Social epistemology in broadcast news interviews

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ABSTRACT

This article investigates how participants in broadcast news interviews display their orientations to a social distribution of knowledge regarding newsworthy events and actors. Interviewers treat the nature, grounds, and limits of interviewees' knowledge as accountable matters. The article employs single-case and quantitative analyses to show that, in and through the design of their questions, interviewers distinguish between (i) interviewees as subject-actors who are responsible for direct, first-hand knowledge of their own conduct; and (ii) interviewees as commentators who, on the basis of indirect, second-hand knowledge, are entitled to opinions about third parties' conduct. This distinction serves as a basis for the production of interviewees' responses as talk that expresses either matters of fact or points of opinion. The article examines how these aspects of question design establish relevancies for interviewees' responses and, ultimately, shape news content. (Mass media, epistemology, conversation analysis, evidentiality, interaction)*

INTRODUCTION

Contending that "knowledge is socially distributed," Alfred Schutz argued that the organization of its social distribution was "general" and "structured" (1970:237, 241); he proposed that its investigation could lead to the "understanding of such complicated relationships as those existing among the performing artist, his public, and his critics, or among manufacturer, retailer, advertising agent, and consumer, or among the government executive, his technical advisor, and public opinion" (Schutz 1970:241).

To Schutz's list may be added the equally complicated social relationships among professional journalists, their sources, and public audiences. Journalists rely on sources for newsworthy information and opinion. In selecting sources, journalists seek individuals in positions to know; and, in subsequently presenting news, journalists also seek to establish, for the news audience, the bases on which their sources are entitled – and, in some cases, obliged – to know. An extensive and growing body of literature establishes that journalists recurrently recruit sources with official, bureaucratic affiliations because those affiliations provide

self-evident corroboration of how those sources are in a position to "know what they say" (Fishman 1980:92–93).[1]

This well-established literature documents how journalists orient to sources' official, bureaucratic affiliations in their SELECTION of sources. There is less research on the practices that journalists employ to PRESENT sources to news audiences. In presenting sources to audiences, how do reporters display their orientations both to what sources know, and to how that knowledge entitles or obliges sources to account for, or comment on, newsworthy actions and events? This article addresses these questions by examining interactions between journalists and sources in broadcast news interviews. It identifies formal design features of interviewers' questions and interviewees' answers to explain how those parties negotiate interviewees' rights and obligations to know about, comment on, and account for newsworthy actions and events. This analysis contributes to an understanding of the practices that news interview participants employ to distinguish between "matters of fact" or "points of "opinion"; more generally, it explores how "practical epistemology" (Zimmerman 1992, Whalen & Zimmerman 1990; see also Drew & Heritage 1992:45–53) shapes news interview content.

BACKGROUND

Journalists have a professional concern for the twin issues of what news sources know, and how that knowledge establishes those sources' rights and obligations to speak authoritatively on newsworthy actions and events. As far as news media scholars have treated these issues, they have tended to consider the "news values" that undergird journalists' selection of "suitable" and "known" sources (Gans 1979), the "role relationships" and "patterned interactions" between media professionals and their sources (Blumler & Gurevitch 1995), and the relative "visibility" of different types of sources (Roshco 1975). From a variety of perspectives, media scholars conclude that, for journalists, " 'news' is about what those in power say and do" (Croteau & Hoynes 1994:177). In a similar vein, Entman and Paletz 1980 assert, "The news is rooted not merely in organizational processes and professional norms, but in the action, inaction, and talk of the elites who are the sources and subjects of most political stories" (1980:164; see also McQuail 1987:163–164; Gans 1979:8–18).

The focus of journalistic attention on elite subject-actors and their action, inaction, and talk can be understood as an adaptation, to journalism in general and the broadcast news interview in particular, of a broader concern for the explanation of action, whether those actors are "powerful," "elite," and "known" or not. As Harold Garfinkel's now classic ethnomethodological studies initially demonstrated, social actors understand "the most commonplace activities of daily life" as possessing the dual attributes of being "observable-and-reportable" (Garfinkel

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1967:1). In consequence, Garfinkel contended, actors treat their own conduct and the actions of others as "accountable" (1967:1, 33–34).

A conception of knowledge and its social distribution as accountable matters was already evident in one of Harvey Sacks's earliest lectures (1992[1964–5]), in which he contrasted "knowledge" and "opinion" in terms of ENTITLEMENT. Discussing how professionals (in particular, psychiatrists) talk with lay persons, Sacks argued that "opinion" is what "lay persons are entitled to have when they're not entitled to have knowledge" (1992:33). For Sacks, "the notion of 'opinion'" gives persons "permission to talk ... under the control that one doesn't really know" (1992:33).

Subsequent research in ethnomethodology and Conversation Analysis (CA) has built on and elaborated an ethnomethodological conception of knowledge as an accountable phenomenon. For this article's focus, two of these subsequent studies are especially salient. Sacks 1975 and Pomerantz 1980 explored how speakers in ordinary conversation design their utterances to display their orientations to a distinction between matters known directly or primarily to them, and matters known to them indirectly, at second hand.

Thus, in analyzing different responses to the inquiry *How are you?*, Sacks 1975 considered how interactants orient to differences between "things you know on your own behalf" (for example, *I feel tired*, or *I feel lousy*) and "things you know by virtue of another's having told you" (*I'm pretty*, or *I'm smart*). "One is responsible," Sacks observed, "for knowing some things on one's own behalf" (1975:72).

Invoking Sacks's analysis in her investigation of "information-eliciting tellings," Pomerantz 1980 formalized the distinction between these two types of "knowables":

Type 1 knowables are those that subject-actors as SUBJECT-ACTORS have rights and obligations to know. For example, ones name, what one is doing, and so on are assumed to be available to a competent subject-actor.

Type 2 knowables are those that subject-actors are assumed to have access to by virtue of the knowings being occasioned. Where your friend is, what she or he did yesterday, and the like are accountably available by virtue of the subject-actor's having been told, having figured it out, having seen the friend, and so on. (Pomerantz 1980:187–8)

The insights of Sacks and Pomerantz establish a direct link between Garfinkel's explication of accountability and Schutz's conception of a social distribution of knowledge. As Sacks's and Pomerantz's research shows, interactants treat one another's knowledge – including the bases for, and limits of, that knowledge – as accountable matters.

THE PHENOMENON AND ITS CONTEXT

This article investigates how participants in broadcast news interviews display their orientations to the social distribution of knowledge as an accountable matter, and how those orientations shape news content. Through the design of their turns at talk, broadcast news interviewers display their understandings of

(1) who sources are;
(2) what sources know (or might be expected to know) based on their identities; and
(3) what such knowledge entitles or obliges sources to address.

Furthermore, in this institutional context, interviewers display these understandings not only to interviewees but also to an "overhearing" audience (Heritage 1985, Schudson 1994).

One straightforward way that interviewers display these understandings is through explicit PERSON-DESCRIPTIONS, produced either in opening sequences (Clayman 1991) or in questioning (Roth 1998). This article examines how interviewers, through the design of questioning turns, display their understandings of interviewees' identities and the grounds for interviewees' knowledge of newsworthy actions or events – without explicitly invoking interviewees' identities through overt person-descriptions. For example, in ex. 1, the interviewer aligns the interviewee as a (potential) SUBJECT-ACTOR. (Here and following, the text refers to interviewer and interviewee as IR and IE, respectively.)

(1) Meet the Press 10/15/95:1 (regarding the "Million Man March" on Washington, D.C.; the IE is Reverend Jesse Jackson.)

 IR: Reverend Jackson?
   Will you be marching tomorrow?

The design of the interviewer's question as a straightforward inquiry into (future) reality (*Will you . . .*) treats the issue as a matter of FACT, based on Jackson's direct, first-hand knowledge of his own intentions.

By contrast, interviewers' questions can align interviewees as COMMENTATORS on the conduct of other subject-actors, as in the following extract. In ex. 2, an interviewer questions Bob Dole about the intentions of a third party (referred to as *he* in the question), California's Governor Pete Wilson. At the time of the interview, Dole was campaigning for the Republican Party's presidential nomination, and though Wilson had withdrawn from that race, many still expected Wilson to play a pivotal role in the party's nomination, as the interviewer's question makes clear:

(2) Face the Nation 10/01/95a:1

 IR: Do you <u>think</u> he's gonna en<u>dor:</u>se <u>you</u>?

As a CANDIDATE in the electoral campaign, Dole was obviously a subject-actor; nevertheless, the design of the question aligns Dole, at least momentarily, as an

(interested) COMMENTATOR on the conduct of another subject-actor, Wilson. Moreover, by formulating the question as *Do you think* … (rather than, for example, "Will he …") the interviewer treats the prospective answer as a matter of OPINION, based on Dole's indirect, second-hand knowledge of Wilson.[2]

These two questioning turns exemplify the primary phenomena that this article analyzes. DIRECT QUESTIONS, as in ex. 1, typically align interviewees as subject-actors; direct questions depict interviewees' answers as involving "correct information," "true accounts," or "established facts" (cf. Pomerantz 1984:609), which interviewees know (or should know) directly, with certainty, as MATTERS OF FACT. By contrast, EPISTEMIC-FRAMED QUESTIONS, as in ex. 2, typically align interviewees as commentators; these questions depict interviewees' answers as involving indirect access to, or less than certain knowledge about, the object of questioning, which interviewees address as informed POINTS OF OPINION.

Although the design of interviewers' questions constitutes the primary phenomenon, this article also examines the consequences of these questions for the design of interviewees' answers, and especially how interviewees' responses embrace or contest interviewers' attributions of knowledge to them.

These aspects of turn design instantiate interviewers' and interviewees' orientations to social epistemology – the nature of knowledge, the grounds for it, and its limits and validity – in the broadcast news interview. These aspects of turn design do not merely REFLECT a social distribution of knowledge; they partly CONSTITUTE it. However, in broadcast interviews the interactional negotiation of social epistemology is typically as inconspicuous as it is important. The work that interviewers' turns do to depict interviewees' access to or knowledge about newsworthy actions and events is typically taken for granted, a "seen but unnoticed" (Garfinkel 1967:118) feature of question design. Nonetheless, differences between the designs of direct and epistemic-framed questions matter because, through these questions and interviewees' responses to them, the participants in broadcast news interviews negotiate interviewees' alignments as commentators or subject-actors, and also their authoritativeness as commentators or their credibility as subject-actors. Though the morally accountable character of the phenomenon typically remains tacit, it does become explicit in instances where interviewers and interviewees display conflicting understandings of what an interviewee is obliged to know or entitled to express.

DATA

The data corpus for this article consists of 20 news interviews as broadcast on PBS's *MacNeil/Lehrer Newshour* and ABC's *Nightline* in July and October–November, 1993. I transcribed all interviews in the corpus using the notation system summarized in the Appendix; the transcripts in this article are simplified versions of more detailed originals.

The data corpus includes 260 question-answer sequences, divided equally between the two programs. From those 260 question-answer sequences, I collected every question-answer sequence in which interviewers questioned interviewees about interviewees' own actions or the actions of a third party. This procedure excluded interviewer questions that did not explicitly ask about action or conduct. For example, the question *Does this budget make sense?* does not involve the formulation of explicit action or conduct, and so it would be excluded from the data collection. After I excluded such questions, the data collection consisted of 131 question-answer sequences, which are the basis for this article's analyses.

QUESTION DESIGN

Exploring the social organization of ordinary conversation, Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson developed the concept of "recipient design" to refer to "the multitude of respects in which the talk by a party in a conversation is constructed or designed in ways which display an orientation and sensitivity to the particular other(s) who are the co-participants" (1974:727). Perhaps the most obvious manifestation of recipient design in broadcast news interviews involves how parties design their talk to be appropriate to the institutional roles of interviewer (IR) and interviewee (IE). Prior research demonstrates that news interview conduct is organized in terms of the pre-allocation of turn-types according to these institutional roles: Interviewers and interviewees produce turns at talk that are minimally recognizable as questions and answers, respectively. Moreover, in adhering to these procedures, the parties "constitute themselves – for one another and for the news audience – as IR and IE respectively" (Heritage & Greatbatch 1991:98).

Among the ways that IRs design their questioning turns to be appropriate for the interviewees to whom they are addressed, the depiction of interviewees' bases of knowledge regarding the matters in question figures importantly, if not always conspicuously, in the social organization of interaction in the broadcast news interview. This section analyzes how interviewers employ DIRECT QUESTIONS to align interviewees as having immediate, first-hand knowledge of some action or conduct, and EPISTEMIC-FRAMED QUESTIONS to align interviewees as having indirect, second-hand knowledge of the action or conduct in question. Furthermore, this analysis demonstrates that interviewers conventionally employ direct questions when asking interviewees about their own conduct, thus aligning those interviewees as SUBJECT-ACTORS; and that interviewers conventionally employ epistemic-framed questions when asking interviewees about the conduct of third-parties, thus aligning those interviewees as COMMENTATORS. The analysis shows the different rights and obligations associated with each interviewee alignment type.

Direct questions

Direct questions propose that interviewers have primary access to, and direct knowledge of, the matter in question. In formulating their questioning turns as

direct questions, interviewers hold interviewees to ACCOUNT FOR their own con-
duct, thus aligning them as subject-actors. Consider the following exemplary
instances of interviewers' direct questions that address interviewees' own past,
present, or future conduct:

(3) Newshour 10/28/93:6

    IR: Mister Fitzpatrick I assume that you've read these diaries.
  →   Is that right?

(4) Newshour 10/21/93:2

    IR: … You've been– your group has been <u>very</u> critical, particularly critical of the ads,
        the ah <u>heal</u>th insurance industry's running.=
  →   Why?

(5) Newshour 11/02/93:10

    IR: .h And do you <u>take</u> any offense at this on<u>going</u> campaign?

(6) Nightline 07/19/93a:1

    IR: … Who <u>do</u> you blame?=Are you bl:aming (.) the American people because they
        just don't a<u>gree</u>: with you?

(7) Newshour 10/21/93:6

  → IR: Where do you go from here?
        You've had <u>two</u> ads, (.) .h ah and I gather you spent close to what, four million
        dollars?

(8) Nightline 07/19/93b:1

    IR: How: <u>how</u> on <u>ear</u>:th do you plan to enforce this order?

Across these representative cases, the direct design of interviewers' questions
projects interviewees' responses as involving "correct information" (e.g., ex. 3)
or "true accounts" (e.g., exx. 4–8) that interviewees are expected (or obliged) to
know.[3] For direct questions that solicit "true accounts," the activity of accounting
entails interviewees' explanations of their conduct in terms of either their dispo-
sitions (exx. 5 and 6), or their motives or intentions (exx. 4, 7, and 8) (cf. Schutz
1970, Louch 1966).

    Furthermore, each question describes an action that the INTERVIEWEE has taken,
might be taking, or might intend to take. In exx. 5 and 8, the description of the
action is embedded in, and constitutive of, the interviewers' questions, as SINGLE-
UNIT TURNS: In ex. 5, the action in question is "taking offense"; in ex. 8, it is the
interviewee's plans "to enforce this order." For the other instances, the inter-
viewer accomplishes the activity of questioning across MULTIPLE-UNIT TURNS,
through what Heritage & Roth 1995 describe as "question delivery structures."
Thus, in ex. 3 the interviewer's question (*Is that right?*) seeks confirmation of a
past action attributed to the interviewee ("having read" *these diaries*) in the ut-
terance that precedes, and establishes the relevance of, the turn's interrogative
unit. The questioning turn in ex. 6 consists of two interrogative units: (i) *Who do
you blame?*, which in its sequential context topicalizes the interviewee's com-
plaint, from his prior turn, about the outcome of a particular policy, and (ii) *Are*

you bl:aming (.) the American people because they just don't agree: with you?,
which proposes both a candidate target of, and a possible reason for, the inter-
viewee's "blaming," which the interviewee can confirm or reject. Thus, across
each of these exemplars, the interviewer's question not only aligns the inter-
viewee as a DIRECT KNOWER but also as a SUBJECT-ACTOR.

Epistemic-framed questions

By contrast with interviewers' direct questions, epistemic-framed questions align
interviewees as having indirect access to or second-hand knowledge of the events
in question. Interviewers employ epistemic frames in the design of their ques-
tions to establish this alignment and to entitle interviewees to express their opin-
ions. I use the term "epistemic frame" to refer to the grammatical form of
interrogatives that include "evidentials" (Chafe 1986).[4] Epistemic frames depict
the bases of interviewees' knowledge about the matter as LESS THAN CERTAIN
and/or their access to it as INDIRECT.

However, depicting an interviewee's knowledge as "less than certain" does
not necessarily discredit the interviewee's response; instead, through use of evi-
dentials such as *think* in *Do you think that...?*, interviewers ENTITLE interview-
ees to respond in terms of their opinions, beliefs, and feelings (cf. Sacks 1992:33).
Consider the following exemplars:

(9) Newshour 07/23/93:1

    IR: What is it that she <u>sa</u>id today:: that– that you think disqualifies her?

(10) Nightline 11/09/93:1

    IR: Secretary Reich ah .hhh <u>wh</u>at do you think was the thuh <u>b</u>est and thuh most substantive
        <u>po</u>int that was made by thuh Vice President.

(11) Newshour 07/19/93a:9

    IR: ... Do you (.) believe there will be a <u>se</u>rious effort in Con::gress .hhh to ah: go <u>b</u>ack to
        the original ban and make that uh– make that thuh law of thuh lan:d.

(12) Nightline 10/21/93:6

    IR: Did you feel that <u>p</u>eople on <u>y</u>our jury were <u>pr</u>essuring each other to come to a verdict?

(13) Newshour 10/28/93:1

    IR: .hhh Mister Dash is thuh Senate constitutionally out of li:ne in subpoenaing these
        diaries, in your opinion?

In each of the preceding data, the interviewer's question could be complete with-
out the epistemic frame: In ex. 9, for example, the interviewer could omit *you
think*, transforming the question to a direct question, "What is it that she said
today that disqualifies her?" Similarly, in ex. 10, the omission of *do you think*
from the interrogative transforms it to a direct question, "What was the best and
the most substantive point...?"

In exx. 11 and 12, the omission of the epistemic frame (*do you (.) believe* in
ex. 11, and *Did you feel that* in ex. 12) and an inversion of verb and predicate (i.e.,

"Will there be a serious effort …" in ex. 11, and "Were people on your jury pressuring each other …" in ex. 12) would transform the interrogatives from epistemic-framed questions to direct questions. Finally, in ex. 13, the interviewer includes the epistemic-mitigating *in your opinion* AFTER the possible completion of the question, retroactively (re)casting the preceding interrogative as eliciting the interviewee's *opinion*.

In sum, across the five representative questions examined here, the inclusion of evidentials projects interviewees' responses as involving indirect, second-hand knowledge. These features of turn construction entitle interviewees to express their opinion on the matter at hand.

Besides the epistemic frame of the question, other aspects of the interviewer's turn design may depict the interviewee's access to the conduct in question as indirect or the interviewee's knowledge of it as less than certain. For example, ex. 14, below, is from an interview on the Senate Judiciary Committee's hearings to confirm Judge Ruth Bader Ginsburg to the Supreme Court.

> (14) Newshour 07/22/93a:1
>
> → IR: .hhh Uh:: d-do you: de<u>tect</u> ah Professor Cheh any s:igns on thuh ju<u>di</u>ciary com-
> mittee: .h that there's any <u>less</u> enthusiasm for her <u>now</u> than there was: .hh when
> she was so: uh– uh– uh <u>fully</u> emb<u>ra</u>ced a month ago.

The question design depicts Cheh as having only indirect access to the members of the Judiciary Committee: To address the question, Cheh must *detect … any signs* of a change in their attitude. In addition to the question's epistemic frame (*Do you detect …*), the evidential marker, *s:igns*, further underscores Cheh's indirect access to the committee's members and their dispositions toward the nominee.

The alignment of Cheh as an expert commentator on the committee's conduct is initially established through the interviewer's introductory description of her (on news interview introductions, see Clayman 1991). The interviewer introduced Cheh as a "professor of law" who has been "following the testimony." The latter formulation – invoked in ex. 14 through the formulation *do you detect* – suggests that Cheh's PHYSICAL access to the hearings is not superior to that of an ordinary audience member; however, this access in combination with her expertise as a law professor constitutes a basis for her superior INTERPRETIVE UNDERSTANDING. As Whalen and Zimmerman note, "The issue of access to an event – the EXPERIENCING of it – involves not simply being near enough to see it or hear it or feel it, but being SOCIALLY positioned with regard to it as well" (1990:478).

Far from undermining the interviewee's credibility as a commentator on the Judiciary Committee, the design of the interviewer's question in ex. 14 depicts her as a specially informed observer of the committee's conduct: As situated by the interviewer's question, Cheh can be expected to have noticed details of the committee members' conduct that other, less expert observers might have either missed or misunderstood.

TABLE 1. *Turn design of IRs' second- and third-party questions.*

	Epistemic Frame	Direct	Total
Second-party question	6	56	62
Third-party question	49	20	69
Total	55	76	131

$X^2(1, N = 131) = 50.44, p < .001$

In questioning interviewees aligned as COMMENTATORS, interviewers typically solicit interviewees' informed opinions on the conduct of third parties as newsworthy subject-actors. In these cases, the activity of accounting invokes interviewees' occasioned, second-hand knowledge of third parties' conduct, and of the reasons, motives, or intentions underlying that conduct. Though interviewees may be expected to have knowledge of these matters, interviewers design questions addressed to commentators to (i) display their understanding of such interviewees' knowledge as indirect and second-hand, in order to (ii) entitle interviewees to express beliefs, opinions, and feelings about third parties' conduct as newsworthy contributions to the broadcast news interview.

THE DISTRIBUTION OF DIRECT AND EPISTEMIC-FRAMED QUESTIONS

Thus far, the analysis of question design has established a difference between direct questions and epistemic-framed questions. This analysis has also shown, on a case-by-case basis, that interviewers employ direct questions to ask interviewees about their own (second-party) conduct, thus aligning those interviewees as subject-actors; and that interviewers employ epistemic-framed questions to ask interviewees about the conduct of third parties, thus aligning those interviewees as commentators. Do these apparent patterns – between direct questions and second-party actions, and between epistemic-framed questions and third-party actions – hold across the entire data corpus? In aggregate, do interviewers' questions display an orientation to the social distribution of knowledge that is, to adopt Schutz's (1970:241) phrasing, "general" and "structured"?

The distributional evidence in Table 1 robustly supports the claim that interviewers recurrently orient to this social distribution of knowledge in formulating their questions: 90% of interviewers' questions about interviewees' own conduct ("Second-Party Questions") take the form of direct questions; and 71% of interviewers' questions about third parties' conduct take the form of epistemic-framed questions.

Although the figures in Table 1 constitute statistically significant support for this pair of relationships, those figures also indicate exceptions to this pattern. The quantitative findings raise additional research questions that require case-by-case analysis. Are there systematic explanations for the instances in which interviewers ask either about interviewees' own conduct with epistemic-framed questions, or about third parties' conduct with direct framed questions? Or are these occurrences the product of questioning practices that are less than systematic?

DEVIANT CASES

When interviewers ask interviewees about third parties' conduct using direct questions, they suggest that interviewees possess certain knowledge about the conduct of those third parties; and, when interviewers ask interviewees about their own conduct using epistemic-framed questions, they suggest that interviewees have less than certain knowledge about their own actions. As "deviant" cases (see, e.g., Clayman & Maynard 1995, Peräkylä 1997), such instances might seem to weaken the argument that question design contributes to the constitution of a social distribution of knowledge. However, an examination of these deviant cases serves to reinforce rather than undermine this argument.

Third-party questions WITHOUT epistemic frames

Interviewers regularly deploy three types of third-party questions WITHOUT epistemic frames. In the first type, interviewers align interviewees as EYEWITNESSES of third parties' publicly observable conduct, as in ex. 15:

> (15) Nightline 10/21/93:3 (The IE was the only African-American juror in a racially charged murder case.)
>
>   IR: <u>Ba</u>:sically you were th'only one saying not guilty.
>   IE: That's corr[ect.
> →   IR: [.hhh An-and what was thuh re:<u>a</u>ction?

The interviewer treats the interviewee as having first-hand access to "the reaction" of a third party, by virtue of her position as a jury member. In ex. 15 and comparable cases, interviewers use direct questions when they align interviewees as eyewitnesses of third parties' observable conduct. The use of direct questions is partly constitutive of this alignment; through direct questions, interviewers treat eyewitness interviewees as having first-hand access to the observable aspects of the conduct in question, and thus they authorize interviewees' descriptions of the observed conduct as factual accounts.

By contrast, when interviewers ask interviewees aligned as eyewitnesses to make inferences about third parties' motivations or intentions – which are NOT directly observable – interviewers do employ epistemic frames, as in ex. 16:

(16) Nightline 09/20/95a:2

    a→   IR: Y:ou were there:, y:ou heard thuh tone:,
    a→   you know what they were talking about.
    b→   Do you think they w::ent in to pro:te:ct O J Simpson, or any family members? Or
              because they thought he might be the:: uh .hh ah he might be thuh lead suspect
              here?

In the first units of the interviewers's turn (arrowed 'a'), the interviewer establishes the interviewee as an eyewitness to a conversation between the detectives who subsequently arrested O. J. Simpson for murder. When the interviewer asks the interviewee about the possible motivations for the detectives' subsequent conduct (which the interviewee did not witness), the interviewer employs an epistemic frame (*Do you think*, at b→) to depict the interviewee's indirect access to the detectives' motivations in that subsequent situation. Thus the interviewer displays an understanding of the interviewee's forthcoming answer as a matter of informed opinion.

In the second type, interviewers use direct questions when they align interviewees as experiencers, or PATIENTS, of third parties' conduct, as in ex. 17:

(17) Newshour 07/21/93:4 (The interviewee is Dr. Lee Brown, whom President Clinton had recently appointed as director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy.)

        IR: .hhhuhh Last February President Clinton among his: uh first official acts .hhh
             ah cut thuh sta::ff in the– in thuh drug control office, from I think a hundred and
             fifty or so down to twentyfour–
    →   .hhh What sort of signal: did that se:nd to you?

The interviewer's turn focuses on a third party's action, President Clinton's decision to reduce the staff at the Office of National Drug Control Policy. The direct design of the question takes into account the interviewee's social role as director of the office that Clinton's action has affected. The interviewee's own immediate experience of (this aspect of) the third party's conduct entitles him to provide a direct account of it.

Finally, interviewers employ direct questions when they align interviewees as AGENTS of third parties. For example, interviewers questioning political consultants and lawyers about their clients' actions regularly treat those interviewees as having first-hand knowledge of those third parties' conduct, by virtue of the interviewees' official roles.

(18) Nightline 11/11/93:5 (On the performance of Ross Perot in a debate on NAFTA; the IR introduced the IE, James Squires, as a former "spokesperson for then presidential candidate Ross Perot" and currently "a volunteer political advisor to Mister Perot's organization, United We Stand America.")

    a→   IR: .hhh Th::is surely is a subject that Mister Perot oughtta know: inside out by
              now:.
    b→   And yet whenever he is con:fronted with s:pecific questions .hhhh ah:: it's always one of these things "Well if I'd known you'd wanted it I woulda brought thuh papers."
    c→   Why doesn't he know– Why doesn't he know thuh subject better: by now?

The first component of the interviewer's turn (a→) raises the topic of Perot's knowledge of the proposed trade agreement. (Through the inclusion of _surely_ and the formulation of the matter as something Perot _oughtta know inside out by now_, this first unit also suggests a PROBLEM with Perot's knowledge.) The turn's second component (b→) describes how Perot reacts, _whenever he is confronted with specific questions_. Drawing on these two components of the turn, the interrogative component (c→) solicits the INTERVIEWEE's account for Perot's inadequate knowledge.

The question's direct – rather than epistemic-framed – design establishes the relevance of the interviewee's identity as one of Perot's advisors. In this capacity, the interviewee may be understood to have inside access to Perot's preparation strategy and to Perot himself, each of which serves as a basis for the interviewee's certain answer to the question. Moreover, casting the interviewee in these terms, the question may also depict the interviewee as partly responsible for Perot's inadequate knowledge.

The potential for close links between third parties and their agents is also evident in ex. 19, below, from an interview on misconduct charges against Senator Bob Packwood. Here the interviewer questions Packwood's lawyer about how Packwood intends to respond to the sanctions against him:

(19) Newshour 10/28/93:8

    a→   IR: Are– are you pre–
    b→   Does: thuh Senator .hhh ah want this to go all the way t' thuh Supreme Court if it <u>has</u> to?

The interviewer's question treats the interviewee as having certain knowledge of how Senator Packwood intends to respond to the charges. The "self-repair" (Schegloff, Jefferson, & Sacks 1977) in the initial portion of the interviewer's turn – from _Are– are you pre–_ (a→) to _Does: thuh Senator . . ._ (b→) – is notable in this regard: Examining the completed question, the initial but abandoned formulation can be heard in retrospect to have projected a question such as "Are you prepared for this to go all the way to the Supreme Court?" This formulation would have treated the interviewee as a subject-actor (perhaps in conjunction with _thuh Senator_, since the _you_ could be either singular or plural). The repaired version of the question (_Does: thuh Senator . . ._) is a recognizably different beginning (see Schegloff 1996); it (re)casts the Senator (rather than _you_) as subject-actor, thus (re)aligning the interviewee as a commentator on the Senator's intentions – albeit a commentator with inside knowledge, based on a combination of the interviewee's status as the Senator's lawyer and the legal decision that is the question's focus.

In asking interviewees about third parties' conduct, interviewers address eyewitnesses, patients, and agents with direct questions, thus treating them as having privileged access to, and knowledge of, that conduct.

Second-party questions WITH *epistemic frames*

The second type of deviant case involves interviewers' use of epistemic-framed questions to ask about interviewees' own (second-party) conduct. This type is not only less frequent but also more uniform than the first type. A single, basic type of interviewer question encompasses nearly all the instances in this collection: Interviewers treat interviewees as having less than certain knowledge about the CONSEQUENCES of their conduct, when those consequences may not be knowable – even to the interviewee – with certainty. In this context, interviewers' use of epistemic-framed questions indexes the PERSPECTIVAL character of the accounts that such questions seek to elicit. The following pair of examples is from an interview on broadcast advertising strategies aimed at influencing the public's understanding of competing plans for health care reform:

```
(20) Newshour 10/21/93:3
         IE:    . . . When you looked at the ad: .hhh if ya had a magnify:ing glass, (.) you might
                be able to find out that the insurance industry paid for this, they– they do have
                it in there. .hhh But you('d) better have pretty high powered magnifying glasses
                to know t[hat.
  a→   IR:             [.hhh Well
  a→          but [lemme ask you why:: do you think it's so:=
         IE:     [Now
  b→   IR:   =Your ad: (0.3) seeks to: expose this.
  c→          Why do you think that's a great strategy?
```

In ex. 20, the interviewee critiques an advertisement produced by the health insurance industry. In response to this critique, the interviewer launches an initial, epistemic-formed question (a→), which the interviewer subsequently abandons to produce a prefatory statement. This question preface (b→) links the interviewee's immediately prior critique to a second advertisement that the interviewer attributes to the interviewee (i.e., *Your ad:* . . .). The final, interrogative component of the interviewer's turn (c→) solicits the interviewee's account of his rationale for the "strategy" he has advocated, both in his immediately prior talk and in the advertisement attributed to him.

Although the interviewee may have primary "rights and obligations" (Pomerantz 1980) to know – and defend – his position as *a great strategy*, the interviewer's question does NOT treat the solicited response as a DEFINITIVE account. Instead, the epistemic frame of the question displays the interviewer's understanding of the solicited account as a point of OPINION: The strategy's success ultimately depends on how audiences respond to it; the interviewee may be entitled to an opinion on what makes the strategy "great" IN HIS VIEW, but he cannot know with certainty whether the strategy will be persuasive for the audience that it seeks to address.

In ex. 21, from the same interview, another interviewee (whom the interviewer introduced as a "Republican media consultant," responsible for the Republican National Committee health ad) offers a critique of the Democratic reform plan:

(21) Newshour 10/21/93:3

    a→ IE: . . . We ah: we want people to read thuh pla:n. And when they <u>do</u>, I think ah:
                    they'll understand that this is not a plan for <u>bet</u>ter health care
    a→   .hhh we just want them to know that this is a plan for <u>big</u>ger government.
        IR: And you think that's an effective argument.

At two points (a→) in the interviewee's displayed turn, his talk indexes his or-
ganization's "wants" (*We want people to read thuh pla:n. . . . . we just want them to
know that. . .*). The interviewer's turn pursues the interviewee's position. The de-
sign of the interviewer's question to include the epistemic frame *you think* depicts
the issue of the argument's EFFECTIVENESS as a matter of opinion, which depends
ultimately on the reactions of the citizens who will view the advertisement and
assess its argument in the upcoming weeks.

    Through questions such as those depicted in exx. 20 and 21, interviewers
solicit interviewees' accounts of their conduct in terms of its not yet knowable
consequences; in doing so, interviewers endow interviewees with limited episte-
mic resources for constructing those accounts. Though addressed to interviewees
as subject/actors, these questions solicit a sort of understanding (i.e., "opinion")
that is characteristic of third-party action questions (compare, e.g., ex. 2): In both
instances, the design of interviewers' questions serves to align interviewees as
indirect knowers whose knowledge is contingent and perspectival, not definitive.

R E S P O N S E   D E S I G N

To this point, the analysis has treated interviewers' questions without considering
the interviewee responses that those questions elicit. The analysis now turns to
examine (i) how interviewees' responses display their orientations to the design
of interviewers turns as epistemic-framed or direct questions, and (ii) the varying
rights or obligations that these question types entail. Specifically, this analysis
shows that interviewees regularly design their responses to embrace the type of
knowledge and/or degree of certainty attributed to them through the design of
interviewers' questions. This analysis also shows how interviewees can design
their responses to contest the knowledge and/or certainty that interviewers' ques-
tions attribute to them, by claiming that the nature or grounds of their knowledge
is either stronger or weaker than depicted through interviewers' questions.

Embracing responses

Consider the interviewee responses to each of the following epistemic-framed
questions:

(10′) Nightline 11/09/93:1

    a→ IR: Secretary Reich ah .hhh <u>wh</u>at do you think was the thuh <u>best</u> and thuh most
                    substance-tive <u>point</u> that was made by thuh Vice President.
    b→ IE: .Tch Ah <u>Te</u>:d I <u>th</u>ink thuh Vice President won: hands down because he made
                    thuh very simple point that . . .

(13′) Newshour 10/28/93:1

    IR: .hhh Mister Dash is thuh Senate constitutionally out of li:ne in subpoenaing
      these diaries,
  a→   in your opinion?
  b→ IE: Eh– No: in my opin:ion the: uh (0.2) thuh Senate Committee's <u>n</u>ot outta line
      constitutionally. >Actually thuh Constitution particularly .hhh ah gives the uh
      (<u>thuh</u>) Senate the power: to:: uh ah p<u>un</u>ish and to:: e<u>x</u>pel: its members.. . .

In each instance, the interviewer's question includes an epistemic frame (a→),
and the interviewee incorporates that epistemic frame into his response (b→).
The interviewee responses in exx. 10′ and 13′ display the interviewees' orienta-
tions to the epistemic frame as a relevant design feature of the interviewers'
questions: The interviewees concur with the interviewers in treating the assess-
ment of an aspect of the vice president's debate performance or the Senate's
subpoena as matters of opinion. In the course of addressing the questions, each
interviewee thus tacitly ratifies the type of knowledge attributed to him by the
interviewer by incorporating the question's epistemic frame into his response.
Thus, interviewer and interviewee collaborate in the production of the responses
as matters of opinion.

 Interviewees also design their responses to interviewers' direct questions to
ratify and mobilize the first-hand knowledge or direct access attributed to them
through those questions. However, without epistemic frames in the interviewers'
questions for the interviewees to incorporate into their responses, the "tuning" of
interviewees' responses to match interviewers' questions is still more tacit for
direct questions, as in exx. 22 and 6′:

(22) Newshour 07/20/93:1

   IR: You worked on that case <u>t</u>oo with hi[m :. right?]
   IE: [I worked on] that case:. I was in charge of the
     organized crime program at that particular time.

(6′) Newshour 07/19/93a:1

   IR: . . . <u>Who</u> <u>do</u> you blame?=Are you bl:aming (.) the American people because they just
     don't <u>a</u>gree: with you?
   IE: .Tch n:o. <u>Ah</u>::m I bl<u>am:e</u> ah:: the:: leadership at thuh <u>P</u>entagon: . . .

In each instance, the interviewer's question targets a matter presumed to be known
with certainty by the interviewee. In ex. 22, the interviewer asks about a phase of
the interviewee's career that brought him into contact with the newsmaker who is
the interview's focus – the newly-nominated FBI director, Louis Freeh. This ques-
tion aligns the interviewee as a direct knower of his own past conduct: The direct
form of the question authorizes the interviewee to describe his involvement in an
organized crime investigation (*that case*) as a matter of fact. The interviewee's
response not only confirms and elaborates on his involvement in the case, it also
tacitly ratifies the type of knowledge (first-hand experience) that the interviewer
has attributed to the interviewee.

 In ex. 6′, the interviewer pursues an interviewee's complaints about shortcom-
ings in a recently approved policy on homosexuals in the military by seeking to

TABLE 2. *Turn design of IEs' answers, by IR turn design.*

	IE Turn		
	Epistemic Frame	Direct	Total
IR Turn			
Direct	12	55	67
Epistemic	40	10	50
Total	52	65	117

$X^2(1, N = 117) = 44.7, p < .001$
NOTE: Table 2 includes 117 interviewee answers, a figure that is smaller than the 131 questions in Table 1. The number of interviewee answers is smaller because not every interviewer question generates an interviewee answer.

determine whom the interviewee holds to account for these shortcomings. The interviewer's question aligns the interviewee as a subject-actor (*Who do you blame?=Are you bl:aming* ...) and as a direct knower who is expected to know and account for his position on these questions. In responding, the interviewer adopts these alignments as subject-actor and direct knower. Even as the interviewee rejects the interviewer's candidate proposal (*n:o. Ah::m I bla:me*...), he ratifies the interviewer's alignment of him as subject-actor and direct knower. In instances such as exx. 22 and 6′, interviewers and interviewees collaborate in the production of interviewees' responses as expressing matters of fact.

The pattern of interviewees designing their responses to ratify the nature or grounds of knowledge attributed to them through interviewers' questions holds robustly for this study's data corpus. As Table 2 shows, in responding to interviewers' epistemic-framed questions, 80% of interviewees' responses are themselves epistemic-framed; and, in responding to interviewers' direct questions, 82% of interviewees' responses are themselves direct in form.

Contesting responses

Table 2 also indicates instances in which interviewees design their responses to contest the nature or grounds of knowledge that interviewers attribute to them. Interviewees can claim greater knowledge than attributed to them by responding to epistemic-framed questions with direct responses. In the data corpus, this occurred in 20% of the cases. Ex. 23, from an interview on the "don't ask, don't tell" policy for homosexuals in the military, displays an exemplary instance in which an interviewee claims greater certainty than has been attributed to her through the interviewer's question.

(23) Newshour 07/19/93a:8

```
        IR:   What about the unit cohesion issue. You're a f:ormer company commander,
   a→         your v:iew of what thuh colonel said.
   b→   IE:   .hhhh Well everyone s:ays right now: that unit cohesion (.) would be uh deni-
               grated .hhh by: ah allowing openly gay and lesbian people to ser:ve.
   c→         But in fa:ct every study that's been commissioned by thuh Department of De-
               fense .hh including thuh Government Accounting Office's re:port .hh has indi-
               cated .h that it should be lifted, en that .h it is on:ly mere speculation on thuh part
               of people .h and we know, and thuh colonel does know this as well:, is that
               positive leadership .hh is– is the example of– by which (.) military people f:ollow.
```

The interviewer's question solicits the interviewee's *view* (a→) on the *unit cohesion issue*, relative to a co-interviewee's previously stated position. (The co-interviewee, referred to here by the interviewer as *thuh colonel*, had previously said, "We're concerned about cohesion. . . . This is going to damage cohesion.") Although the interviewee may be expected to know her own position with certainty, three aspects of the interviewer's question design depict the solicited position as a matter of the interviewee's (experientially informed) opinion: First, the questioning turn formulates "unit cohesion" as an *issue*; second, the question solicits her position relative to *what thuh colonel said*; and, third, the interviewer solicits the interviewee's *view*. Each of these three features of the interviewer's question contributes to an understanding of the proposed policy's effect on "unit cohesion" as a point of debate rather than as a matter of fact. That said, the question authorizes the interviewee's informed opinion on the "unit cohesion issue" based on her experience as a "former company commander" in the military. In brief, the question design depicts the issue and aligns the interviewee relative to the matter in terms that allow her to speak AUTHORITATIVELY, BUT NOT DEFINITIVELY on it.

In responding, the interviewee claims greater certainty about the policy's consequences for "unit cohesion" than the question attributed to her. She begins (at b→) by presenting the perspective that unit cohesion would be "denigrated" by the policy, and asserts that "everyone" holds such a view, a characterization that treats the opposing position taken previously by her co-interviewee (*thuh colonel*) as a TYPICAL position, given his situation. She goes on to counter this position (at c→) by invoking, as fact (*in fa:ct*), *what every study that's been commissioned by thuh Department of Defense . . . indicates* – that cohesion *should be lifted* by allowing openly gay and lesbian people to serve. By reporting these studies' findings – rather than speaking in terms of her own first-hand experience, as solicited by the question – the interviewee depicts this position (beginning at c→) as a matter of fact. Notably, in constructing her answer as independent of her own experience, she avoids depicting the position she articulates as simply HER position, despite the interviewer's question having been designed to elicit just that.

Whereas in instances such as ex. 23 interviewees claim greater certainty of knowledge than interviewers attribute to them, in other instances interviewees

display lesser knowledge. This practice is obvious in cases where interviewees respond to direct questions with epistemic-framed responses, as occurred in 18% of the cases in the data corpus. In such cases, interviewers can and do treat interviewees' lesser displays of knowledge as accountable matters. Consider the following exemplar, from an interview on "what to do about juvenile violence and crime." In ex. 24, the interviewer questions the Florida State Attorney (*Mister Shorestein*) about the state's policy of prosecuting juvenile offenders as adults.

(24) Newshour 11/04/93:1

    IR: Mister Shorestein let me start with you. Ahm:: To many people locking up–
        (0.3) kids– as adults would seem (.) like a pretty dra:stic <u>step</u>.
        .hhh <u>H</u>as it ha:<u>d</u> any measurable impact ye:t on thuh l:evel of of ah teen age: and
        child violence and <u>cri</u>:me in Jacksonville?
        (0.3)
a→ IE: .hhh W-we think it's ha:d a uh: discern:able ah <u>po</u>sitive effect. .hhh You <u>h</u>ave to
        understan:d that ah (.) <u>l</u>ocking up juveniles 'n <u>pro</u>secuting them as a<u>dul:ts</u> is a::
        ah <u>l</u>as:t ditch effort. .hhh really done in recog<u>ni</u>tion of thuh failure of: ah: <u>ou</u>r
        state an:: thuh majority of thuh states' ah juvenile <u>ju</u>stice systems. .hhhh Ah
b→   we think it <u>has</u>: to have a <u>po</u>:sitive effect ah merely because we're <u>ware</u>housing
        proli:fic ah juvenile offenders.
    IR: .Tch But is it t:oo <u>s:</u>oon– I gather you've had thuh program eighteen months.=Is
        it just too <u>soon</u>: to tell: if it's .hh (.) acting as a deterrent, or: reducing thuh level
        of cri:me?
c→ IE: .hhhh (.) W-well: ah-hh i-ih– I-I <u>know</u> it's reducing thuh <u>level</u> of cri:me because
        of thuh <u>fact</u> that uh: these uh: offenders are:
d→   in<u>car</u>cerated. .hhh We believe it has a deter:rent affect because it's: par:t of our
        comprehensive program to intervene with children (.) at the earliest possible
        opportunity. . . .

The interviewer's initial question attributes a critical assessment of the program (as *a pretty dra:stic step*) to an unspecified third party (*many people*; see Clayman 1992), and it topicalizes the program's "impact" as a matter for the interviewee to describe. The interviewer formulates the question – which holds the interviewee to account for the program's efficacy in terms of its *measurable impact* – as a direct question, depicting the interviewee as one who knows, or ought to know, about this.

The interviewee's response is notable for its deployment of *we think* as an epistemic-mitigating frame (see a→ and b→). In both instances, through the frame *we think*, the interviewee depicts the assessment of the program as a matter of less than certain (institutional) opinion.[5] This way of formulating his response displays less certain knowledge than has been attributed to the interviewee through the interviewer's question; moreover, the interviewee's lack of certainty may be heard as problematic, given his responsibility for the policy.

In the subsequent question, the interviewer PURSUES this response (Greatbatch 1986), specifically in terms of the interviewee's lack of certainty: *Is it just too soon: to tell: if. . . .* In combination with the program's duration (which the interviewer interjects into the turn, *But is it t:oo s:oon– I gather you've had thuh program eighteen months. . . .*) the question can be heard to imply that the inter-

viewee's lack of certainty is NOT because it is *too soon to tell* (as the question nominally inquires), but because the program is ineffective. Defending against this implication, the interviewee gives reasons for the program's efficacy in terms of his personal knowledge (*I <u>know</u> it's reducing thuh <u>level</u> of cri:me because . . . at c→*) and official belief (*we believe it has a deter:rent affect because . . . at d→*); these statements are hearable as less than convincing, especially considering the initial characterization of the program as *pretty drastic*.

In summary, "deviant" cases in which interviewees' answers do not adopt the epistemic resources bestowed through interviewers questions highlight the NEGOTIATED, ACCOUNTABLE character of interviewees' rights and obligations to know about newsworthy matters. When interviewees conform to interviewers' expectations of them, the "negotiation" of what interviewees are entitled or obliged to know remains in the background, as an unstated premise of both the question and its response. By contrast, when interviewees claim greater or more certain knowledge than is attributed to them, it is obvious that interviewers do not unilaterally stipulate the relevant nature or grounds of interviewees' knowledge on newsworthy matters; and when interviewees fail to answer with the degree of certainty projected by interviewers' questions, interviewers treat interviewees' lack of certainty as an accountable matter to be pursued through supplementary questions. Interviewees' rights and obligations to know are a product of negotiation, enacted in interaction with interviewers through each party's turns at talk.

HOSTILE QUESTIONING OF SUBJECT-ACTORS

Drawing on the previous analysis, this section examines a single case of especially hostile questioning of an interviewee aligned as a subject-actor. This examination shows how interviewers can depict interviewees' lack of knowledge to discredit them. Although the questioning turns examined in the following exemplar each take the form of direct questions – that is, the conventional form for questions directed to interviewees regarding their own conduct, goals, beliefs, and intentions – the line of questioning that these direct-formed questions constitute is hardly a "standard" interviewing practice. In this example, the interviewer pushes the boundaries of acceptable interviewing practice.

Two days before Louisiana's 1991 gubernatorial election, *Meet the Press* featured an interview with the two candidates, Edwin Edwards and David Duke. During this interview, host Tim Russert and two additional interviewers repeatedly asked questions that challenged Edwards's and Duke's qualifications for office. At one point in the interview, Duke claimed that he should be elected because he would do more than Edwards for Louisiana's economic development. Subsequently, Russert questioned Duke about the state's economy, as displayed in ex. 25:

(25) Meet the Press 11/10/91:11

```
 1   IR:   What manufacturers are thuh three biggest
 2         employers in thuh state of Louisiana?
 3         (0.6)
 4   IE:   Well we have a number of– of employers in our:
 5         sta:[te.
 6   IR:       [But who are thuh <three (.) biggest (.)
 7         m:anufacturers> >who are the biggest employers
 8         in thuh state ah Louisiana?<
 9
10         ((15 lines of talk, on state's
11         largest employers, omitted))
12
13   IR:   Mister Duke please. .hhh Alright. In
14         ter:ms of economic development, (.) thuh
15         ca– the condition of your state,
16         how many people in your state (.) live
17         below thuh poverty line?
18         (0.4)
19   IE:   A great– a great percentage sir.
20         We have thuh highest per capita percentage
21         eh– .h in thuh country.
22         Just about.
23         'Bout thuh la:st five states of thuh country.=
24   IR:   =How– how many?
25
26         ((11 lines of talk, on people living
27         below the poverty line, omitted))
28
29   IR:   Are these thuh kinds of th:ings a governor
30         should know?=Who thuh largest employers are,
31         how many people live below thuh poverty line?
32         (.)
33   IE:   I'– I think thuh governor should know how
34         to make business wor:k....
```

In asking Duke to name *thuh three biggest employers* (lines 1–2) and to enumerate *how many people … live below thuh poverty line* (lines 16–17), Russert employs direct questions. The questions' direct form displays the twin understandings of (i) the substantive focus of each question as involving a matter that can be known with certainty, and (ii) Duke as belonging to a category of person who can be expected to possess this knowledge. Note that such a DISPLAY of understanding is not necessarily equivalent to what Russert "really" or "actually" expects Duke to know: In all likelihood, Russert chose to ask Duke these questions precisely because he expected Duke would NOT be able to answer them. However, the issue here is not Russert's private expectations, but instead those he displays publicly through the design of his questions. Throughout the segment, Russert's questions take the form of direct questions, displaying the expectation (however disingenuous it may have been) that Duke is, or should be, in a position to provide specific names and numbers.

In neither instance does Duke do so. Silences between the completion of Russert's questions and the beginning of Duke's responses (lines 3, 18) project troubles in those responses.[6] In both turns, Duke's responses evade dealing in specifics: *Well we have a number of– of employers . . .* (line 4) and *A great– a great percentage. . . .* (line 19). In the second case, when Duke attempts to elaborate by claiming *We have thuh highest per capital percentage . . . in thuh country* (lines 20–21), he immediately hedges that claim (*Just about.,* line 22) and ultimately retreats to a mitigated, less specific claim (*'Bout thuh la:st five states of thuh country.,* line 23). Russert pursues Duke's responses, treating them as inadequate (lines 6–8, 24), with the result of further (but no more specific) talk by Duke about Louisiana's largest employers and its poverty rate.

The initial questions' direct form provides a partial basis for these pursuits. Had Russert constructed the initial question of both sequences (lines 1–2, 16–17) to include an epistemic frame (e.g., "What manufacturers do YOU THINK are the three biggest employers. . . ?"), the questions themselves would have entitled Duke to respond in terms of his personal opinion, and so mitigated the grounds on which Russert might pursue any less than certain response by Duke. By contrast, formulated as a direct question – which display an expectation of certain, direct knowledge – the initial question of each sequence establishes grounds on which any response that departed from the expectation of definite knowledge could be pursued as having failed to answer the question.

To this point, the two sequences of questioning (lines 1–12 and 13–28) may be understood as topically related (both deal with aspects of Louisiana's economy) and structurally similar – each involves Russert's pursuit of Duke's initial response. That said, it is Russert's next question (lines 29–31) that both makes their topical relationship explicit and posits their moral significance. Russert's question is the culmination of what can be understood, retrospectively, as a line of questioning. The two prior sequences of questioning have established that Duke cannot name the state's three largest employers or enumerate its rate of poverty; the segment's culminating question – *Are these thuh kinds of th:ings a governor should <u>know</u>?. . . .* – makes explicit the contrast between Duke's lack of knowledge and the expectations of what "a governor should know." Russert's typified formulation – *Are these thuh kinds of things. . . ?* – depicts the two prior topics of questioning as INSTANCES of a more general, fundamental category, what *a governor should know*. Given the foregoing sequences, this question affords Duke few, if any, response options to counter the question's strong implication that his revealed lack of knowledge undermines his credentials as a candidate.

In reminiscing on his role as an interviewer for *Meet the Press*, Tim Russert singled out his questioning of Duke, and in particular the segment treated here, for attention. Here is Russert's account of the exchange:

Tone and temperament are essential to on-air professionalism. The only time I believe I became too emotional in my questioning was with former Ku

Klux Klan leader and Nazi sympathizer David Duke. He was running for governor of Louisiana, and I asked him to name the three largest employers in his state. He couldn't name one. The audience clearly saw his inadequacies, but I persisted in behaving like a prosecutor, yelling "You don't know the biggest employers in your state!" jabbing my finger all the while. I regretted my behavior.... Forty-eight hours later he lost the election. (http://www.msnbc.com/news/116892.asp#BODY)

If Russert's treatment of Duke approached the outer limits of "on-air professionalism," the detailed study of news interview talk and its organization offers an alternative to Russert's own psychological assessment of his conduct – that he became "too emotional." Though "tone" and "temperament" surely matter, the analysis of the exchange presented here suggests that turn design is also an essential aspect of Russert's (and other interviewers') professional conduct. It is through the design of his questions (as direct questions) that Russert depicts Duke as someone who OUGHT to know the answers to those questions. Thus, Duke's lack of knowledge came to be portrayed as a MORAL matter, and that portrayal is crucial to Russert's claim that "[t]he audience clearly saw [Duke's] inadequacies." In sum, this instance dramatically exhibits how treating a subject-actor as an authoritative knower (that is, as one who has or ought to have definite knowledge regarding some matter) can serve as a basis for discrediting the subject-actor (see also Roth 1998:94–96).

DISCUSSION

Persons regularly design their talk to display what they know and how they know it, or to display understandings of what others know and the bases for those understandings (see, e.g., Sacks 1975, Pomerantz 1980, Whalen & Zimmerman 1990). Studies of the interactional practices that persons employ to accomplish these displays specify and elaborate the significance of Alfred Schutz's (1970) claim that knowledge is "socially distributed."

One interpretation of the interactional practices examined in this study is that they give evidence of interviewers' and interviewees' finely detailed orientations to a social distribution of knowledge about newsworthy actors, actions, and the explanation of action. However, such an understanding of the data captures only part of what they demonstrate, because it treats the social distribution of knowledge as a phenomenon that is independent of, but reflected through, the participants' conduct. More fundamentally, however, this article has shown that the social distribution of knowledge is produced and reproduced through interactional practices such as those described. These interactional practices do not simply reflect the social distribution of knowledge, they contribute to its constitution. As interactants display an orientation to the social distribution of knowledge, their conduct reproduces it.

For example, interviewers' selective use of direct or epistemic-framed questions provides a framework for the interpretation of interviewees' responses as actions. Through specific questioning practices, interviewers display their understandings of interviewees' social position relative to newsworthy matters. As shown, interviewees orient to these aspects of interviewers' question design by constructing their responses to match, upgrade, or downgrade the type and/or extent of knowledge attributed to them through the question design. Much as the turn-taking system for broadcast news interviews provides a structural framework for the production of interviewees' disagreements and for the calibration of the strength of those disagreements (see Greatbatch 1992), the organization of interviewers' question design constitutes a framework for the production and intelligibility of interviewees' claims to more or less certain knowledge. When news interviewees claim greater knowledge than has been attributed to them through the design of interviewers' questions, or acknowledge lesser knowledge than those questions attribute to them, recurrent patterns in turn design provide for the recognizability of those actions. This is most obvious in instances where interviewees overtly contest the extent or type of knowledge attributed to them through the design of interviewers' questions, but it is no less the case when interviewees design their responses to fit the epistemic resources bestowed on them through the question design.

Perhaps most fundamentally, this empirically grounded account of interaction between journalists and their sources shows how interviewers and interviewees NEGOTIATE the epistemic status of sources' claims, as expressing MATTERS OF FACT or POINTS OF OPINION. As this article's data analysis shows, this negotiation is an ongoing aspect of news interview interaction that participants enact across each question-answer sequence through the design of their turns at talk. These negotiations shape the resulting news content, affecting not only the trajectory of questioning in particular cases but also the possibilities for the news interview as a broadcast medium. In cases such as exx. 24 and 25, the coherence of a trajectory of questioning depends on expectations about knowledge displayed through the design of interviewers' initial questions: In each case, when the interviewee fails to fulfill those expectations, the interviewer pursues the interviewee's lack of knowledge as a morally accountable matter. Thus, the interactional negotiation of what interviewees are entitled or obliged to know contributes, in these cases, to the constitution of the broadcast news interview as one domain of the public sphere in which government officials and other prominent newsmakers are held accountable for their conduct.

The phenomena investigated here also affect the possibilities for the news interview as FORUM FOR COMMENTARY on newsworthy actors and their actions. As noted, the evidential markers that interviewers employ to construct epistemic-framed questions are not typically conspicuous in broadcast news interview discourse; they are, however, the linguistic resources through which interviewers entitle interviewees to express their opinions. This not only allows broadcast

news interviews to address newsworthy events, despite the absence of the events' protagonists as interviewees (recall, for example, ex. 2); it also allows the broadcast news interview to serve as a forum for public debate between interviewees who represent conflicting perspectives on some social issue (as in ex. 23).

Finally, the interactional practices analyzed in this study are adaptations to the institutional context of the broadcast news interview of practices whose provenance is much more general. As an aspect of interaction, the negotiation of social epistemology – the nature and grounds of knowledge as SOCIAL SITUATED, PRACTICAL knowledge – is at once a local issue, arising out of and fitted to the particulars of singular instances of human interaction, and, nonetheless, a recurrent orderly phenomenon, constituted as such through describable practices of persons engaged in interaction with one another. Insofar as the social distribution of knowledge is, as Schutz contended, "general" and "structured," it depends on orderly practices of talk-in-interaction for its instantiation; through these practices, interactants create a social world in which "knowledge" (including different modes of knowing and their bases and limits) is a morally accountable matter.

NOTES

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[1] See also, inter alia, Sigal 1973, Molotch & Lester 1974, Tuchman 1978, and, for a succinct overview of this literature, Schudson 1989. Raymond 2000 offers an innovative account of how anchors and reporters negotiate their relative rights to describe authoritatively events in live news broadcasts.

[2] Evidential phrases, such as *I think*, *I guess*, or *I suppose* can indicate that knowledge stems from opinion or belief. See note 4.

[3] See Pomerantz 1984 on the interactionally based distinction between "correct information" and "true accounts."

[4] Chafe (1986:271) defines "evidentiality" to include "any linguistic expression of attitudes toward knowledge." In his analysis of evidentiality in English conversation, Chafe includes "belief" as "a mode of 'knowing' in which concern for evidence is downgraded" (1986:266). On evidentiality in oral discourse across different languages and cultures, see the contributions to Hill & Irvine 1993.

[5] The interviewee's selection of "we" – rather than, e.g., "I" – as the proterm for the epistemic frame indexes his incumbency in an official, institutional role (i.e., as Florida State Attorney). On "institutional" uses of "we," see Whalen & Zimmerman (1990:479–484), as well as Drew & Heritage (1992:30–31) and the studies they cite.

[6] Prior conversation analytic research demonstrates that delays regularly project "dispreferred" response types. For a summary of this research, see Heritage (1984:265–280).

APPENDIX: Transcript Notation

Adhering to conventions originally developed by Gail Jefferson and now widely used by conversation analysts, these transcripts aim to capture the details of actual, naturally occurring speech. The following list explains the transcription symbols used in this paper:

Will <u>you</u> be marching?	Underlined items were markedly stressed.
Will <u>you</u> be mar::ching?	Colon(s) indicate prolonging of the prior sound.
Will– will you be mar::ching?	A hyphen denotes a 'cut-off' sound.
.hhh Will you be marching?	Strings of 'h' preceded by a period mark audible inbreath. The longer the string, the longer the inbreath.
Will you be (.) marching? (0.7)	Numbers in parentheses denote elapsed silence in tenths of seconds; a period within parentheses denotes a 'micropause' of less than 0.2 seconds.
IR: Will you be marching.= IE: =Yes, I will.	Equal signs indicate that one event followed another with no intervening silence.
IR: Will you be march[ing. IE: [No.	Brackets mark the onset of simultaneous talk.

For a more detailed account of transcription conventions, see Atkinson & Heritage (1984:ix–xvi).

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