh).

Ultimately, the evaluation of Clinton’s laughter by the media not only simplified but reshaped its meaning. In this re-shaping of the meaning of her laughter, on the one hand, many aspects of the originating contexts of its occurrence were ignored completely. On the other hand, what was highlighted as the most newsworthy was *that* she laughed, and more importantly, that *the way she laughed* calls into question the kind of person she is (i.e., a contrived and inauthentic political identity). What is then implied is that the kind of person who “cackles” is one who is unfit for the role of president. Further, in characterizing the way she laughed as a “cackle”, and doing so in an uncritical way, each repetition of this recontextualized version served to draw attention to and reinforce that belief. Precisely how that belief is tied to the fact that Clinton is a woman is the subject of the second analytic section of this chapter, to which I now turn.

5.5 The “cackle” representation as gendered

There are no “neutral” words and forms—words and forms that can belong to “no-one”; language has been completely taken over, shot through with intentions and accents. For any individual consciousness living in it, language is not an abstract system of normative forms but rather a concrete heteroglot conception of the world. All words have the “taste” of a profession, a genre, a tendency, a party, a particular work, a particular person, a generation, an age group, the day and hour. Each word tastes of the context and contexts in which it has lived its socially charged life; all words and forms are populated by intentions. Contextual overtones [...] are inevitable in the word. (Bakhtin, 1981: 293)

As a public, enduring and far-reaching form of communication, media discourse has the capacity to “populate” and “repopulate” particular words and forms with “contextual overtones”. In the previous section, I showed how the characterization (re)produced in news media recontextualizations of Clinton’s laughter is that of a “cackle”. In this section, I draw on the concept of *indexicality* (as elaborated by Elinor Ochs 1992, in particular) in order to make the case that this entextualized form of re-presentation has an ideological “taste” that is gendered.

5.5.1 Indexing gender

Indexicality, or “the semiotic operation of juxtaposition” (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004: 378), is a concept developed by Charles Peirce and further elaborated in the work of linguistic anthropologists such as Silverstein (e.g., 1976, 1985, 2003) and Ochs (e.g., 1992), sociolinguists such as Penelope Eckert (2008), and others. William Hanks (2001: 119) writes, “To say that any linguistic form is ‘indexical’ is to say that it stands for its object neither by resemblance to it, nor by sheer convention, but by contiguity with it. As [...]”

Pierce put it, an indexical sign stands in relation of 'dynamical coexistence' with its object. In other words, the indexical and what it stands for are in a sense co-present in the context of utterance." So, for example, smoke indexes fire in the sense that this association of meaning arises out of a relationship of co-occurrence.

Since the social construction of meaning is an ongoing process that occurs across multiple contexts, indexicality is a fundamental concept in understanding how linguistic forms come to be associated with social categories such as gender. Whereas early studies of language and gender assumed a one-to-one mapping of linguistic form onto the social category of gender, Ochs' (1992) model of constitutive indexical relations demonstrates how the relation between language and gender "is mediated by and constituted through a web of socially organized pragmatic meanings" (341). Ochs' (1992: 342) elaborates, "Knowledge of how language relates to gender [...] entails tacit understanding of 1) how particular linguistic forms can be used to perform particular pragmatic work, [...] and 2) norms, preferences, and expectations regarding the distribution of this work in relation to particular social identities of speakers, referents, and addressees". In this model, then, the relationship between linguistic forms and gendered meanings is "mediated by and constituted through" social stances, acts, and practices that are gendered in particular communities. Ochs (1992: 340) argues that this relationship between linguistic form and gendered meanings "is almost always indirect, as few linguistic features directly and exclusively index gender". In English, direct/exclusive indexes of gender include, for example, personal pronouns denoting the sex of a person (e.g., *she*, *her*), some suffixes (e.g., *waitress* vs. *waiter*) and social titles (e.g., *Ms.* vs. *Mr.*). The indexicality of gender,

according to Ochs (1992), then, involves (at least) two semiotic levels: at the level of *direct indexicality*, linguistic forms “most immediately” index particular social roles, activities, stances or acts, whereas at the level of *indirect indexicality*, these same linguistic forms become associated with particular social types and personas believed to embody those roles, engage in those activities or take/perform such stances and acts—types and personas that are culturally coded as gendered (Bucholtz, 2009: 148).⁵⁰ One oft-cited example from the language and gender literature concerns some sentence-final particles in Japanese, which allow speakers to signal social attitudes or stances toward utterances (this example is described in Ochs, but see also Inoue, 2002). Some particles index assertiveness and intensity, while others index uncertainty and hesitancy. In Japanese culture, there is a symbolic association between men and assertiveness and women and uncertainty. When these different particles are used, they indirectly index the speaker’s gender. For example, use of the particle *-wa*, which directly indexes a stance of uncertainty and hesitancy, in turn indirectly indexes femininity; that is, it becomes perceived as a feature of “women’s language”.

It is at the level of indirect indexicality, as Bucholtz (2009: 148) points out, where *ideology* comes to play a crucial role “since it is at this level that [the particular social roles, activities, stances or acts] acquire more enduring semiotic associations.” The quotation by Bakhtin at the beginning of section 5.5 emphasizes the fact that language

⁵⁰ Although Ochs introduced the terminology “indirect indexing” to describe the way that certain linguistic forms/ways of talking become imbued with gendered meanings, Sally McConnell-Ginet (Forthcoming) points out that the idea, without the terminology, was in fact being put forward both in Robin Lakoff’s (e.g., 1975) as well as her own (e.g., McConnell-Ginet, 1983 [1978]) early work on language and its relationship to gender. That said, however, McConnell-Ginet acknowledges that neither Lakoff’s nor her own account of this process was particularly well developed at that time.

use is never neutral; that is, “it always conveys some ideological perspective on the world” (Hodge 2011: 22). Ideology, defined in very simple terms, involves representations of “reality” from the perspective of a particular interest group (Fairclough, 1995) or group of interests. Thus, ideological underpinnings of language manifest themselves in everyday uses of language in which events are described and social realities represented. In the case of media discourse, ideologies circulate through the re-presentations of the events that are (not) selected, (not) described and (not) emphasized. Specifically, journalists, pundits and media commentators constrain the ways in which actors and acts are represented through the use of particular lexical choices (i.e., linguistic forms), which allow them to convey a range of meanings beyond the strictly referential, denotational ones. The constitutive relations between a particular form and its social meaning(s) are, in some sense, “the grey area between denotational meanings, the relatively neutral representational depiction of an entity, and its more evaluative [social] meanings (Cotterill, 2001).

In the remainder of this section, I shed light on the constitutive relations between the linguistic form, “cackle”, and its social meanings; that is, I argue that the “cackle” representation, which became the caricature of Clinton’s laughter, indirectly indexes the laugh of a negative, gendered persona (i.e., a witch). This particular lexical choice constrains the way in which Clinton’s laughter is represented. It also allows for the possibility of a series of overwhelmingly negative meanings to get evoked in and through its (re-)production in the news media, meanings beyond the strictly referential, denotational ones offered in dictionaries. Ultimately, its indirect indexical association

with negative gendered meanings is formed through interpretations of co-occurrence (Irvine, 2005). Thus, rather than rely on my own intuitions to ground my claims about these indexical associations, I draw on collocational and connotational insights from corpus linguistics. While dictionary definitions of “cackle” do not on the surface indicate any problematic or pejorative meanings with respect to gender (or, women specifically), I will show how such meanings arise out of a series of indexical relations evidenced both in frequent patterns of co-occurrence and actual contexts of use. But, first, to the dictionaries.

5.5.2 “Cackle”: Dictionary definitions

One obvious place to begin investigating the meaning of “cackle” is to consult what is provided in standard dictionaries. What forms of “cackle” are relevant in this respect? In terms of the forms in which Clinton’s laughter is described as a “cackle” in news media reports, most commonly, it is referred to or described as a *noun*. Below are representative examples in their local contexts of reporting.

That Clinton **Cackle**.
(*The Boston Globe*, September 30, 2007)

Hillary Clinton is trying to get the last laugh over her now-infamous **cackle**.
(*Daily News*, October 4, 2007)

The cold **cackle** of opportunism.
(*The Washington Times*, October 5, 2007)

Less often, “cackle” appears in a *verb* form, as in:

Clinton **cackles**; lies about Iraq vote.
 (*The Rush Limbaugh Show*, September 13, 2007)

Democratic frontrunner can **cackle** all the way to the nomination.
 (*The Seattle Post*, October 2, 2007)

Cackling⁵¹ all the way.
 (*The Virginian-Pilot*, October 3, 2007)

And, in other (rare) cases, an *adjective*:

If [her laughter] was working better, people would be talking about charisma in reference to Hillary instead of “bizarre **cackling** sound”.
 (*The Pittsburgh Post*, October 3, 2007)

She has been attacked for her **cackling** laugh.
 (*Herald Sun*, December 27, 2007)

The candidate’s “**cackle**”-like laugh.
 (*The Toronto Star*, December 30, 2007)

Turning to dictionary definitions for the entry, “cackle” as a noun, the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) puts forth the following: “a short spasmodic laugh, a chuckle”. The American Heritage Dictionary offers three entries: 1) “The act or sound of cackling”; 2) “Shrill laughter”; and, 3) “Foolish chatter”, while the Merriam-Webster-Collegiate only gives one: “An explosive sound that is a sign of amusement”. The denotative meanings proposed in these dictionary entries suggest that, in its nominal forms, “cackle” describes the sound quality of a laugh or, at the very least, some kind of expressive act. Similarly, with respect to entries of “cackle” as an intransitive verb, the OED offers the following definitions: 1) “To make a noise as a hen, especially after laying an egg”; and, 2) (said of

⁵¹ In this case, the verb form is used as a noun, i.e., a gerund.

persons) “To chuckle, to laugh, to giggle”. The American Heritage provides two definitions: 1) “To make the shrill cry characteristic of the hen after laying an egg”; and, 2) “To laugh or talk in a shrill manner”. And, Miriam-Webster-Collegiate’s two entries combine elements of both the OED and American Heritage definitions: 1) “to make the sharp broken noise or cry characteristic of a hen especially after laying an egg”; 2) “to laugh especially in a harsh or sharp manner”; and, 3) “to chatter”. Again, the denotational values retain a focus on characterizing the production of an expressive act (i.e., a particular kind of sound or “noise” quality), characteristic of hens in particular. This expressive act characteristic of hens can be thought of as what “cackle” directly indexes.

What is significant about these standard dictionary definitions for my purposes is that they indicate subtle associations between “cackle” and the specific category [+female]. For example, those definitions of “cackle” as a sound characteristic of a *hen*, especially upon laying an egg, are linked to a kind of animal (i.e., a bird) belonging to the category [+female], and the practice of laying an egg is also uniquely tied to femaleness.⁵² More significantly, many of the dictionary entries demonstrate a clear association with actual women in the usages they cite. Indeed, the only explicitly gendered subjects of any “cackle” entry in any of the dictionaries I looked at (OED, American Heritage, Miriam-Webster’s Collegiate) are women. For example, the OED reports the earliest example of “cackle” in terms of the meaning “to laugh” occurring in

⁵² Beyond this direct association between “cackle” and the category [+female], gender—specifically, *femaleness*—also appears to be indexed by the use of other words in the dictionary definitions (e.g., “shrill”, “giggle”), but this is where denotation bleeds into connotation.

1530: “Howe **these women** cackyll nowe they have dyned”. Other entries include, from 1861: “The equerries and **women in waiting**... cackled over their tea”; from 1880: “**The ladies**... now rose... in joyously cackled satisfaction”; and from the Merriam-Webster-Collegiate: “I could hear **my aunts** cackling in the next room”. What these usages reveal, then, is that the word “cackle” as a way of characterizing laughter has had an historical association with women from its earliest usages right up until the present day. Notably, however, none of the denotative meanings nor the examples used to illustrate usage suggest “cackle” is/was a negatively-valenced term—one associated with witches, a particularly negative, gendered persona. Despite the apparent absence of this association (both historically and in present-day), I will make the case that it is something overtly recognizable and recognized both in contemporary usage (as evidenced vis-à-vis corpus linguistics) and in media re-presentations of Clinton’s laughter, including explicit metapragmatic commentary about those re-presentations.

5.5.3 “Cackle”: Evidence from corpus linguistics

Corpus linguistics is particularly valuable to an investigation of the role lexical choice plays in constructing ideological representations of reality (Cotterill, 2001). To provide evidence for the negative valence of “cackle” that the term indirectly indexes and the ideological frames it invokes, I draw on collocational and connotational insights from the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA). The COCA is the largest freely available corpus of American English, containing more than 450 million words, including 20 million words each year between 1990-2012 (Davies, 2008). For each year, the

corpus is equally divided between the five genres of spoken discourse, fiction, popular magazines, newspapers, and academic journals. The interface allows the search of exact words, phrases, lemmas, parts of speech or any combination of these. *Collocation*, or, “the company a word keeps” (Firth 1935; cited in Stubbs, 1996: 173), can provide insight into the semantic shape/profile of a word or phrase and possible indexical relationships precisely because it reveals patterns of co-occurrence. Using corpus data, a word or phrase (the *node* word) can be investigated to examine the items that frequently co-occur within a certain span of this node; COCA permits the search of collocates within a 10-word window (i.e., 10 words to the left and right of the node word) (Stubbs, 1996).⁵³ For example, the collocates of the noun, “bank”, are useful in illustrating its different contexts of use and diverse meanings, as in “river”, “blood” and “piggy” (Baker, 2006). An additional concept related to collocation that is relevant for my discussion of “cackle” is *semantic prosody* (see, for example, Sinclair, 1991), which has to do with the characteristic collocations of words.⁵⁴ Such collocations reveal words’ connotations, that is, their perceived positive or negative associations and, by extension, the indirect meanings that are indexed by or embodied within them (Stubbs, 1996; but see also, Cotterill, 2001). The semantic prosodies of words work in two ways; that is, “words have

⁵³ The “significance” or strength of collocations is measured in terms of collocational statistics, and specifically, the Mutual Information (MI) score (which COCA automatically calculates in its search results). As Cotterill (2004: 535) explains, an MI score “expresses the extent to which observed frequency of co-occurrence differs from expected, meaning ‘expected under the null hypothesis’”. An MI score of 3 or higher is taken as evidence that two items are collocates, while higher MI scores indicate that two terms are more likely to constitute characteristic collocations than those with lower MI scores (Salama, 2011).

⁵⁴ More recently, some have expressed a preference for the term *discourse prosody* to differentiate between meanings that express speaker attitudes, and those that are purely lexical and independent of speakers (Jaworska & Krishnamurthy, 2012); however, this distinction is neither altogether clear nor is there widespread agreement about what it suggests (in terms of the nature of meaning). For these reasons, I will retain use of the term, *semantic prosody*.

particular prosodies due to the fact that writers or speakers intend to express themselves in a particular way; writers [or speakers] choose certain words in order to take advantage of a [particular] prosody, at the same time reinforcing that prosody” (Baker, 2008: 77). One of the strengths of corpus linguistics is that the semantic prosodies of a word are explicated by reference to corpus data (i.e., examples of real life language use) rather than by reference to one’s intuitions or impressions (Stubbs, 2001). As Janet Cotterill (2001: 293) explains, “A corpus-based analysis of semantic prosody is clearly of value in gaining an understanding of precisely what those connotations might be in the contextualized collocations of a particular word”. Thus, I draw on the COCA to identify the patterns of collocation and semantic prosody surrounding “cackle” as a way of grounding my claims about the implicit meanings indirectly indexed by its use.

5.5.3.1 A semantic profile of “cackle”

An analysis of the semantic shape of “cackle” in its various grammatical forms provides some insight into its principal active associations that are of particular relevance to the larger argument being put forward in this chapter. These associations, I suggest, are narrow and restricted, predominantly tied in such a way as to indirectly index the laugh of an undesirable negative persona. One initial piece of evidence that “cackle” is limited to a restricted range of contexts is its very low overall frequency of occurrence in the corpus. Out of a total of 450 million words, there are only 704 instances of “cackle” (and its lemmas), which means that “cackle” has an overall frequency of 1.52 per million words. Notably, unlike the “cackle” media coverage of Clinton’s laughter, which would

suggest that “cackle” as a noun occurs much more frequently than as a verb form, the corpus contains over twice as many instances of “cackle” as a verb ($n = 483$) as opposed to as a noun ($n = 221$). This is particularly interesting because the media’s frequent use of the nominal form depicts “the cackle” as an attribute of Clinton—which suggests that it is a unique or inherent property—as opposed to describing something she *does* (which, of course, is an act or action that anyone can do; cf. fn 59 on Giuliani, President Clinton and the verb “cackle”). Comparing this with the most common and widespread hypernym of what “cackle” predominantly describes, that is, a laugh, illustrates further the relative infrequency of “cackle”. That is, there are a total of 64,787 instances of “laugh” (and its lemmas) in the same corpus, with an overall frequency of 139.62 per million words. So, the word “laugh” occurs almost 100 times more frequently than the word “cackle” in this corpus.

Beyond the fact that the word “cackle” occurs rather infrequently, looking closer into its collocational profile it becomes clear that the term, and the connotations associated with it, have a *negative semantic prosody*. A particular word can be said to carry a negative semantic prosody if its typical collocates are overwhelmingly negative or unpleasant (Stubbs, 1996). From an analysis of adjective collocates, Table 5.2 reports the top 15 adjectives that collocate with the noun “cackle”, their number of occurrences and MI score (recall that an MI score of more than 3 indicates that the two items are collocates, the higher the MI score the greater the strength of association).

Table 5.2: Top 15 adjective collocates for *cackle*

Collocate (ADJ)	Frequency	MI score
fly-down	5	17.95
maniacal	3	12.87
devilish	2	11.67
demonic	3	11.47
hoarse	2	10.43
high-pitched	2	10.26
shrill	2	10.06
triumphant	2	9.66
wicked	3	9.47
hysterical	2	9.35
loud	2	6.35
evil	2	6.33
wild	2	5.39
high	3	3.23
little	2	2.00

What this evidence from the corpus reveals is that “cackle” collocates strongly with evaluative adjectives with negative meanings. Again, this negative semantic prosody and relatively restricted use becomes even clearer when compared with the top 15 adjective collocates for the noun “laugh”, reported in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3: Top 15 adjective collocates for *laugh*

Collocate (ADJ)	Frequency	MI score
mirthless	23	10.97
throaty	44	9.58
derisive	20	8.91
rueful	24	8.86
humorless	17	8.61
hearty	89	8.37
maniacal	11	8.22
tinkling	12	7.87
sardonic	12	7.49
raucous	22	7.19

good-natured	14	7.16
husky	17	7.06
wry	17	6.68
high-pitched	12	6.32
infectious	30	6.02

The 15 adjectives with the highest rated MI scores, and thus, the strongest collocates of “laugh” illustrate a much broader range of meaning potential than that of “cackle”, including adjectives that predominantly describe the quality of one’s laugh (e.g., throaty, husky), and adjectives that describe “laugh” in both positive (e.g., good-natured, hearty, infectious) and negative ways (e.g., maniacal). This greater range of collocates for “laugh”, of course, may be partly due to the fact that it occurs more frequently in the corpus. Clearly, however, there are a greater number of adjectives with negative meanings that collocate strongly with “cackle”. The following selection of concordance lines for both “laugh” and “cackle” further highlights the negative semantic prosody of “cackle” compared with the broader, and arguably, more neutral semantic prosody of “laugh” in actual contexts of use.⁵⁵

Table 5.4: Concordance of adjective collocates and *laugh*

The marquess gave a mirthless	laugh	and shot a quick glance
she's tall and slender with a throaty	laugh	and the kind of honestly
She choked a derisive	laugh.	“Where do you get these
He let out a humorless	laugh.	“You don't want to know.”
And with a deep hearty	laugh	at his own joke,
her harsh evaluation with a tinkling	laugh,	amused by the boldness

⁵⁵ A concordance lists the occurrences of a word in its immediate context, where the node word appears at the centre of each line, and the rest of each line contains the immediate context (i.e., other words) to the left and right of the node word (Salama, 2011).

Table 5.5: Concordance of adjective collocates and *cackle*

she said, breaking into a maniacal	cackle.	“Ain't he a pistol.
And she laughed this devilish	cackle	that she's now become
Anybody home? A demonic	cackle	cuts through the darkness.
turkeys will sound off to the shrill	cackle	of a strutting rooster.
door bolt through, and with a wicked	cackle	she's off the stoop
stared coldly at her, let out an evil	cackle	and stood.

The last two examples of negative adjective collocates of “cackle” above, “wicked” and “evil”, are also among the top 3 strongest adjective collocates for what I am suggesting is the undesirable negative persona indexed by “cackle”, namely, “witch” (with MI scores 9.13 and 5.01, respectively; also in the top 3 strongest adjective collocates for “witch” is “teenage”). Indeed, when we look at what kinds of persons or things “cackle”, additional evidence from the corpus ranks both “hens” and “witches” as the top two noun collocates of “cackle” (n = 19 and n = 14, and with corresponding MI scores of 8.88 and 7.08, respectively). Recall that the former category, “hens”, is part of the denotative meaning provided by dictionaries in their definitions, while the latter category, “witches” is not. This is consistent with the idea that “cackle” directly indexes the act characteristic of hens, an act that has come to be associated (via indirect indexicality) with the category of witches. The concordance list below also indicates how this association with witches entails the category [+female] (indicated in italics).

Table 5.6: Concordance of *cackle* and *witch*

short piece and carries <i>her</i> , possibility. <i>Penelope</i> spun to go, witch if <i>she</i> was	cackling like a witch , back into cackling like a witch as <i>she</i> cackling and stirring afterbirth and rabbit cackled and rattled its teeth. <i>She</i> cackling above. They held out plastic
witch above the door, and it and <i>Lily</i> opened it, the witch	

and dark energy are?" *Julie's*
 end of the chain. "Surprise!"
 control's overrated # like when we
 the fire # and we just
witch on a cornstalk
 those African genes." *Annie*
 would certainly fall out!" *She*
 all out?" The **witch** doctor

cackle would have done the **witch**
cackled the **witch**, pulling off *her*
cackled, they called us **witches** # now
cackle, we're a fuckin **witches'** choir
cackling in the wind, "You can't
cackled like a **witch**, and I
cackled, looking more like a **witch**
cackled. "He's good, Hugo.

I do not wish to suggest that when "cackle" appears as a verb it *never* takes a man as its subject—indeed, it can, and sometimes does—but there is no doubt a much stronger and significant association with "witches", who belong to the category [+female]. That is, there does not appear to be any corresponding association that indirectly indexes the category [+male].

In examining the semantic profile of the word "cackle" in the COCA, I have tried to demonstrate how it carries a negative semantic prosody, through its strong collocation with a set of negative evaluative terms and subjects (i.e., witches). Given that indirect indexicality is formed through interpretations of co-occurrence, this collocational pattern provides strong evidence that "cackle" indirectly indexes a very negative persona. And, this indirect association connotes gender through a process of inference (since a very reasonable inference to draw is that witches are women).

5.5.4 Clinton's "cackle" as gendered re-presentation

In light of what I have shown about the term "cackle" thus far, I now return to a discussion of the news media's recontextualization of Clinton's laughter and its concomitant transformation into "The Clinton Cackle". In this section, I show how this

particular re-presentation of her laughter constitutes a key phrase or sound bite that indirectly indexes and discursively reconstructs a prevailing and overwhelmingly negative persona. That is, in recontextualizing Clinton's laughter as a "cackle", the news media simultaneously evoke the term's negative semantic prosody and its indirect association with witches, thereby indexing an undesirable negative persona that is gendered. The recontextualization of Clinton's laughter as a "cackle" serves to (re) produce and reinforce an ideological re-presentation, wherein the wide range of meanings laughter can convey is restricted to a narrow, negative (and stereotypical) perspective of Clinton. In this way, the prospects of Clinton as a viable political candidate for the highest level of political office in the United States are not only called into question but actively, albeit indirectly, challenged on the basis of gender.

While I am arguing that the relationship between "cackle" and witches is an indirect one, some media commentary makes this relationship explicit by directly describing Clinton's laughter as "witch-like". What I am suggesting, then, following Bucholtz (2009) and Ochs (1992), is that the indirect indexical association between "cackle" and this negative, gendered persona has become so strong in present-day usage that it may be perceived as direct. The very first instance that supports this line of argument occurred on Sean Hannity's radio show on September 24 (see Table 5.1, No.4). One of the phone-in callers requests that Hannity post a sound bite of Clinton's laughter that he has been repeatedly playing on his show (from her interview with Chris Wallace on *Fox News Sunday*) so that the caller's daughter, who is going to be a witch for Halloween, can use it to "work on her **shrill witch laugh**." As soon as the caller has

stated this reason for the request, Hannity plays the sound bite. Thus, although the caller is responsible for raising the topic of witches, the indirect association between Clinton's laughter and that of witches is made when Hannity re-plays the clip of her laugh at the precise moment when the caller introduces the "witch" characterization. In this way, Clinton's laughter as characteristic of a witch is directly indexed by the caller's request and indirectly so by Hannity's re-playing the audio clip at that precise moment.

There are other moments in the media when this association between "cackle" and the unfavourable (gendered) persona of being witch-like is expressed. For example, two television programs that broadcast segments regarding Clinton's laughter in the first two weeks of coverage explicitly discussed this association to some extent. CNN aired a video clip on Clinton's laughter that contained a brief mention of this association between "cackle" and a negative persona:

Excerpt (5.8) (*The Situation Room*, October 1, 2007)

Voice over (Jeanne Moos): Hillary is not the only front-runner to be accused of calculated mannerisms. [(Video clip is shown of Republican presidential candidate Rudolph Giuliani)]. But at least no one described Rudy as cackling. **Cackling is what witches do.** "I like Hillary's laugh," read one Internet post. "What was she laughing about?" read another. And for once, Web shorthand LOL, laughing out loud, seemed perfect. At least they didn't say COL, cackling out loud.

In this segment, CNN adopts a critical perspective toward the characterization of Clinton's laugh as a "cackle". Specifically, "at least no one described Rudy as cackling" portrays this as an undesirable description, one matter-of-factly presented as being ascribed to witches. In a more substantial piece of coverage by Glenn Beck (which, at

the time, broadcast on FOX), the association between Clinton's laughter as a "cackle" and witches is brought to the fore:

Excerpt (5.9) (*Glenn Beck*, October 7, 2007)

America's starting to pay attention to the real issues that America faces, namely Clinton's laugh. I've never noticed it but critics have. They've called it, and I'm quoting "less of a laugh and more of a cackle". **Some have been a little more cruel as to even compare her laugh to the wicked witch of the West**, which is just a little unfair ((laughingly)). Here is the actual wicked witch of the Wizard of Oz. [[[Video clip of the Wicked Witch of the West is played]]]. **Okay, and here's the wick- uh the junior Senator from New York.** [[[Plays video clip of same example of Clinton's laughter that Hannity played an audio clip of]]].

Using satire, Beck reproduces a characterization of Clinton's laugh as a "cackle"—notably, as in Healy's NYT article, sources for this attribution are vague and unspecified—in a way that draws attention to this indirect association with witches but purports not to be doing precisely what he is doing. That is, he suggests that likening Clinton's laugh to the wicked witch of the West is "a little unfair" but then he proceeds to make this association anyway (note the strategic use of self-initiated repair in introducing the clip of Clinton: "here's the wick- uh the junior Senator from New York").⁵⁶ And, in re-playing a decontextualized clip of a single instance of Clinton laughing, immediately following a clip of the wicked witch of the West from the Wizard of Oz doing so, the association is made between Clinton and this unflattering negative persona.

These kinds of overt characterizations of Clinton laughing in the way witches do also appear in various print news media sources. For example, *Boston Globe* columnist,

⁵⁶ On the interactional import of the practice of self-initiated, same turn repair in the context of the courtroom, see Romaniuk & Ehrlich (2013).

Joan Vennochi writes: “ Any woman who has ever been the only female in the room knows the guys are always waiting for that perfect moment—the one that makes the woman look silly, stupid, weepy or, best of all, **witchy**. [...] The men running against Clinton are still waiting for such an opportunity. So far, all they have to work with is her laugh” (September 30, 2007). Here, Vennochi does not label Clinton’s laughter as a “cackle” but rather talks about being perceived as “witchy”, and then noting “her laugh”. Some newspaper columnists noted Jon Stewart’s *Daily Show* segment (treated as the source of topicalizing Clinton’s laughter in Healy’s article, outlined in section 5.4), in which Stewart played a montage of Clinton’s laughs and then commented, “She’ll be our first president that you can’t spill water on”. With this comment, Stewart, too, evokes an image of the wicked witch of the West from the Wizard of Oz. An even more critical stance toward Clinton’s “cackle” is adopted in the following Opinion piece from the *Contra Costa Times*, wherein the association between her laughter and witches is not only made explicit but Clinton is portrayed with intense derision: “Unlike Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and Queen Elizabeth II, who have aged gracefully, there is nothing graceful about Clinton. **Her cackle makes the wicked witch of the West sound sweet**, and her pear-shaped figure in pantsuits is unfeminine and a real turn off to men” (December 27, 2007). In addition to being compared to other female politicians (or, political-like figureheads) on the basis of her femininity—which has absolutely no relevance to her credentials as a candidate for President of the United States—Clinton’s “cackle” is again compared to that of the wicked witch of the West. These ideologically saturated examples from various media sources (and others like them), used in either

ostensibly jocular or pejorative ways, demonstrate public recognition of this association of “cackle” with the negative persona of a witch. That these connotations are made explicit demonstrate the power of these implied meanings and their ability to be activated in (re)producing an undesirable and overtly negative re-presentation of her.

One of the most revealing sources of metapragmatic commentary on Clinton’s laughter appeared amidst the early days of print news coverage in an article entitled, “That Clinton Cackle” published on September 30 in *The Boston Globe* and written by columnist, Joan Vennoch. The lead into the article reads: “Hens cackle. So do witches. And so does the frontrunner in the Democratic presidential contest”. In terms of the structure of news stories, while leads characteristically cover the central event of the story by introducing pertinent information on actors and the setting of the event in question (Bell, 1998), they may also do so with a particular “evaluative accent” (Voloshinov, 1973). In this particular lead, the “event” in question is offered with an evaluative orientation that speaks to the central issue of the recontextualizations of Clinton’s laughter as a “cackle”. “Hens cackle” begins with the denotative meaning of the term. “So do witches” extrapolates the indirect association that the term evokes, while “And so does the frontrunner in the Democratic presidential contest” goes one step further by tying this association to Clinton, but in a way that also highlights her frontrunner status in the Democratic campaign at the time. Thus, the mapping of this negative, gendered, social meaning onto linguistic form is brought to the fore in one fell swoop. As this “cackle” characterization of Clinton’s laughter travelled across discursive contexts and formed links in an intertextual series, I am also suggesting that over time the link between

“cackle” and Clinton (and not just “witches”) became so strong that even that association has come to be ideologically perceived as direct (see Bucholtz, 2009; Ochs, 1992). Further evidence of what I mean by this is evident when we look beyond the linguistic plane (i.e., use of the word “cackle”). For example, Google technology provides a powerful avenue for exploring dimensions of indexicality (Hill, 2005), particularly given how it can illustrate other non-linguistic semiotic elements of representations that can co-occur with linguistic ones. Following Jane Hill, I used Google’s search engine to see what other kinds of nonlinguistic (i.e., visual) semiotic elements of representations co-occur with the term “cackle”. Figure 5.2 shows the first row of results of a *Google* search of images associated with the term.



Figure 5.2: First eight visual representations of “cackle” (Source: *Google* search engine)⁵⁷

These visual elements reveal precisely the indexical relations I have been describing. Two out of eight images show a flock of hens with the title, “The cackle club”, which is consistent with the denotative meaning of the term. Another three images are of witches (two depict the head of a fairytale-like witch and one is an actual woman enacting a witch-like persona), while the remaining three images are of Hillary Rodham Clinton, open-mouthed (similar to the image of the woman “doing” witch), and woven into this overall semiotic “picture” of “cackle”. What I am suggesting, then, is that re-

⁵⁷ Retrieved from <https://www.google.ca>: November 18, 2012.

presentations of Clinton's laughter as a "cackle" have been powerfully consequential, so much so that this indirect indexical association of an undesirable, negative and gendered persona has become so strongly associated with Clinton—no less than six years later, and still counting—that even *she* has become, in a sense, part of the meaning indexed by the term's use—an association exemplified in these enduring semiotic representations.

The notion that this ideological representation of Clinton is gendered—a result of the media's recontextualizations of her laughter as a "cackle"—is not only something that I am suggesting by virtue of the foregoing analysis; rather, it is also something overtly recognized—albeit infrequently, and not to a particularly significant extent—in some of the news reports themselves. While I would maintain that the *dominant* re-presentation of Clinton's laughter by the news media was no doubt this "cackle" characterization, there is some evidence of a metapragmatic awareness of this representation as a very negative, gendered one. Particularly, this awareness is manifest in media commentary that problematizes the "cackle" representation as *sexist*, a perspective rarely mentioned in early reports of her laughter (in the months leading up to the primaries), but that became more commonly noted later on in the primary season and nominating process.⁵⁸ Within the first four months of coverage (September-December 2007), less than one quarter of the total number of newspaper articles devoted to the topic of Clinton's laughter raise the possibility that the "cackle" characterization may be problematic on the basis of gender

⁵⁸ It was not until May 20, 2008 that Obama officially clinched the majority of pledged delegates, and the Democratic primaries lasted until June 3, with Clinton conceding the nomination (June 5) and endorsing Obama (June 7); however, the media began writing the obituaries on Clinton's campaign around the end of March/beginning of April—a time when pundits argued she had little chance of overcoming Obama's lead in pledged delegates. Following the primary contests in Pennsylvania, Indiana, and North Carolina on April 22 (when Obama led in pledged delegates), the majority of mainstream media were already declaring the primary effectively over.

(8/37, or 22%), while nearly two thirds of the total number of articles on the topic of the demise of Clinton's campaign (April-September) cite the "cackle" re-presentation of her laughter as one of many instances of sexism in her campaign (16/27, or 60%). Excerpts (5.11) – (5.13) are illustrative of these kinds of metapragmatic commentaries.

Excerpt (5.11) (*The Times*, UK, October 6, 2007)

The biggest political Facebook group in the US, boasting 450,000 members, is called Stop Hillary Clinton. Elsewhere on the internet, it is possible to buy thousands of items of anti-Clinton merchandise including beer mugs describing her as "the devil" and T-shirts referring to her husband's sexual trysts. **There is also a range of YouTube videos splicing together clips of the slightly mirthless laugh that she sometimes uses to deflect awkward questions. This has been branded the "Clinton Cackle" and often shows her face morphing into that of the Wicked Witch of the East from The Wizard of Oz. Ellen Malcolm, president of Emily's List—a Democratic women's network—and co-chairman [sic] of Mrs. Clinton's campaign believes many of such attacks are motivated by sexism.** She told *The Times* yesterday: "There is always going to be a group of people who have a strong visceral reaction to politicians on the other side. Some of those with these negative feelings get a lot more angry when they see a woman candidate for president."

Excerpt (5.12) (*Desert Morning News*, May 23, 2008)

The campaign was rife with reminders of how women charging forward are pushed backward. Clinton supporters aren't the only women who have rediscovered a word rarely spoken outside of women's studies class: misogyny. **How else to explain the focus on Clinton's "cackle" and cleavage, the T-shirt that read "If Only Hillary Had Married OJ Instead"?** Or the casual use of the b-word? Or the "hilarious collectible" given to the husband of a prominent politician on his birthday: a Hillary Clinton nutcracker?

Excerpt (5.13) (*The Monitor*, July 18, 2008)

And when one of our own, Hillary Rodham Clinton, ran for president, she faced all sorts of sexism. A Washington Post woman columnist publicly admonished her for showing “cleavage.” Carl Bernstein derided her “thick ankles.” FOX News’ Marc Rudov said: “When Hillary Clinton speaks, men hear, ‘take out the garbage.’” MSNBC’s Tucker Carlson said: “When she comes on television, I involuntarily cross my legs.” *New York Times* news coverage referred to Clinton’s “cackle,” as did other media. **“Like her or not,” as CBS anchor Katie Couric put it, “one of the great lessons of the campaign is the continued and accepted sexism in American life, particularly in the media.”** The media flayed the early feminists unmercifully. Some things haven’t changed that much in 160 years.

These critical and reflective commentaries on the media’s “cackle” coverage directly orient to the relevance and significance of gender, and thus, they reinterpret and recontextualize this ideological re-presentation of Clinton’s laughter in a substantially different contextualizing framework. Specifically, in such instances, “*The Clinton Cackle*” is not taken-for-granted or presupposed to exist; rather, *the fact that her laugh was represented as a “cackle”* becomes the very object of critique (note, for example, the use of scare quotes in the excerpts, which allow the journalists/commentators to create some distance from the “cackle” characterization). Notably, nearly all of these gender “noticings” are attributed either to Clinton herself or (individual members of) her campaign, her supporters, or particular women’s groups, thereby reinforcing these perspectives as isolated and marginal rather than widely held, and therefore, legitimate. Although treated as reflecting a marginal perspective, these metapragmatic commentaries are a striking contrast to the bulk of “cackle” coverage—coverage that, in the spirit of Healy’s NYT piece, reported innumerable references to unidentified groups of people (e.g., “friends”, “most people”, “some people”, “critics”, “opponents”, etc.) who

characterized Clinton's "cackle" in a range of negative ways (e.g., "mirthless," "wicked", "evil"), thereby reinforcing a particularly damaging perspective of her.

One significant question that arises from this is the extent to which the laughter of other (male) politicians is represented by news media, if at all? If it is reported, what kinds of re-presentations occur, and to what extent do they undergo the intertextual processes of decontextualization and recontextualization as they enter the news cycle? And, how do they circulate once they enter the news cycle? For example, are they subjected to the same kinds of gendered ideological recontextualizations that Clinton experienced with regards to her laughter? These questions will be considered in the final analytic section of this chapter, to which I now turn.

5.6 What's in a laugh? Comparing re-presentations

In the last section, I made the case that the media's recontextualization of Clinton's laughter as a "cackle" is in fact a gendered re-presentation, and a very negative one at that. Since the findings reported in Chapter 3 reveal that the practice of laughing in the course of news interviews is not unique to Clinton, the question remains as to whether and to what extent the media have reported on this practice when other (male) politicians have employed it. This is the overarching question to be considered in this third and final analytic section of this chapter with reference to one politician, Republican Presidential candidate Rudolph Giuliani, in the context of the Republican nominating process also in 2007-2008.

5.6.1 Giuliani's laughter

Recall how prior to the “first” print news media reference to Clinton’s laughter as a “cackle” was published, political commentator Dick Morris and his wife Eileen McGann wrote an article on *Fox news.com* concerning Clinton’s laughter in her September 23rd interview with Chris Wallace. They described it as: “loud, inappropriate and mirthless ... a scary sound that was somewhere between a cackle and a screech” (see section 5.5). Following a very negative discussion of her laughter as a sign of her artifice, the authors go on to accuse the mainstream media of essentially having given Clinton a free ride by not reporting on her laughter, as shown in Excerpt (5.14).

Excerpt (5.14) (*Fox news.com*, September 27, 2007)

The mainstream media hasn't had much to say about the laughing candidate. **But can you imagine if Rudy Giuliani responded to a network interviewer by laughing loudly and hysterically for five seconds? No doubt *The New York Times* would seriously wonder about his state of mind. But they don't find it odd with Hillary.**

The first point of note about this commentary is that *The New York Times* did in fact release a full-length article devoted entirely to reporting on and dissecting Clinton’s laughter: Patrick Healy’s *Political Memo*, published the day after Morris and McGann’s article was published. The second, and more significant observation, is that Morris and McGann’s comments actually foreshadow an interactional scene involving then Republican presidential candidate, Rudolph Giuliani. In an interview on NBC’s *Meet The Press* with Tim Russert just over two months later (on December 7), Giuliani laughed, arguably both “loudly and hysterically”—and certainly for more than five

seconds—no less than 13 times in the 48 minute interview. In Chapter 3, I analyzed just one example of Giuliani’s laughter involving a lengthy sequence where it was interspersed throughout the interviewer’s attempt to deliver a “serious” question about Giuliani’s business associations (see excerpt 3.12). Thus, at a time when Clinton’s laughter had been dubbed “The Clinton Cackle” by *The New York Times* and subsequently further recontextualized as it underwent frequent re-presentations and scrutiny by the press, Morris and McGann’s hypothetical scenario regarding a Republican presidential contender, Rudolph Giuliani, in fact, becomes a reality. Specifically, Giuliani deploys the same interactional resource in the same kinds of ways as Clinton had in, for example, her 20-minute interview with Chris Wallace (which, incidentally, involved her laughing on a total of 3 occasions compared with Giuliani’s 13); that is, he produces laughter that disaffiliates from what is being proposed as “serious” by an interviewer. But, how did the news media respond in terms of reporting on Giuliani’s laughter? For example, did they, and, in particular, *The New York Times*, “seriously wonder about his state of mind?”

5.6.2 Giuliani’s laughter in the press

In terms of immediate media reactions, five references were made to Giuliani’s laughter with respect to his interview on *Meet The Press* in articles devoted either to the content of the interview and/or to Giuliani’s performance overall (and, contrary to Morris and McGann’s expectations, none of these references appeared in *The New York Times*). Since all five references involve relatively brief commentary (as compared to the

numerous full-length articles devoted to the topic of Clinton's laughter), the relevant portions of each are reproduced in Excerpts (5.16) – (5.22) below.

Excerpt (5.16) (*National Journal*, December 9, 2007)

Giuliani may have solidified his foreign-policy credentials, but it was the personal and the personnel that continue to dog him. **The interview may also have placed national spotlight on Giuliani's laugh. While Hillary Clinton has gotten attention for her laugh on the trail, Rudy Giuliani has one as well, and uses it often to deflect tough questions.** As Russert pounded Giuliani on his business associations with Hugo Chavez and Kim Jong Il, **Giuliani sat there laughing**, so much that Russert had to remind him that the accusations were being made "in a very serious way" about security business and his law firm.

Excerpt (5.17) (*Newsday*, December 9, 2007)

Giuliani stayed relaxed and tried to brush back some of the toughest questions, frequently with **a hearty laugh**.

Excerpt (5.18) (*Daily News*, December 10, 2007)

The usually combative candidate was uncharacteristically subdued about the grilling. Somberly dressed in a dark suit, white shirt, and red tie, Giuliani employed many of the timeworn techniques of damage control. [...] **Stealing a page from Hillary Clinton's script, he wielded a tactical laugh now and then.**

Excerpt (5.19) (*Politico*, December 10, 2007)

Defusing a steady laugh and dose of humility, Giuliani used his softer side to emerge largely unscathed from his hour-long appearance.

Excerpt (5.20) (*Associated Press*, December 10, 2007)

Smiling broadly and laughing at some of the tougher questions, Giuliani did not directly answer when asked why the security expenses were built to obscure New York City offices.

First of all, in each of these references to Giuliani's laughter, no more than a single sentence is devoted to describing its occurrence. Two of the comments merely focus on describing *that* he laughed: "Giuliani sat there laughing (Excerpt 5.16), or "Smiling broadly and laughing" (Excerpt 5.20), while one actually presents an overtly positive interpretation of Giuliani's laugh by describing it as a manifestation of his "softer side". In terms of the comments that characterize Giuliani's laughter in a specific way, the following three evaluative adjectives are utilized, "hearty", "steady", and "tactical". Only the third adjective "tactical" implies strategic use, and thus, a somewhat negative reading, while both "hearty" and "steady" are relatively neutral evaluative terms (compared with the evaluative adjectives used to characterize Clinton's laughter, such as "evil", "wicked" and "calculated"). Significantly, the only seemingly less neutral characterization "wielding a tactical laugh" is a practice that is actually attributed to Clinton: "Stealing a page from Hillary Clinton's script..."; Excerpt 5.18). So, even when a male politician—and, notably, another presidential candidate—engages in the generic interactional practice of laughing in the course of a news interview, it is presented as though it is something uniquely attributable to Clinton. Writing for the *National Journal*, journalist Matthew E. Berger also mentions Clinton when he makes reference to the media coverage of Clinton's laughter, and then describes Giuliani as "hav[ing] one as well, and us[ing] it often to deflect tough questions" (Excerpt 5.16). Berger also raises the possibility that Giuliani's "laugh" (not "cackle", "giggle" or "guffaw") may also get placed on the "national spotlight". The question is, did Giuliani's laughter become part

of a “national” conversation? How were these initial descriptions of his laugh reported subsequently by news media, if at all? Did his laughter undergo similar kinds of transformations in meaning in subsequent news reportage? Furthermore, was Giuliani’s *Meet The Press* interview the first time his laughter in a news interview was reported on by the press?

To address these questions, I conducted a similar search of all English language print news media references to Giuliani’s laughter and the key words/lemmas, “laugh” “cackle” and “giggle” in both the *Factiva* and *Lexis Nexis* databases from the period in which Clinton’s laughter became the subject of media attention (September 1, 2007) until the U.S. Presidential election (November 10, 2008). What I found was a total of six additional print news media references to Giuliani’s laughter, for a grand total of 11 references. Since the respective searches of both Giuliani and Clinton’s laughter were conducted for the same time period of coverage, it is possible to compare the total amount of print news references of each by date. The results of this comparison are shown in Figure 5.3.

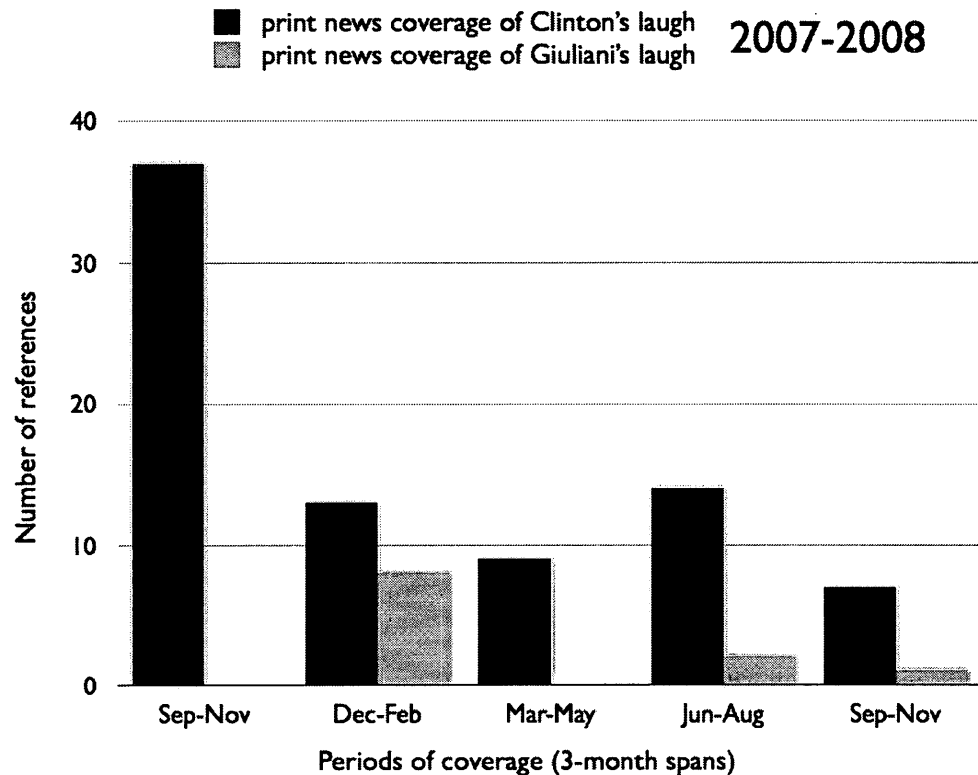


Figure 5.3: Print news references to Clinton's laughter and Giuliani's laughter compared

Of these six additional print news references to Giuliani's laughter, two appeared in New York's daily newspaper, *Daily News*, and the remaining four in the national newspaper, *The New York Times*. The first thing to note about all of these references to Giuliani's laughter is that his laughter is never topicalized as an issue worthy of coverage in and of itself as was the case with Clinton's laughter. Also, unlike the "cackle" coverage, Giuliani's laughter is never made the focus of a full-length article, but instead, is most often mentioned in passing. For example, in the brief comments shown in Excerpts

(5.21) and (5.22), again, it is simply noted *that* he laughs, as was the case in Excerpts (5.16) and (5.20) described above.

Excerpt (5.21) (*Daily News*, January 25, 2008)

Giuliani tried to laugh off the question about why his poll numbers have plummeted so rapidly in recent months. “I believe that I’m going to have the same fate that the New York Giants had last week, and we’re going to come from behind and surprise everyone”, he said.

Excerpt (5.22) (*The New York Times*, August 17, 2008)

Pointing to his rather limited powers of political prognostication, **Mr. Giuliani noted with a laugh** that he was also convinced that Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton would be his opponent.

In neither of these brief mentions do the authors of these articles evaluate Giuliani’s laugh in any way. Only one of these additional print news references to Giuliani’s laughter offers an evaluative description of it, as shown in Excerpt (5.23).

Excerpt (5.23) (*The New York Times*, September 14, 2008)

In his commentary, which is e-mailed periodically to roughly 4,000 subscribers, Mr. Koch, who has been a supporter of President Bush, wrote that “the country is safer in the hands of Barack Obama” and that though Sarah Palin, the Republican vice-presidential nominee is “a plucky, exciting candidate,” it “would scare me if she were to succeed John McCain in the presidency”. **He also commented on former Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani’s “maniacal laugh” during his speech at the Republican convention.**

The focus of this article is in fact former Mayor Edward Koch’s endorsement of Obama for the general election. In the one sentence referring to Giuliani’s laugh, it is characterized as “maniacal” but note how this characterization is attributed to a single

individual, that is, Mr. Koch, and Koch's opinion is offered in direct quotes. Thus, the one arguably negative—but not gendered—characterization is neither presupposed to exist nor is it presented as the opinion of *The New York Times*, as was the case with “The Clinton Cackle”. This also raises the question of whether Giuliani's laughter is ever characterized in a gendered way.

5.6.3 Gendered re-presentations?

In section 5.5, I argued that to describe Clinton's laughter as a “cackle” is a gendered representation. I have also suggested that words like “giggle”, too, are commonly associated with women, though it, of course, does not have the extremely negative associations that “cackle” does. However, just because these terms are associated with women does not mean that they may *never* be used in referring to a man. Indeed, two of the other references to Giuliani's laughter use each of these terms; however, I would suggest that these singular instances do not accomplish the same gendered representational value as those that are repeated again and again, as is the case with the “cackle” recontextualization of Clinton's laugh. (Not to mention the other associations that are made that are directly associated with gender, such as the use of evaluative adjectives that collocate with witches). One of these two references comes from *The Daily News* in an article that reports on New York's “Knuckleheads of the year”, published on December 31, 2007. In describing various public figures in New York and related controversies or personality quirks, the editor turns to Giuliani. Specifically, in describing how one of Giuliani's staff accidentally let loose a 140-page strategy plan for

Giuliani's presidential campaign, he writes: "And who suggested that, when confronted on "Meet The Press" with questions about security details for his then mistress, the candidate sit there and **giggle**". The other example in which a gendered term is employed in reference to Giuliani laughing comes from an article on the topic of the state of his campaign during the early primaries. The specific reference appears in a description of Giuliani laughing in response to a question by a television reporter following a speech he gave in Florida to prospective voters. The relevant portion is provided in Excerpt (5.24).

Excerpt (5.24) (*The New York Times*, January 24, 2008)

Then [Giuliani] leaned in to listen to a question from a television reporter: "Mayor, you've had the state to yourself here in Florida for so long, for weeks," she says. "Why is it that you seem to be losing support, not gaining support?" The eyes of Rudolph W. Giuliani popped wide. **He tosses back his head and cackles in a manner not even vaguely suggestive of humor.** What a crazy idea! "I think the reality is that we are gaining support," he said. "Our campaign is now in high gear." Before another question can be asked, Mr. Giuliani says thank you, waves, pivots, kisses a startled baby and walks out a side door.

In this excerpt, NYT's columnist Michael Powell employs the term "cackle" in providing a rather literary description of the interactional scene in which Giuliani laughed. In addition to being a singular instance (and one that is not mentioned again at any point in this article or any other article in the specified time period), I would suggest that this is a rather different use of "cackle" than is employed by journalists and political commentators who used it in reference to Clinton's laughter. Specifically, Giuliani's laugh is not characterized *as* a "cackle", but rather *that* he "cackles". As a verb, it connotes a somewhat sinister response to the television reporter's question. In the news reportage on Clinton's laughter, however, the "cackle" characterization is predominantly

used as a noun (e.g., “The Clinton Cackle), and, as a nominalization, it becomes a characteristic or attribute of her. These differential ways of using “cackle” to describe Giuliani laughing versus Clinton laughing are consistent with dominant gender stereotypes or schemas with regards to leadership, and can be summed up in the phrase, “men act” (Valian, 1999: 13; cited in Stein, 2009). Indeed, although the *NYT’s* description of Giuliani employs the term “cackle”, it is not about *who he is* or *what he does*, but instead is about something *he did*.⁵⁹

Thus, contrary to Morris’ and McGann’s predictions, *The NYT* does not report on Giuliani’s laughter in a way that is comparable to the coverage of Clinton’s laughter nor does any *NYT* columnist or contributor in any way question what his laughter might mean about Giuliani as a viable contender for president. Indeed, it is only after Clinton ceded the nomination to Barack Obama that *The NYT* offers a critical reflection of its own arguably sexist reportage of Clinton’s laughter. In an article devoted to the question of sexist news coverage in Clinton’s campaign, *NYT* editor Clark Hoyt responds to some of the specific criticisms leveled against the newspaper:

Excerpt (5.25) (*The New York Times*, June 22, 2008)

Some complaints about *Times* news coverage seem justified. A “political memo” last fall analyzed “the Clinton cackle”—a laugh, it was suggested, that she used to fend off political attacks or tough media attention. Cackle? That’s what witches do in fairy tales. *Times* editors expressed regret about using the word, though they defend the examination of the laugh. ***The Times never did a similar dissection***

⁵⁹ As a general point of interest, the only instance of the word, “cackle” being used to refer to former president Bill Clinton appeared in an article in the *Pittsburgh Post* in June of 1999, in a headline that read: “As the GOP dithers: The Republicans stumble on spending bill, and **Clinton cackles**”. As is the case in the Giuliani example, “cackle” as a verb describes the action carried out (again, implying a somewhat sinister response), and the description is not mentioned again at any point in the body of that specific article or beyond.

of the way Rudolph Giuliani burst into odd gales of laughter under tough questioning.

Although Hoyt acknowledges that Giuliani's "odd gales of laughter under tough questioning" could have been subject to similar scrutiny by the press, even this description is not negative or gendered in any way. To characterize his laughter as "odd gales", for example, does not reinforce a negative perspective of Giuliani specifically, nor does it (re)produce particular negative stereotypes of men or male politicians, more generally. Indeed, Giuliani's laughter is not re-presented in a way that makes gender relevant, nor is it re-presented in particularly negative ways (relatively speaking). Additionally, while Hoyt concedes that the "cackle" characterization of Clinton's laughter was unjustified, he reports that the editors "defend the examination of the laugh". One significant problem with Hoyt's concession—confession?—is that it suggests that such an "examination" of Clinton's laughter was and can be separated from the evaluative contextual framing in which it was reported. The fact remains, however, that the *NYT* published an article by one of its columnists (Patrick Healy) that offered an uncritical and misleading adoption of the "cackle" characterization. In not accurately portraying its source, this article was then treated as the legitimate source for a substantial amount of subsequent news coverage. Not only did this article reify a nasty representation of her laugh in a way that indirectly indexed an undesirable persona, but it also served to reinforce a harmful, gendered image of the leading presidential candidate. To express "regret over use of the word" grossly oversimplifies (and under-appreciates)

the complex intertextual processes already at work and further set into motion by media reports such as Healy's *Political Memo*.

5.7 Summary

In this chapter, I have tried to show how a particular linguistic activity, namely Hillary Clinton's laughter, was first decontextualized from the local, interactional contexts in which it occurred (where it was not oriented to as a gendered practice by participants, nor was it found to be a practice employed exclusively by her), and then recontextualized in a way that made gender relevant in a negatively-valenced way. Specifically, I argued that these reports effectively altered the meaning of Clinton's laughter, in that they recontextualized a powerful generic interactional practice in accordance with the dominant ideas about how a woman – and her laugh – should be represented. Moreover, I have suggested that the type of work these mainstream media recontextualizations are involved in is ideological; that is, they not only contribute to reinforcing a particularly negative perspective of Clinton, but they also rely on the reproduction of a common gendered stereotype (i.e., that women, or, perhaps more accurately, witches, cackle). Through the process of reiterating this one particular re-presentation, Clinton's laughter was further decontextualized from its source interactions, and, in that process, it became invested with new meanings that fed into the media's—and correspondingly, the public's—interrogation of Clinton as a viable contender for the Democratic nomination for President.

By virtue of these entextualization practices, I would also argue that news media are able to use their ideological power in (re)producing negative re-presentations; in particular, they play a central role in legitimizing and perpetuating gender ideologies. In this case, "The Clinton Cackle" is a representation indicative of a much larger issue concerning the "double-bind" situation women politicians still face. That is, they are expected to meet the expectations and requirements of what constitutes "acceptable" or "professional" political behaviour—behaviour long associated with men and so-called "men's language"—and at the same time deal with normative assumptions and expectations about "femininity" (Felderer, 1997). Because the public sphere of politics remains a predominantly masculine domain, it is influenced by and sustained through a traditionally masculine model of power. Thus, the way in which Clinton and her laughter were re-presented is indicative of the dominant belief that powerful people (i.e., political leaders vying for the highest level of public office) should continue to be men (not witches), and speaks to an additional dilemma women politicians face that men do not.

Chapter 6: Conclusions

6.1 Introduction

This dissertation has presented an analysis of politicians' laughter in broadcast news interviews, and media representations of one politician's laughter—that of Hillary Rodham Clinton—in the context of her failed bid for the Democratic nomination in 2007-2008. The analyses combined different approaches to investigating both talk and text: it employed the methodological framework of Conversation Analysis (CA) to examine the interactional work accomplished by laughter *in situ* (i.e., in the broadcast news interviews in which politicians as interviewees participated) and it employed an intertextual approach to analyze the *post-hoc* recontextualization of Clinton's laughter by the mainstream media. In analyzing these two dimensions of Clinton's laughter—its deployment in talk-in-interaction and its subsequent representation in talk-out-of-interaction—this study makes a distinctive contribution to a central question in studies of language, gender and sexuality—when gender can or should be invoked as an explanatory category in the analysis of discourse.

This chapter briefly summarizes the principal findings of the empirical chapters. It discusses the significance of those findings vis-à-vis previous research on laughter in talk-in-interaction and in relation to debates about the relevance of gender in discourse analytic work. It then describes some of the implications of these findings for future research on gender, particularly in the realm of politics and media.

6.2 Summary of Chapters

I opened this dissertation by describing my first encounter with Clinton's laughter, that is, when it was dubbed "The Clinton Cackle" in the mainstream media and became the subject of much negative reporting. In seeking to understand what politicians' laughter might actually look like in the context of broadcast news interviews, Chapter 3 cast a wide net by examining the laughter of politicians as interviewees (IE), in general. Drawing on a corpus of 50 live interviews, broadcast predominantly during the 2007-2008 election campaign in the United States, this chapter provided the results of a systematic CA analysis of such laughter. I began by identifying and exemplifying the range of sequential environments where IE laughter occurs, and this, in turn, warranted a distinction between *invited* laughter (the relevance of which is established by the context of the interviewer's (IR) remarks or by some visual element of the scene), on the one hand, and *volunteered* laughter (as the name suggests, that which is produced on a voluntary basis), on the other. In cases of volunteered laughter, I further distinguished between laughter that occurred in relation to the IE's own turn-at-talk (*within-speech* or *post-completion*) and in relation to the IR's questioning turn. It was this latter type of laughter in two sequential environments—at the completion of an IR's question or during its production—that became the focus of extensive analysis, precisely because it was this type of laughter (as utilized by Hillary Rodham Clinton) that became the subject of attention in the news media. I demonstrated that politicians' laughter in the course or completion of "serious" questions by IRs was deployed within and constitutive of dispreferred actions by publicly displaying a disaffiliative stance. Determining the

disaffiliative status of such cases of laughter required considering the local, sequential environments of each instance including where in the course of the IR's unfolding talk the laughter occurred, what the IR did (or did not do) in response, and what the IE did subsequently (both verbally and visually). Indeed, by considering its local sequential environment, I showed how, in the context of "serious" questions, the laughter's specific placement—either at the completion of a question or during its production—indexes what the IE disaffiliates from without explicitly going "on record". Thus, I argued that laughter (in these sequential positions) constitutes a powerful interactional resource politicians deploy in the face of adversarial questioning, to undercut the terms of the question, or some aspect of it, and also to project a disaffiliative verbal response. Given that this analysis involved 50 interviews with 30 different politicians (both male and female), I was also able to demonstrate how laughing in this way is a generic interactional practice, a point that is crucial in considering media representations of Clinton's laughter. Before turning to those representations, however, it was necessary to compare and contrast Clinton's laughter in news interviews with that of others, in order to determine whether she was deploying it in similar or distinctive ways. This was the subject of Chapter 4.

Conducting a parallel CA analysis of Clinton's laughter required drawing on another corpus of live interviews, also broadcast predominantly during her 2007-2008 Presidential bid.¹ To compare the overall frequency of the occurrence of Clinton's

¹ A marginal number of interviews following the 2008 Presidential election were also included to see whether Clinton continued laughing during BNIs, even after the negative media coverage—something the media suggested she would not do if the laughter were contrived, as many suggested it was.

laughter with that of other politicians, I categorized all instances with respect to the same sequential environments. For the most part, the distribution of Clinton's laughter relative to other IEs and IRs was shown to be remarkably similar. First of all, the findings reported in both corpora showed that both Clinton- and IE-initiated laughter accounted for 90% of all instances of laughter in the news interviews considered. Given the media's reporting on Clinton laughter, I had expected to find that she volunteered laughter more often than other politicians; however, the opposite turned out to be the case (although the difference was only marginal). That is, Clinton produced volunteered laughter in 79% of the cases, while other IEs did so in 86% of cases. With respect to the distribution of Clinton- and IE-initiated laughter according to sequential position, the results of both corpora were again remarkably similar/consistent. In relation to Clinton's and the IEs' own talk, both Clinton's and other IEs' laughter occurred *within-speech* two thirds of the time (65%) and *post-completion* one third of the time (35%). In relation to the IR's turn-at-talk, both Clinton's and other IEs' laughter occurred *during the IR's questioning turn* roughly three quarters of the time and *at question completion* roughly one quarter of the time. The only noteworthy difference between Clinton's laughter and that of other IEs in terms of distribution was that Clinton produced laughter in relation to the IR's talk more frequently than in relation to her own (68% and 32%, respectively), a finding that contrasts with the equal distribution of IE laughter in relation to these two possibilities. I suggested that this might be one possible reason why the media noticed Clinton's laughter, although it hardly accounts for the nature of the representations. As regards the interactional function of the type of Clinton's laughter that was reported on by the media,

the findings of Chapter 4 corroborate those of Chapter 3 in terms of revealing how such laughter constitutes a disaffiliative move in the course of or at the completion of “serious” IR questions. Indeed, I showed how Clinton deployed laughter as a way of displaying resistance to such questions, or some aspect of them, just as other IEs did. The results of the analysis presented in Chapter 4, then, demonstrated how Clinton’s laughter abides by the constraints imposed on politicians in BNIs and is consistent with other politicians’ laughter in terms of the sequential positions in which it occurs, the actions it accomplishes and also how it is treated by IRs. The findings reported in Chapters 3 and 4, taken together, also made clear that this practice of laughing in the course of “serious” IR questioning was not oriented to as gendered by any of the participants in any of the interviews.

Chapter 5 investigated the news media’s subsequent treatment of Clinton’s laughter, and the characterization of it as a “cackle”, by examining *post-hoc* interpretations of it. Drawing on a large corpus of (inter)national media coverage of Clinton’s laughter, the analysis revealed how the characterization that obtained special status in these reports described the *quality* of her laugh, namely, as a “cackle”. The chapter began with a description of how the “cackle” re-presentation of Clinton’s laughter entered the news cycle, tracing the phrase from its earliest references to the first print news article in *The New York Times*, Patrick Healy’s piece on “The Clinton Cackle”. I showed how this particular ideological re-presentation took hold as the dominant characterization of her laughter, and, how such a re-presentation relied upon decontextualizing that laughter from its origins of occurrence and recontextualizing in a

way that invested it with a particularly negative gendered meaning. For example, not once across numerous media references to Clinton's laughter as a "cackle" did any journalist suggest that the practice of laughing in response to "serious" interviewer questions might be something that other politicians (or people, more generally) do. Instead, the discussion of these references highlighted how this practice was attributed to Clinton exclusively. What is problematic about the ideological picture the media (re)constructed is not just that it was inaccurate and misleading, as the first analytic section of the chapter detailed, but also that it was gendered in stereotypical and unflattering ways. In the second analytic section, I argued that the "cackle" representation is indexically linked to gender through processes of association, where a cluster of particularly negative social meanings are indirectly mapped onto this particular lexical choice. Although there is nothing negative about the denotative value of "cackle", according to standard dictionaries, the findings reported in this chapter illustrated how these meanings arise out of patterns of co-occurrence in actual contexts of use. To bolster this claim, I drew on collocational evidence from corpus linguistics, from the media representations themselves as well as metapragmatic commentary on those representations. In doing so, my discussion demonstrated how "cackle" indirectly indexes the laugh of an undesirable negative persona that is gendered, namely, a witch. I suggested that, in recontextualizing Clinton's laughter in this way, these media representations actually do ideological work by contributing to the construction of a particularly negative perspective of Clinton, and, at the same time, by reproducing a common gendered stereotype (i.e., that women—or, more accurately, witches—cackle).

The final analytic section of the chapter considered the question of whether and to what extent the media discussed other political candidates' laughter during the 2007-2008 nomination through a comparative analysis of news coverage of then Republican Presidential candidate, Rudolph Giuliani. The results of this analysis revealed that the media did in fact mention Giuliani's laughter; however, it was never made the subject of more than a single sentence in any given representation. In addition, none of the ways in which his laughter was mentioned either reinforced a negative perspective of Giuliani or (re)produced any negative stereotypes of men or male politicians. Indeed, the discussion showed that Giuliani's laughter was neither represented in any way that made gender relevant nor in any way that painted him in an unflattering light. Thus, while this dissertation demonstrated that Clinton's laughter is similar to that of other politicians (in terms of its use and function), it was shown that, in spite of such similarities, it was taken up by the media in gendered (arguably, misogynist) ways.

6.3 Significance of findings

The foregoing discussion of this dissertation's findings illustrates the breadth of this project, particularly in terms of the different kinds of data drawn upon and the diverse methodological and theoretical tools that facilitated the investigation of politicians' laughter, including that of Hillary Rodham Clinton, both as an interactional practice and as a gendered representational practice. Given these distinctive dimensions of my analysis, this project offers three principal scholarly contributions. Because my analysis began with the interactional component, I start by outlining the ways in which the

findings presented in Chapters 3 and 4 contribute to existing literature on laughter from a social-interactional perspective, in general, and within the specialized context of broadcast news interviews, specifically. I then turn to a discussion of the findings presented in Chapter 5, and show how they contribute an original perspective on the question of the relevance of gender in discourse-based research, in particular, who may count as a participant in considering orientations to gender and what may count as an orientation. Finally, I describe the analytic purchase of having combined the two different kinds of methodological and theoretical approaches to discourse that informed this research (i.e., the interactional perspective offered by CA, utilized in the analyses put forward in Chapters 3 and 4, and the intertextual perspective adopted in Chapter 5), particularly in terms of understanding gender inequalities (cf. Ehrlich, 2012). I will briefly expand on each of these distinct contributions in turn.

6.3.1 On laughter

My analysis of politicians' laughter in broadcast news interviews from the perspective of CA has illuminated a previously undescribed practice within this specific interactional context, namely, the practice of IEs laughing during the course of, or in response to, IRs' "serious" questions. Accordingly, it adds to the growing body of research in CA that demonstrates how laughter can accomplish far more than simply responding to humour or displaying affiliation. It also highlights the important relationship between affiliation and disaffiliation and between the serious and the non-serious and broadens our understanding of the prospective and retrospective dimensions of these facets of laughter.

For example, while a speaker can always propose a serious or non-serious definition-of-the-situation, a recipient can always respond in ways that either affiliate with or disaffiliate from that proposed definition. Indeed, participants can and do engage in complex negotiations regarding the laughing or serious nature of talk in terms of how they choose to respond to it—or not—in the moment-by-moment unfolding of interaction. What should be clear from the analyses of IE laughter presented in Chapters 3 and 4 is that an understanding of these negotiations requires a detailed sequential but also multimodal analysis.

My analysis of politicians' laughter in broadcast news interviews also joins other research from distinct interactional settings in revealing how the particular workings of laughter and its responses may be shaped by the interactional roles and goals of the participants (e.g., Glenn, 2010; Jefferson, 1984; Lavin & Maynard, 2002). More specifically, the practices described in Chapters 3 and 4 showed laughter to be one of the available resources politicians, as IEs, mobilize in negotiating the constraints of this particular interactional setting. As was outlined in my review of previous research (Chapter 2), studies of laughter in other interactional contexts have shown it to be a resource for managing activities or moments that are potentially face threatening (e.g., Haakana, 2001; Wilkinson, 2007; Zayts & Schnurr, 2011). In broadcast news interviews, there is no doubt a strong interactional motivation for politicians as IEs to find ways of lessening the impact of and/or diffusing potentially damaging or face threatening talk. Indeed, Clayman (2001) described this issue as "the IE dilemma"—that is, IEs want to appear cooperative and not evasive but they also do not want their reputations to be

damaged. Prior CA work on broadcast news interviews has outlined various questioning practices and verbal strategies for responding, which often constitute forms of interactional resistance (Clayman & Heritage, 2002; Ekström, 2009; Harris, 1991). The findings of my analyses in Chapters 3 and 4, then, suggest that laughter is yet another form of resistance politicians utilize in dealing with this institutionally specific dilemma. Significantly, it is also an embodied one.

Given the performance dimension of broadcast interactions, embodied multimodal resources such as laughter—and their contribution to the organization of participants' action—are important because they are available not only to the participants *in situ* but also to the overhearing—and, crucially, viewing—audience. Furthermore, as I suggested in my analysis in Chapter 3, because laughter not only occurs on the visual plane (like eye rolls, for example) there is a sense in which it competes auditorily for the overhearers' attention in a way that other non-vocal displays do not. This may make the degree of accountability in the act of laughing stronger than is the case with other multimodal resources (e.g., eye and head movements); thus, laughter is perhaps more susceptible to being “noticed” (by media commentators, for example). My analysis of politicians' laughter has no doubt contributed to a noted gap in CA research on broadcast talk and political communication (Streeck, 2008) by empirically analyzing the embodied communicative behaviour of politicians in broadcast news interviews. However, it has also raised additional questions concerning whether and to what degree varying forms of embodied communicative behaviour may be treated and understood as accountable actions, particularly in consequential forms of public discourse such as broadcast

interactions. These are issues that certainly warrant expansion and they are no doubt a potentially productive area of future research.

6.3.2 On the relevance of gender in discourse-based research

Whenever I speak, the information that I am a woman is available (conveyed by the pitch and timbre of my voice, as well as my bodily appearance in face-to-face contexts) to be used by my interlocutors in their interpretations; even if my discourse does not evidence any intention to make my gender relevant, interlocutors can always choose to treat it as such (Cameron, 2005: 330).

In Chapter 1, I presented an overview of a significant methodological and theoretical debate concerning when and how—and to what extent—it is justifiable for analysts to make claims about social categories such as gender in their analyses of discourse (e.g., Schegloff, 1997; Speer & Stokoe, 2011b; Stokoe & Smithson, 2001; Stokoe & Weatherall, 2002; Wetherell, 1998). For conversation analysts, participants' orientations to gender (and to any other aspect or feature of “context”) are displayed in and through the practices and actions of their talk and other conduct. According to CA orthodoxy, these orientations need to be both demonstrably relevant and procedurally consequential for the participants to the interaction. What this has meant for those concerned with describing the workings of gender in talk-in-interaction is “showing that and how speakers ‘orient’ to” (Speer & Stokoe, 2011a: 13), account for, make relevant, naturalize, and sustain gendered norms, assumptions and ideologies as they engage in the everyday activities that constitute their social worlds. The analysis put forward in this dissertation has contributed to this debate in at least two ways: first, it broadens the scope of precisely

whose orientations to gender may “count”, and second, it expands our understanding of what those “orientations” may look like.

Building on the work of Blommaert (2005) and Ehrlich (e.g., 2002), my analysis highlights the importance of adopting a broader notion of “participants”, when considering whose interpretations may be considered relevant to and consequential for a given interaction. In the CA view, “interaction” typically means restricting one’s analytic focus to participants within singular, bounded communicative events. Blommaert’s critique of this “narrow” view of context is that it does not consider the fact that “talk may *not* have certain implications to the (direct) participants, certain matters are *not* ‘demonstrably relevant’, but *they are made relevant by later re-entextualizations of that talk by others*” (2005: 56; emphasis in original). Precisely who those “others” may be depends on the nature of the interactional format under investigation. In the context of the present study, the “interaction” format of principal concern was that of broadcast news interviews since such interviews were the interactional context in which Clinton’s laughter occurred. My analysis of those interactions—in which she, and other politicians as interviewees, participated—did not find the interview participants demonstrably orienting to laughter as a gendered practice nor was such a practice found to be procedurally consequential for those participants along gender lines *in situ*. However, the potential consequentiality of those interactions (or some component/aspect of them) in terms of gender’s relevance does not stop when the lights go down and the cameras are turned off. On the contrary, portions of what takes place within those singular, bounded communicative events often travel across contexts and into other discursive spaces.

Accordingly, given the nature of broadcast news interviews—communicative events in which talk is a public, enduring and consequential form of public discourse—talk is ultimately designed for a public audience: thus members of that audience may constitute “other” participants. Since news media representations are a main source of information to that public about what goes on in news interviews, such *post-hoc* accounts of talk-in-interaction are one form of discourse in which gender may be made demonstrably relevant in consequential ways for “original” participants. For analysts interested in the complex ways in which gender may become relevant in talk-*out-of*-interaction, the results of this dissertation have suggested that an expanded notion of “participant” is certainly warranted in such cases. While I have provided one additional answer to the question of who may count as a “participant” in this dissertation (recall Ehrlich’s example of judges’ assessments of trial discourse being another), it is up to future research to discover some of the other ways that an expanded notion of “participant” may be warranted by other types of discourse data.

Having established a rationale for considering the mainstream media as one possible kind of *post-hoc* “participant”, the second and related question this dissertation has contributed to concerns what may count as an orientation to gender. Building on work such as Kitzinger (2005), and Cameron (1998, 2005), my analysis has offered another account of gender’s relevance as accomplished through indirect means. According to CA, it seems that the most obvious cases of what counts as an orientation to gender have involved explicit references to gendered category terms (e.g., “chick”, “ladies”, “women”; see Chapter 1, section 1.3.2). However, as Kitzinger (2005: 231) has

noted, the most overt ways of indexing gender and/or sexuality “are perhaps the least analytically interesting, precisely because of their explicitness”. She explains, “the relevances [*sic*] that shape the formulated experience exhibited in talk-in-interaction are made apparent ‘not only in what persons choose overtly to talk about; perhaps there least of all’” (Schegloff, 2000: 718; cited in Kitzinger, 2005: 231). Indeed, in the article that initially sparked debate regarding gender’s relevance in interaction, Schegloff also acknowledged the possibility of orientations to gender being manifested “without being explicitly named or mentioned” (1997: 182). In fact, he cited Ochs’ (1992) work on indexicality as one example. In this dissertation, then, I have made the case that Clinton’s laughter in broadcast news interviews was subject to recontextualization by the mainstream media (post-hoc “participants”) in such a way as to *make gender relevant*. Drawing on Ochs’ (1992) theoretical framework of indexicality, I argued that understanding the gendered nature of the dominant characterization of Clinton’s laughter as a “cackle” requires going beyond its conventional meaning (as evidenced in the denotations provided in standard dictionaries, for example), and taking into consideration the terms’ indexical associations, associations which trigger gendered inferences. Rather than relying on my own intuitions to support my interpretation of “cackle” as indirectly indexing a negative, gendered persona (i.e., “witch”), I drew on collocational insights from corpus linguistics to provide complementary evidence and support for my claims about this indirect association. Indeed, one of the original contributions of this dissertation is having grounded such claims in patterns of co-occurrence in contexts of actual usage. Thus, just as other scholars interested in the relationship between language

and gender have shown the availability of inferences about gender (or sexuality) despite the fact that gender may not *overtly* be oriented to by participants (e.g., Cameron, 1998; Kitzinger, 2005), so too has the analysis put forward in this dissertation. Such an approach necessarily involves a consideration of culturally specific background knowledge and assumptions that are either embodied or displayed in talk (in the case of Cameron's or Kitzinger's work, for example), or that get activated by particular lexical choices in representing talk (as in this dissertation).

No matter what precise form an "orientation" to gender may take, I would suggest that gender's omnipresence means that it is always an available contextual feature of interaction (and representation) that may be made or may become observably relevant, be it in the course of interaction, as it unfolds, or in the ways in which an interaction may be taken up by others, and, as we have seen, in consequential ways.

6.3.3 On textual travels: Methodological implications

One of the fundamental features of communication in contemporary societies is that our words and interactions often have a life beyond their initial acts of occurrence.

Following Blommaert (2005), this dissertation has shown how communicative acts, which originate in one interactional setting/environment, may be turned into "texts", and may be decontextualized and recontextualized in that process. As these "texts" travel across time and space, they may continue to undergo significant transformations in structure and meaning. Since processes of contextualization extend beyond speakers and their intentions, specific communicative acts "may receive unexpected uptake, taking

them into directions of meaning and social effects not intended by speakers” (Blommaert, 2005:43). Because we often do not have control over how our acts may be taken up by others—or even where our words may go in that process—the transformations in meaning that may occur “can be deeply implicated in larger patterns of social inequality” (Ehrlich, 2012: 48). The significance of this point for the argument developed in this dissertation is that it is only by having combined an analysis of both Clinton’s and other politicians’ laughter in broadcast news interviews with an investigation of the media’s “uptake” of Clinton’s laughter as a “cackle”—that is, how Clinton’s laughter was turned into a “text” that then travelled across discursive contexts—that we can see the larger “social effects” (i.e., gender inequality) at play. Considering the trajectory of such “texts”, and the differential nature of the kinds of data drawn upon in doing so (i.e., interactional *and* representational forms of discourse data) therefore necessitated the use of distinctive methodological approaches.

Recall that I began this dissertation by introducing how I came to “know” about Hillary Rodham Clinton’s laughter as a topic in its own right, that is, via an article in *The New York Times* that reported on “The Clinton Cackle”. If this dissertation had only investigated the news media representations of Clinton’s laughter, it would have been able to show that and how her laughter was being represented in sexist terms (i.e., the media’s characterization of Clinton’s laughter as a “cackle”); however, we would not know that such laughter was *not* an idiosyncratic feature of Clinton’s discursive repertoire but in fact a generic interactional practice—one that other women and men politicians employ in similar interactional environments and to similar ends (as the results

of my interactional analysis of laughter revealed). Likewise, if this dissertation had only investigated politicians' laughter in broadcast news interviews, it would have been able to show its generic properties and functions, but we would not see women and men's performance of this practice as gendered. By conducting both an interactional analysis of Clinton's—and other politicians'—laughter as well as a critical, intertextual analysis of the media's "uptake" of her laughter, this dissertation has been able to show how, despite women and men behaving in similar ways, Clinton's behaviour was taken up in gendered ways. In fact, in this case gendered meanings were ascribed to something that was not gendered at all. Thus, it is by virtue of having considered the way Clinton's laughter travelled across contexts—which required the combination of distinctive methodological approaches—that a picture of gender inequality comes fully into view (for a similar argument in the context of courtroom trials and legal proceedings, see Ehrlich, 2012).

Early on in the debate about the grounds for and legitimacy of invoking gender as an explanatory category in one's analysis of discourse, Schegloff (1997: 184) proposed that "formal" analysis (as offered by conversation analytic methods) and critically-informed approaches need not be taken as "competitors or alternatives". Of course, Schegloff is not alone on this point. A number of discourse analysts espouse an eclectic approach that draws on the strengths of a variety of approaches that best answer their research questions (Ehrlich & Romaniuk, in press). I would also advocate such an approach since, as the results of this dissertation have shown, interactional and critical approaches are not just compatible lines of inquiry but in fact complementary perspectives that allows us to see how gender—and, significantly, gender inequality—can

emerge at the interface of interaction, discursive practices and ideologies (Bucholtz, 2003).

6.4 Cracks in the glass ceiling?: Implications for research on the gendered nature of media representations in politics

Although a substantial amount of attention was devoted to the topic of laughter in this dissertation (it was the focus of discussion in Chapters 2-4), it is nevertheless the case that the most significant implications of this dissertation are not *only*, or even *primarily*, about laughter. No doubt it offers important findings regarding laughter in the institutional context of broadcast news interviews and, accordingly, makes a valuable contribution to our understanding of laughter in this context, as outlined above. The fact that the focus of inquiry was laughter, however, is somewhat incidental, in the sense that it turned out to be an interactional phenomenon where gendered meanings became relevant. Thus, laughter per se should by no means be taken to be the only way in which gender may become relevant in discourse; instead, it serves as an exemplar of the kinds of interactional practices subject to a process of gendering along the lines that I have shown. Similarly, while much attention was given to Hillary Rodham Clinton in this dissertation (her laughter and mass media representations of it were the focus of Chapters 4 and 5), the overarching significance of this dissertation neither concerns *only*, nor *primarily*, her as well. Again, there is no question that the findings I reported with respect to the way in which her laughter was decontextualized and then recontextualized as it travelled across contexts have implications for her as an individual. For example, I showed how the meaning of her laughter was substantially transformed to the extent that

the indirect indexing of an unflattering gendered persona became ideologically associated with Clinton specifically. However, the gendered representational practices she and her laughter were subjected to transcend Hillary Rodham Clinton, the principal subject of this study. Ultimately, this dissertation's most significant implications concern women in the public sphere of politics, and, particularly, the representation of women in that sphere.

The remarkably low number of women politicians holding elected office at national and state levels in the US (and throughout the world) is a disconcerting reality. When Clinton ran for the Democratic nomination in 2007-2008, the Inter-Parliamentary Union's rankings of 188 countries ranked the United States 71st in terms of the number of women in national legislatures. On the basis of updated information provided by National Parliaments on February 1 2013, out of 190 countries, the US ranking has (shamefully) fallen to 77th. Today women constitute less than 20% of the country's total political representation, far behind many Western nations, and an increasing number of developing nations. These percentages are but one indication that the public sphere of politics in America (and elsewhere) remains a distinctively gendered culture, and specifically, a masculine one (see, for example, Edwards, 2009). According to McElhinny (1995: 221), at least two factors contribute to the perception of politics as a gendered environment: the "presence or even predominance" of one sex, and "cultural norms and interpretations of gender that dictate who is best suited" for electoral office (such as viewing the role of President of the United States as quintessentially masculine). Both of these factors play a substantial role in contributing to the relatively dismal number of women in politics, but they also have a profound influence on what happens

when women attempt to gain entry into this traditionally “masculine” domain. What the findings of this dissertation have revealed is a particularly troubling sexist/discriminatory practice that women may encounter in this process.

For those women like Clinton who do run for electoral office, there are two principal (and potentially consequential) environments where they may encounter sexism in contemporary election campaigns (particularly at the national and state levels). The first of these involves their participation in various public forums of interaction such as political debates, broadcast news interviews, and town hall meetings. The second entails the mass media’s uptake of those performances—post-hoc interpretations that circulate across diverse channels of communication (e.g., television, radio, newspaper, Internet). Contemporary research on gender in political campaigns has described some of the forms that sexism takes in media representations of women who run for public office (e.g., Falk, 2008; Mayhead & Marshall, 2005; Uscinski & Goren, 2011), including for example, stereotypical representations of women candidates (e.g., emphasizing women’s emotions, their role in families, etc.) and non-parallel naming practices for referring to candidates (e.g., use of first names), or for describing them (e.g., use of adjectives describing women’s clothing or physical appearance). Yet the kind of sexist representation I have unraveled in this dissertation is not something that is easily recognizable in the same kind of way (though it is, of course, discoverable). Although non-sexist guidelines continue to draw attention to many of the *overt* sexist practices that plague (representations of) women in the course of political campaigns (see, for example, Larris & Maggio, 2012), it is difficult to see how the ultimate goal of such guidelines can be achieved—that is, how

the pervasiveness of sexism can be *erased* from our culture when gendered meanings can always be communicated indirectly. What remains deeply problematic, then, at least to me, is that such attempts at reform are inevitably unable to capture the range of implicit and indirect processes of gendering that women may still be subjected to, even when the practices they engage in and the actions they employ have absolutely nothing to do with gender (such as those described in this dissertation). Thus, it seems that women who enter the public sphere continue to be *damned if they do, damned if they don't*. Indeed, the findings of this dissertation contribute empirical support to claims of this double-bind situation that women politicians still face by grounding them in the details of interaction *and* linguistic practices. Ultimately, what I have shown is the extent to which cultural norms and interpretations of gender have shaped—and continue to shape—women's success (or lack thereof) in the public domain of politics. If Betty Friedan (1993; cited in Jamieson, 1995) was correct and “coverage of Hillary [Rodham] Clinton is a massive Rorschach test of the evolution of women in our society” then I am afraid we have not come a long way, baby. One of the challenges for future research, then, is to discover other indirect and implicit ways by which gendered interpretations take hold—interpretations that clearly have a significant impact on women's ability to break through that glass ceiling, once and for all.

APPENDIX A: TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

1. Temporal and sequential relationships

[A left bracket indicates the onset of overlapping speech
]	A right bracket indicates the point at which overlapping utterances end
=	An equals sign indicates contiguous speech
(0.5)	Silences are indicated as pauses in tenths of a second
(.)	A period in parentheses indicates a hearable pause (less than two tenths of a second)

2. Aspects of speech delivery

.	A period indicates a falling intonation contour
,	A comma indicates continuing intonation
?	A question mark indicates rising intonation contour
¿	An inverted question mark indicates a pitch rise stronger than the comma but weaker than the question mark
_	An underscore indicates a level intonation contour
:	Colons indicate lengthening of preceding sound (the more colons, the longer the lengthening)
ye-	A hyphen indicates an abrupt cutoff sound (phonetically, a glottal stop)
<u>yes</u>	Underlining indicates stress or emphasis, by increased amplitude or pitch
YES	Upper case letters indicates noticeably louder speech
°yes°	The degree sign indicates noticeably quiet or soft speech
^	A caret indicates a sharp rise in pitch
	A pip indicates a sharp fall in pitch
>yes<	Indicates talk that is noticeably faster than surrounding talk
<yes>	Indicate talk that is noticeably slower than surrounding talk
hh	The letter 'h' indicates audible aspirations (the more hs the longer the breath)
.hh	A period preceding the letter 'h' indicates audible inhalations (the more hs the longer the breath)
y(h)es	h within parentheses within a word indicates "laugh-like" sound
£yes£	A pound sign indicates smile voice
~	A tilde indicates tremulous or 'wobbly' voice

3. Other notational devices

(guess)	Words within single parentheses indicate likely hearing of that word
((coughs))	Information in double parentheses indicate descriptions of events rather than representations of them
()	Empty parentheses indicate hearable yet indecipherable talk

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEWEE CORPUS OF INTERVIEWS (CHAPTER 3)

No.	Air Date	Network/Program	Interviewer(s)	Interviewee
1	2007-01-21	ABC/This Week	George Stephanopolous	Bill Richardson
2	2007-02-11	CBS/Face The Nation	Bob Schieffer	Chris Dodd
3	2007-03-18	CBS/Face The Nation	Bob Schieffer	Dianne Feinstein
4	2007-04-30	CBS/Face The Nation	Bob Schieffer	Condoleezza Rice
5	2007-05-13	ABC/This Week	George Stephanopolous	Barack Obama
6	2007-05-13	CBS/Face The Nation	Bob Schieffer	Charles Rangel
7	2007-05-18	CNN/The Situation Room	Wolf Blitzer	Mike Gravel
8	2007-06-17	CBS/Face The Nation	Bob Schieffer	Mitch McConnell
9	2007-07-08	ABC/This Week	George Stephanopolous	Ron Paul
10	2007-08-27	CNN/Late Edition	Wolf Blitzer	Bill Richardson
11	2007-09-19	CBS/Face The Nation	Bob Schieffer	John Edwards
12	2007-09-19	CBS/Face The Nation	Bob Schieffer	Mike Huckabee
13	2007-09-21	CBS/Face The Nation	Bob Schieffer	Lindsey Graham
14	2007-09-30	CNN/Late Edition	Wolf Blitzer	Nancy Pelosi
15	2007-10-07	NBC/Meet The Press	Tim Russert	John Edwards
16	2007-10-10	FOX/Fox News Sunday	Chris Wallace	Mike Huckabee
17	2007-10-28	NBC/Meet The Press	Tim Russert	Chris Dodd
18	2007-11-16	ABC/ABC News	Rick Klein	Dennis Kucinich
19	2007-12-02	CNN/Late Edition	Wolf Blitzer	Ron Paul
20	2007-12-09	NBC/Meet The Press	Tim Russert	Rudi Giuliani
21	2007-12-16	NBC/Meet The Press	Tim Russert	Mitt Romney
22	2007-12-23	NBC/Meet The Press	Tim Russert	Ron Paul
23	2007-12-30	FOX/Fox News Sunday	Chris Wallace	Fred Thompson
24	2008-01-04	CNN/America Morning	Kiran Chetry	Mike Huckabee
25	2008-01-14	FOX/Hannity & Colmes	Sean Hannity & Alan Colmes	Fred Thompson
26	2008-02-10	NBC/Meet The Press	Tim Russert	Mike Huckabee
27	2008-02-17	ABC/This Week	George Stephanopolous	John McCain
28	2008-04-20	ABC/This Week	George Stephanopolous	John McCain
29	2008-05-04	NBC/Meet The Press	Tim Russert	Barack Obama
30	2008-05-08	CNN/The Situation Room	Wolf Blitzer	Barack Obama
31	2008-06-12	FOX/The O'Reilly Factor	Bill O'Reilly	Dennis Kucinich
32	2008-08-03	ABC/This Week	George Stephanopolous	Nancy Pelosi
33	2008-09-17	FOX/Fox News	Sean Hannity	Sarah Palin
34	2008-09-28	CNN/Late Edition	Wolf Blitzer	Ron Paul
35	2008-11-23	CNN/Late Edition	Wolf Blitzer	Jennifer Granholm
36	2008-11-24	FOX/Hannity & Colmes	Alan Colmes	Mark Sanford
37	2008-12-23	ABC/ABC News	Charles Gibson	George Bush
38	2009-02-18	FOX/Hannity	Sean Hannity	Mark Sanford
39	2009-06-14	ABC/This Week	George Stephanopolous	Mitt Romney
40	2009-07-12	NBC/Meet The Press	David Gregory	John McCain
41	2009-07-12	NBC/Meet The Press	David Gregory	Chuck Schumer
42	2010-02-17	CBS News	Harry Smith	Joe Biden
43	2010-02-17	CBS/Face The Nation	Bob Schieffer	Joe Biden

44	2010-07-30	FOX/Hannity	Sean Hannity	Evan Bayh
45	2010-07-31	ABC/ABC News	Christiane Amanpour	Nancy Pelosi
46	2010-08-02	FOX/Hannity	Sean Hannity	Rand Paul
47	2010-08-04	FOX/Hannity	Sean Hannity	Arlen Specter
48	2010-08-09	NBC/Meet The Press	David Gregory	John Boehner
49	2010-09-14	CNN/Live	Jessica Yellin	Christine O'Donnell
50	2010-12-28	CNN/Live	Jessica Yellin	Russell Pearce

APPENDIX C: CLINTON CORPUS OF INTERVIEWS (CHAPTER 4)

No.	Air Date	Network/Program	Interviewer(s)
1	2007-03-07	CNN/360 interview	Anderson Cooper
2	2007-09-18	ABC/Good Morning America	Diane Sawyer
3	2007-09-23	CBS/Face The Nation	Bob Schieffer
4	2007-09-23	MSNBC/Meet The Press	Tim Russert
5	2007-09-23	ABC/This Week	George Stephanopoulos
6	2007-09-23	CNN/The Late Edition	Wolf Blitzer
7	2007-09-23	FOX/Fox News Sunday	Chris Wallace
8	2007-12-06	ABC World News	Charles Gibson
9	2007-12-17	FOX/Fox Morning news	Steve Doocy & Gretchen Carlson
10	2007-12-17	MSNBC/The Today Show	David Gregory
11	2007-12-17	CBS/The Early Show	Harry Smith
12	2007-12-17	CNN/American Morning	Kiran Chetry
13	2007-12-31	ABC/This Week	George Steph.
14	2008-01-13	MSNBC/Meet The Press	Tim Russert
15	2008-01-16	MSNBC/Nightly News	Brian Williams
16	2008-01-27	CBS/Face The Nation	Bob Schieffer
17	2008-04-22	MSNBC/Countdown	Keith Olberman
18	2008-04-30	FOX/The O'Reilly Factor	Bill O'Reilly
19	2008-05-05	CBS/CBS News	Katie Couric
20	2008-05-05	FOX/Fox & Friends	Gretchen Carlson
21	2008-10-13	ABC/Good Morning America	Kate Snow
22	2008-10-15	FOX/Fox & Friends	Gretchen Carlson
23	2008-10-15	CNN/Post-debate interview	Wolf Blitzer
24	2009-08-09	CNN/GPS	Fahreed Zakaria
25	2009-09-27	CBS/Face the Nation	Harry Smith

APPENDIX D: MEDIA DISCOURSE DATA

- Age* (Australia) 2007, October 3. "Clinton cackle becomes issue on US election lips," Anne Davies.
- American Weekly Magazine* 2007, December 9, by Berger.
- Boston Globe* 2007, September 30. "That Clinton cackle," by Joan Vennoch.
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- Daily News* 2008, January 25. "GOP fiscal fisticuffs hopefuls spar over econ. In FLA debate," by Celeste Katz & David Saltonstall.
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- Monitor* 2008, July 18. "Women's rights movement celebrates 160 years," by Annie Laurie Gaylor.
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- New York Times* 2008, September 14. "Endorsement of Obama overflows Koch's inbox," by Sam Roberts.
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- Times* (UK) 2007, October 6. "Voodoo dolls and wicked witch gibes just can't stop the Clinton juggernaut crushing all in its path," by Tom Baldwin.
- Toronto Star* 2007, December 30. "The year of living shamelessly 2007: David Olive looks back in anguish with his annual quiz," by David Olive.
- Virginian-Pilot* 2007, October 3. "Cackling all the way."
- Washington Post* 2007, October 2. "Chucklegate," by Howard Kurtz.
- Washington Post* 2007, October 3. "Hillary chuckles; pundits snort; Clinton's robust yuks lead to analysis of appeal of laughter," by Howard Kurtz.
- Washington Times* 2007, October 5. "The cold cackle of opportunism," by Wesley Pruden.

Broadcast Media

- Daily Show 2007, September 25, with Jon Stewart.
- Fox News Sunday Roundtable 2007, September 23, with Brit Hume and Chris Wallace.
- Glenn Beck 2007, October 7, with Glenn Beck.
- O'Reilly Factor 2007, September 24, with Bill O'Reilly.
- Rush Limbaugh Show 2007, September 13. "Clinton cackles; lies about Iraq vote."
- Rush Limbaugh Show 2007, September 24. "Do you want four years of this?"
- Sean Hannity Show 2007, September 24, with Sean Hannity.
- Situation Room 2007, October 1, with Wolf Blitzer.

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