



An Exploration of Youth Talk Around Representations of Individual Difference in the American Television Show Glee

Citation

Dorsey, Jennifer M. 2016. An Exploration of Youth Talk Around Representations of Individual Difference in the American Television Show Glee. Doctoral dissertation, Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Permanent link

<http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:HUL.InstRepos:27112712>

Terms of Use

This article was downloaded from Harvard University's DASH repository, and is made available under the terms and conditions applicable to Other Posted Material, as set forth at <http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:HUL.InstRepos:dash.current.terms-of-use#LAA>

Share Your Story

The Harvard community has made this article openly available.
Please share how this access benefits you. [Submit a story](#).

[Accessibility](#)

An Exploration of Youth Talk Around Representations of Individual Difference in the
American Television Show *Glee*

Jennifer Dorsey

Helen Haste
Joseph Blatt
Jal Mehta

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of the Graduate School of Education of Harvard University in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Education

2016

© 2016
Jennifer Dorsey
All Rights Reserved

Abstract

In this study I investigate the ways in which youth talk about difference and fictional television characters in order to better understand youth's relationship with the media and diverse others. I use the theoretical framework of constructivism and the analytic framework of Foucauldian Discourse Analysis in order to answer the following research questions:

- 1) What discourses and positionings do youth use when talking about fictional characters?
- 2) What discourses and positionings do youth use when talking about difference in the context of a television program that presents diverse characters, specifically in the areas of (a) ability, (b) sexuality, and (c) ethnicity?
- 3) What do these ways of talking about characters and difference make possible for youth in the world?

I chose to study these questions by investigating the meanings that youth were making of characters on the television show *Glee*. I conducted a qualitative interview study, recruiting participants in accordance with purposive sampling for maximum variation. Data gathering consisted of qualitative interviews, both with individuals and pairs. Interviews included both photo and video elicitation. Following data collection and interview transcription, I conducted data analysis using positioning theory, discourse theory, and Foucauldian Discourse Analysis.

In my first analytic chapter I identified two main discourses that youth use when talking about characters: Character as Person and Character as Creation. In my second analytic chapter I analyze youth speech and discuss the discourses and positionings that

they use when talking about difference, identifying three main discourses: Being Different, Having Difference, and Enacting Difference.

In my final analytic chapter I look more closely at the parasocial relationships that youth describe having with characters, investigating when youth do and do not describe identifying with the characters on *Glee*. I note that when youth describe relating strongly with a character because of a shared difference, they most often use the discourses of Character as Person and Being Different.

Through the lens of Foucauldian Discourse Analysis, I am able to explore not only the patterns apparent in youth talk about characters and difference, but also what this talk makes possible in the world.

Acknowledgements

I would not have been able to complete this work without the help of a great many people. First and foremost I would like to thank my committee. Helen Haste has taught me how to analyze qualitative data and to see how the ways that we talk about things matter. Joe Blatt has taught me everything I know about the world of media research and given me some of the best work experiences of my life. Jal Mehta has taught me so much about how to write a dissertation and how to make and support an argument. More than anything, each of them has stood by me for the better party of a decade. The influence of each is clear in this document that I am now so proud to share.

I would also like to thank the many other faculty who shaped my experience including Wendy Luttrell for teaching me to see the world in new ways, Mark Warren for making me a better interviewer, and Mica Pollock for showing me the moment-to-moment interactions that make any culture what it is. I'd like to thank Meredith Mira and Ling Hsiao who as members of my writing group helped to shape the thinking on this project from its inception, and Julia Galindo for working with me to see the project through to completion.

I'd like to thank Ryan Murphy, Brad Falchuk, and Ian Brennan for creating the perfect television show to use to talk to high school students about difference and diverse characters.

On the home front, I'd like to thank Steve Rogers for cheering me through every last hurdle. I'd like to thank my parents and my brother, Jan, Jerry and Forrest Dorsey, for always letting me know that I would be loved no matter what. I'd like to thank Sarah Kimmel for being my tarantula and helping me to work with my mind instead of against

it. And to all of the wonderful friends who supported me throughout this process including but not limited to Jenn and Mary, Jen, Erin, Holly, Atisha and Sara, Danielle and Keili, and Kevin, Ryan and Amalia.

To the Neves family for taking me in for five Thanksgivings in a row and making me feel like I had family in Boston. To Cronkhite Center, for letting me share cold, cold nights with Stella, Vanessa, and Diane, Carla, Carrie, Tomas and Marcia. And to everyone in the Boston and Austin improv communities who provided unlimited hugs and helped me to keep my sense of humor.

I'd like to thank everyone at the Charles A. Dana Center at the University of Texas at Austin for supporting me in this work and for becoming my new intellectual home. I'd particularly like to thank Uri Treisman for having the vision to create a place where I can fight for equity while being challenged with work that I love.

Finally, I would like to thank the Harvard Graduate School of Education. My mind is a different beast than it was ten years ago, and I am able to do more for myself and for the world because of it. I'd also like to thank HGSE for introducing me to Dr. Jennie Weiner, Dr. Sherry Deckman, Dr. Carla Shalaby, Dr. Meredith Mira, Dr. Julia Hayden Galindo, Dr. Kelly Leahy Whitney, Dr. Anita Wadhwa, Dr. Ling Hsiao, Dr. Christina Dobbs, Dr. Thomas Nikundiwe, Dr. Amy Fowler, Dr. Keith Catone, Dr. Analía Jaimovich, and everyone else that I am forgetting. Thank you all for challenging me and supporting me in a million different ways. I'm excited to be joining your ranks.

Contents

Chapter 1. Introduction	1
Why Diverse Media Portrayals Might Matter.....	3
Parasocial relationships	3
Meaning Making and the Parasocial Relationship Theory	4
Difference on <i>Glee</i>	6
Road Map	9
Chapter 2: Theoretical and Analytic Frameworks	11
Theoretical Framework: Constructionism.....	11
Discourses	13
Positioning.....	15
Another Representation of Positioning and Discourse: “The Positioning Triangle”	18
Analytic Framework: Foucauldian Discourse Analysis.....	21
The Foucauldian Discourse Analysis Framework	22
Foucault’s Madness: An Example of Discourse, Related Positionings, and What They Make Possible in the World	27
Madness as Punishment from God.....	27
Madness as Contagion.....	28
Madness as Imbalance in the Body	30
Madness as Mental Illness	33
Revised Foucauldian Discourse Analysis Framework.....	34
Conclusion.....	36
Chapter 3: Methodology Part 1: Data Gathering	37
Study Design	38
The Research Questions	41
Choosing Interviewing as the Primary Means of Data Gathering	43
Individual and Pair Interviews	43
Protocol Design.....	45
Character Card Design	46
Character Card Uses & Questions.....	47
Using <i>Glee</i> Video Clip	48
Consent process.....	49
Criteria for Recruitment	50

Diversity	50
Familiarity with the show.....	51
High School Aged.....	52
Conducting Interviews	53
Piloting process	53
Conveying Information about Consent and Assent	53
Video recording and Analytic Voice Memos.....	54
Interview Spaces and Specifics of Individual Interviews	55
Recruitment and Conducting Interviews at Youth Pride	55
Recruitment and Conducting Interviews at Molly Ivins High School After-School Program	57
Recruitment and Conducting Interviews at Other Interview Spaces	58
Other After-School Programs	58
Purposive Recruitment and Snowball Sampling.....	60
Sample Demographics	63
Chapter 4: Applying the Framework of Foucauldian Discourse Analysis to Positioning and Discourse Analysis.....	68
Conducting a Modified Foucauldian Discourse Analysis.....	69
Preparing for Modified FDA: Conducting a Thematic Analysis	69
Beginning Modified FDA: Choosing a Subset of Data	71
Conducting a Modified FDA: Beginning with Discourses	72
Conducting a modified FDA: Beginning with Positionings	74
Final Steps in Modified FDA: Writing and Analysis.....	75
Case Study: A Modified FDA of Student Talk about Wade “Unique” Adams	76
The Positioning Triangle.....	78
Positioning Wade “Unique” Adams as Female	79
Positioning Wade “Unique” Adams as Male	83
Discourses Associated with Positioning Wade “Unique” Adams	85
The Fluidity of Discourses and Positionings: My positioning of Unique.....	86
What this positioning and these Discourses create in the world.....	87
Chapter 5: Speaking about Characters as Person or Creation.....	90
Using the discourse of Character as Person	92
Describing a character’s actions, thoughts and feelings	93

Talking Directly to a Character.....	96
Using the Language of Emotion and Relationship	99
Using the Discourse of Character as a Creation.....	102
Talking about the Actor Playing the Character.....	103
Using the Language of Television Production.....	108
Talking about “Them:” Youth using “They” and “Them” to refer to the Producers involved in Making Show Decisions	110
What these two character discourses makes possible	113
Discussion: Building on this Analysis	116
Discourses of Difference: A Framework	119
Discourses of Difference: Talking About Emma Pillsbury	122
Being OCD.....	124
Having OCD.....	126
Enacting OCD	127
What these Discourses Make Possible.....	131
Sexuality.....	133
Being a Sexuality	135
Enacting a Sexuality.....	139
Using Multiple Discourses of Sexuality	142
What this Makes Possible	145
Race and Ethnicity	146
Enacting a Race or Ethnicity.....	147
Case Study: Descriptions of Santana’s Sexuality through the lens of Discourses of Difference	152
Discussion	160
Chapter 7: Identifying with Characters: Participants’ Parasocial Relationships with Characters and why they are Important.....	163
Identifying with others in your group: Gay Men Identifying with Kurt and Blaine.....	164
Identifying with a Strong Female Lead: Girls Identifying with Rachel Berry’s Bossiness.....	167
Identifying Across Sex: Identifying with Rachel and Finn.....	171
Not Identifying with those in your Group: Youth with OCD not identifying with Emma Pillsbury	174
Tyler	175
CJ.....	176

Heidi	177
Discussion	181
Chapter 8: Discussion and Implications Discussion of the Findings	184
Research Question 1: What discourses and positionings do youth use when talking about fictional characters?	185
Research Question 2: What discourses and positionings do youth use when talking about difference in the context of a television program that presents diverse characters, specifically in the areas of (1) ability, (2) sexuality, and (3) ethnicity?	188
Research Question 3: What do these ways of talking about characters and difference make possible for youth?	190
Implications for Media Studies	193
Implications for Parasocial Relationship Theory and the Parasocial Contact Hypothesis ..	193
Pro-Social Media for Teenagers.....	194
Implications for Media Literacy.....	194
Importance for Youth and Those Who Work with Youth: Managing Difference in Schools	195
A Call for More Diverse Characters	196
Implications for Methodology.....	199
Pair Interviews	200
Character Cards and Positioning	201
Data Analysis: Discourses and Positioning.....	201
Chapter 9: Validity, Limitations and Next Steps	203
Validity.....	203
Limitations	206
Bias and Reactivity	206
Lack of Generalizability.....	208
Other Limitations	209
Further Work.....	210
Bibliography.....	213
Appendix A. Character Cards with Character Information	228
Appendix B. Interview Protocol	240
Appendix C. Interview Protocol Organized by Research Question.....	246
Appendix D: Parent Informed Consent Form	249
Appendix E: Student Informed Assent	253

Appendix F: Oral Script for Youth Recruitment into the Research Study	257
Appendix G: Sample Letter of Inquiry for Schools and After School Programs	259
Appendix H: Letter of Agreement with the ----- School	261
Appendix I: Email Communication with Principal of ----- School:	263
Appendix J: Glee Character Cards	264
Appendix K: Glee Recruitment Card	271
Appendix L: Glee Color Flyer	272
Appendix M: IRB Approval	273
Appendix N: Glee Recruitment	274
Appendix O: De-identified Student Data	275
Appendix P. Content Analysis of Youth Talk about Difference within Character Descriptions	278
Appendix Q. Example of Initial Coding of Character Descriptions	280
Appendix R. Example of Confidentiality Agreement for Transcribers	281
Appendix S: Initial Thematic Codes and Categories	282

Chapter 1. Introduction

Movies and television are omnipresent in the lives of American youth. The most recent Kaiser Family Foundation report states that “8 to 18 year olds spend more time with media than in any other activity besides (maybe) sleeping—an average of more than 7½ hours a day, 7 days a week” (Rideout, Foehr, & Roberts, 2010, p.1). Youth spend 42% of that media time engaged with television content on various platforms (4 hrs and 29 min per day on average). Televisions are in 99% of the homes of 8 to 18 year olds, and youth of every ethnicity spend more time watching (primarily live) television content than engaging with any other kind of media activity (Rideout, Lauricella, & Wartella, 2011). A more recent study by Rideout (2013) shows that for 0 to 8 year olds, television is still the dominant form of media content with a trend towards time-shifted programming. In whatever ways that youth choose to interact with television programming, from birth to the age of 18, television content is their dominant form of media consumption.

While all American youth spend substantial amounts of time watching television, youth across lines of difference rarely see themselves represented. Each year, the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) conducts a content analysis of all primetime scripted programming. The 2014 annual report entitled *Where We Are on TV* states that “out of 813 primetime broadcast scripted series regulars, 32 will be LGBT this year, or 3.9%.” GLAAD found that 27% of regular characters on broadcast television are characters of color, and only 1.4 percent of characters are disabled (GLAAD, 2014). These percentages are similar across cable television as well, and annual reports for 2013

and 2012 show similar findings. In addition to the quantitative data on content, the report also indicates that representations of LGBTQ, female characters, and ethnic minorities tend to be stereotypical and one-dimensional.

While American television does not often enough portray diverse communities, the youth of America are diverse in many ways. The US Census reports that for the first time, more than half (50.4%) of all American children under the age of one belong to a racial minority group¹ and more than 40% of students in K–12 schools are non-White (Orfield & Lee, 2005). A 2012 study using data from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that nationally, 5.1% of middle school students identify as LGBT (Shields, Cohen, Glassman, Whitaker, Franks, & Bertonlini, 2012) and 13% of American students qualify for disability services (Hochschild & Scrovonick, 2003; US Department of Education, 2009). According to the CDC,² seventeen percent of all American youth are obese.

I have chosen to investigate why this disconnect (between the reality of youth's lived experience and what is portrayed in the media) might matter by qualitatively exploring the relationships that a diverse group of youth have with a television program featuring diverse, school-aged characters. *Glee*, a show that aired on the Fox network in the United States from May 2009 to March 2015, had a cast of characters that were diverse in terms of sexuality, ethnicity, gender, and ability. Talking about *Glee* provided an opportunity for youth in this study to talk about their interactions and (perceived) relationships with these diverse television characters. Through this talk, I was able to better understand the ways that youth were making meaning of television representations

¹ <http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/population/cb12-90.html>

² <http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/childhood/index.html>

of difference and also the ways that they were make meaning of difference in their own lives.

Why Diverse Media Portrayals Might Matter

Parasocial relationships

Parasocial relationship theory, conceived by Horton and Wohl in 1956, posits that individuals can have relationships with people on television in the same way that they can have relationships with people in the real world. Their 1956 work was a thought piece that described ways in which audiences might accept or reject the role that they were placed in by a television show. While Horton and Wohl looked largely at non-fictional television personalities (today's equivalent would be hosts of morning talk shows), a large body of research since their initial work has investigated viewers' relationship with television's fictional characters.

Numerous studies have shown that youth have relationships with fictional characters that are similar to the relationships that they have with the real people in their lives (Banks & Bowman, 2014; Cohen, 2003; Giles, 2012; Hoffner & Buchanan, 2005; Horton & Wohl, 1956; Kanazawa, 2002; Theran & Newberg, 2010). Theran and Newberg have shown that a majority of adolescent girls participate in parasocial relationships of some kind.

“Wishful identification” and “perceived similarity” are strong indicators of whether an individual will identify with a character (Hoffner & Buchanan, 2005). Wishful identification describes when an individual desires to be like a character, while perceived similarity is the individual's belief that they are already like that character.

I propose to add to the field of parasocial relationship theory by investigating youth's parasocial relationships with characters through a qualitative lens. This is an important addition to the work because of the myriad ways that youth could make meaning of the representation of television characters. By investigating with qualitative methodologies, I have been able to determine not only whether students were relating to fictional characters, but also how they talked about these characters, how they talked about the diversity that these characters represented, why they reported relating to these characters, and what these understandings and relationships made possible in the world.

Meaning Making and the Parasocial Relationship Theory

Beginning with Stuart Hall's theory of encoding and decoding (1980), the fields of cultural studies, audience studies, and reception studies have investigated the ways that individuals make meaning of a media text. Within these branches of media studies, many researchers take on a constructivist framework. Within this frame it is not enough to look at the effects that media is having on the audience; researchers must also look into the possible ways that individuals might be understanding and using those texts.

Researchers in the field of audience studies or reception studies (Ang, 1996; Buckingham, 2002, 2008; Fiske, 1987; Hall, 1980; Livingstone, 2010, 2012; Radway, 1991; Staiger, 2005; Tobin, 2000) argue that texts do not have static meanings that can be determined by an expert, but relational meanings that are activated by an audience. Researchers in this area are also clear that this meaning-making process is true for youth as well as adults (Buckingham, 2008; Fisherkeller, 2011; Grace & Henward, 2013; Tobin, 2000), and that qualitative methodology is critical to understanding how youth

understand and interact with a text as well as providing much needed information on youth voice to research (Thorne, 2002).

Fiske (2011) argues that popular texts are popular in part because different people can read the texts and see themselves through the texts in different ways. He argues that if texts “do not contain resources out of which the people can make their own meanings of their social relations and identities, [the texts] will be rejected and will fail in the marketplace. They will not be made popular” (p. 2). He also argues that the creators of popular texts are particularly astute in providing the fodder for diverse meaning making. In order to attract a large audience, a text must be able to be interpreted in different ways by different members of an audience group. Using these criteria, *Glee*'s large, primarily youth audience made it an ideal candidate for looking at meaning making.

Davies & Harré (1990) give an example of meaning making in a study of youth reading the story, *The Paperbag Princess*. While the story was meant as a feminist fairytale, with the princess rescuing the prince from the dragon, many youth who heard the story had a different reading. They thought the princess was dirty and the prince didn't like her because of the way she looked. Many of them thought the prince had saved the day.

Even with an intended interpretation, a text's creator cannot control how someone will interpret that portrayal (Hall in Jhally, 2014). This leads to an important question: If youth can interpret portrayals of diversity in a myriad way, are positive portrayals important? Are diverse youth even identifying with diverse television characters? What are these portrayals of diverse characters making possible for youth in the world?

My study focuses in on the ways that youth make meaning of *Glee*, an American television show with purposefully diverse representations of ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and ability. By investigating youth talk about this show, I was able to learn about how youth were interpreting these diverse characters, and what these interpretations might make possible in the world.

Difference on *Glee*

Glee is a teen drama, featuring a suburban school in Ohio with teens searching for identity and belonging. What sets *Glee* apart from other teen dramas of its time is the purposefully diverse cast of characters. *Glee*, which premiered on the FOX network in September 2009, tells the story of life at an American high school, focused on students who are perceived by their peers to be different in some way and are often bullied for that difference (GLAAD report, 2011, 2012; Weinman, 2011). The show includes characters that are diverse in terms of ethnicity, ability, socioeconomic status (SES), sexuality, and appearance, and these characters interact with each other and have friendships across multiple lines of difference. My study sought to explore how youth (high school students) made meaning of these portrayals of difference and friendships across lines of difference.

Of the six original glee club members³ (three males and three females) portrayed in the pilot episode, one is Jewish with “two gay dads,” one is LGBTQ, one is in a wheelchair, one is Asian, and one is Black or African American. Of the six teachers and school personnel (four male and two female) with speaking parts in the first episode, one is LGBTQ, two are of color, and one has a clear case of obsessive-compulsive disorder.

³ Glee characters will be referenced by name throughout this dissertation. Appendix A includes pictures of prevalent characters along with written descriptions of that character’s characteristics and storyline.

By Season 4, when I began conducting my interviews, the core cast had expanded to include two Asian characters, three Black or African American characters, one Latina, one transgender student, multiple gay male students, one lesbian student, one bisexual student, and supplemental characters with disabilities, including two with Down syndrome. The show includes Jewish and Christian characters, characters of different economic statuses, and multiple characters that are either overweight or otherwise non-normative in appearance. Unlike other popular shows that only use nominal representations of diversity, *Glee* includes both token difference and multiple examples of people with multiple kinds of difference. *Glee* has been widely acknowledged for its portrayal of diversity, especially in its portrayal of LGBTQ characters (GLAAD 2011).

The character roster on *Glee* is not a case of what Shonda Rhimes (producer of the popular shows *Grey's Anatomy*, *Scandal*, and *How to Get Away with Murder*) has termed “colorblind casting,⁴” wherein the best actor for the job gets the role regardless of their ethnicity. *Glee* instead exhibits what I would term *purposeful diversity*. Ryan Murphy, the show’s producer, was vocal about his intention to create a diverse show, especially in terms of LGBTQ characters.⁵ Murphy and Falchuk made a concerted effort to create a diverse high school show which included characters who were diverse along lines of sexuality, ability, ethnicity, gender identification, religion, SES, and appearance. I would argue that *Glee* was the primetime network show that represented the most diversity on television for each of the years that it aired (2009–2015).

⁴ http://www.nytimes.com/2005/05/08/arts/television/greys-anatomy-goes-colorblind.html?_r=0

⁵ Murphy YouTube interview, retrieved 2/13/2014

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=35mBnR8yRIU&noredirect=1>

It is because of this diversity of casting and character portrayals that I chose *Glee* as the focal point of this study. Media advocates call for more diversity in television programming, and point out again and again that diversity is lacking in network television programming (GLAAD, 2012, 2013, 2014). In my work, I look at the meaning that youth, especially youth who identify in the non-normative categories portrayed on the show, are making of these diverse representations. I wanted to see how youth understood a show that was popular, diverse, and outside of the norm of traditional heteronormative programming.

Glee and the characters on the show reflect discourses and created text that position high school students and kinds of difference in particular ways. The show's creator and producer Ryan Murphy explicitly worked to create a representation of high school that included character types that are often excluded from or marginalized by traditional American high school television shows (Shary, 2014). By looking specifically at the ways that youth talked about this show and the high school life portrayed here, I was able to better understand not only the language that youth used to talk about difference as portrayed by characters on the show, but also the ways that they talked about and understood difference in the world. In order to investigate this topic, I posed the following research questions:

- 1) What discourses and positionings do youth use when talking about fictional characters?
- 2) What discourses and positionings do youth use when talking about difference in the context of a television program that presents diverse characters, specifically in the areas of (a) ability, (b) sexuality, and (c) ethnicity?

3) What do these ways of talking about characters and difference make possible for youth?

These research questions reference both positioning and discourses, concepts that I will introduce in the next chapter. I will then return to these research questions in Chapter 3 in order to provide full context for any reader unfamiliar with these terms.

Road Map

In Chapter 2, I describe the theoretical framework of Constructivism that guides my work. I focus particularly on the analytic framework of Foucauldian Discourse Analysis and the place that positioning analysis and discourse holds within it. I also address the ways in which this framework allows researchers to investigate how language makes things possible in the world.

In Chapter 3, I describe my methodology for data gathering, including my study design, participant recruitment, and data collection.

In Chapter 4, I describe my methodology for data analysis, in which I analyzed transcripts of participant talk using thematic coding (Boyatzis, 1998; Patton, 2014; Seidman, 2006), discourse analysis (Gee, 2005, 2014; Willig, 2013), and positioning analysis (Davis & Harré, 1990; Harré & Moghaddam, 2003; Moghaddam, Harré, & Lee, 2008). I end this chapter with an example of positioning analysis drawing on the Foucauldian Discourse Analysis that I conducted on my interviews with students. In this example, I look at the ways that youth position a transgender character on the show and what the positionings and discourses involved in their talk make possible for themselves, for that character, and for transgender youth in the real world.

In Chapter 5, I begin by looking at discourses and positionings that youth used when talking about characters in general. In this chapter, I identify two main discourses that describe the ways that youth talked about and interacted with characters: Character as Person and Character as Creation. This chapter links with existing research on parasocial relationships and lays the foundation for the work done in future chapters.

In Chapter 6, I answer the question: How do youth talk about difference, specifically difference in ability, gender, ethnicity, and sexuality? I analyze youth speech and discuss the discourses and positionings that they used when talking about difference, identifying three main discourses: Being Different, Having Difference, and Enacting Difference. The discourses and positionings identified in this chapter and in Chapter 5 lay the foundations for future analysis.

In Chapter 7, I address the question: How do the ways that youth talk about characters and difference position those characters and themselves? I look more closely at the parasocial relationships that youth described having with characters, especially those in which youth explicitly stated that they identified with characters because they perceived them to share common characteristics. I also describe some youth's rejection of identification with characters who shared similar characteristics. I note that when youth described relating strongly with a character because of a shared difference, they most often use the discourses of Character as Person and Being Different.

In Chapter 8, I discuss the findings of this study and the implications.

I conclude in Chapter 9 with a look at the validity and limitations of this study as well as future work that I plan to engage in.

Chapter 2: Theoretical and Analytic Frameworks

Theoretical Framework: Constructionism

Words are the way that most people come to understand their situations. We create our world with words. We explain ourselves with words. We defend and hide ourselves with words. The task of the qualitative researcher is to find patterns within those words (and actions) and to present those patterns for others to inspect while at the same time staying as close to the construction of the world as the participants originally experienced it. (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p. 18)

From a social constructivist (or constructionist) perspective, meaning is made through our experience of the world, and our world is produced through our experience of it (Berger & Luckman, 1966; Davies & Harré, 1990; Marshall, 1981; Willig, 2008; Willig, 2013). Within this framework, individuals are continuously constructing themselves, and making sense of their lives through the discourses and stories available to them (Davies & Harré, 1990).

According to Willig (2008), research with a “social constructionist perspective is concerned with identifying the various ways of constructing social reality that are available in a culture, to explore the conditions of their use and to trace their implications for human experience and social practice” (p. 7). Within this context, a researcher’s role is not only to locate the positions and discourses that an individual is using, but to see what other positions and discourses are available within that same cultural context.

Within a constructionist theoretical framework, there is no one true reality to discover, because the lens through which they view the world colors every individual’s experience of reality. Willig (2008) gives the example of two individuals viewing the

same chair. One may believe the chair to be junk while the other views it as an antique. While constructionists allow for the fact that the chair does exist and is called a chair, neither description of the chair is right or wrong, and the ways in which each individual constructs the chair gives insight into the lens through which they view the world. Constructionists have as a key goal to learn more about these individual lenses in order to better understand individual experience. Therefore, the goal of constructionism is “to describe particular events, processes, or culture from the perspective of participants, usually using qualitative techniques” (Rubin & Rubin, 2012, p. 22).

This theoretical framework of constructivism applies to television studies within the realm of audience studies or audience reception studies (Buckingham, 2008; Hall, 1980; Hall in Jhally, 2014; Morley, 2003; Radway, 1991; Staiger, 2005; Tobin, 2000). In this realm, researchers are interested in “meaning making” or the ways that individuals construct their own understanding of the media texts that they interact with. For these researchers, the question is not what a media text is doing to youth, but how these particular youth are making sense of the media text and making use of it. This is the process that Hall (1980) first described as encoding and decoding. The message encoded into a media text by producers is not necessarily the same message that will be decoded by viewers.

In this chapter, I outline the analytic and theoretical frameworks that I will use to investigate the ways that youth are constructing their reality. I work from three interrelated models in this dissertation and am bringing together aspects of each of them to develop the analysis of my data. Those theoretical models are discourse theory, positioning theory, and Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA). I will first describe

discourse theory and positioning theory, and then describe the framework of FDA, which encompasses them both.⁶

One goal of this chapter is to give a theoretical basis for the analysis that I will be conducting. Another is to provide a glossary for the terms that I will be using throughout. There is much debate on what the terms “discourse” and “discourse analysis” mean within the research community (Edley, 2001; Gee, 2014; Potter, Wetherell, Gill, & Edwards, 1990; Slocum-Bradley, 2010; Willig, 1995; Willig, 2008; Willig, 2013). In addition, different disciplines use these terms and conduct analysis in different ways based on their construction of the concept. Similarly, FDA has a range of prescriptions for both analysis and key constructs. In this chapter I will put forward the definitions and analytic frameworks that I have chosen for my analysis, and in Chapter 4, I will discuss at greater length how I have applied these analytic and theoretical frameworks in practice.

Discourses

Gee (2014) states in his text on discourse analysis:

In my view, no one theory is universally right or universally applicable. Each theory offers tools which work better for some kinds of data than they do for others. Furthermore, anyone engaged in their own discourse analysis must adapt the tools they have taken from a given theory to the needs and demands of their own study. (p. ix)

The conceptions of discourse that best fit my data and the work that I have undertaken in describing youth talk about fictional characters and difference are Willig’s

⁶ I am not conducting a full Foucauldian Discourse Analysis in this study. Instead, I am using the framework of FDA to 1) describe the interrelation of discourses and positionings within youth talk about the media and difference, and 2) as a vehicle for describing what these positionings and discourses make possible in the world.

(2008) construction of “discourse” in her description of Foucauldian Discourse Analysis, and Edley (2001) and Potter, Wetherell, Gill, and Edwards’s (1990) use of “interpretive repertoire.”

Potter et al. (1990, p. 208) use the terms interpretive repertoire and discourse interchangeably. For the sake of clarity, I will be using the term discourse (instead of interpretive repertoire) when referring to their work. They argue that,

- 1) Talk is manufactured out of “preexisting linguistic resources”
- 2) Talk involves choice from the possibilities
- 3) We deal with the world in terms of the “discursive constructions or versions” of these possibilities. In this view, individuals construct the world using the discourses that are available to them.

In this conception, the discourse is a description of one of the constructions or versions that individuals use to metaphorically construct their reality.

Willig (2008) describes a discourse as a way to describe the ways that speakers construct discursive objects (the concrete or abstract concepts that are the focus of analysis). In Willig (2008), Edley (2001), and Wetherell and Potter’s (2001) conceptions, discourses are fluid and an individual can use different discourses within one interview or even one statement. In his analysis of a male college student’s description of his sexual exploits, Edley describes the student using the discourses of “sex as an achievement,” “sex as something of a scarce commodity,” “sex as playfulness and froth,” and the “*have and hold* discourse of sexuality” (pp. 222-223). In Willig’s description of Foucauldian Discourse Analysis, she analyzes an interview excerpt in which a woman is describing her romantic relationship, and identifies the competing discourses of relationship as

“social arrangement” and relationship as “a step on the way” to marriage (2005, p. 114).

In both of these examples speakers move between these discourses fluidly, often using multiple discourses in response to one interview question.

Using Willig (2008), Edley (2001), and Wetherell and Potter’s (2001) conceptions of discourse, discourse analysts look at the ways that discourses describe concepts, ideas, and other constructs in the world. When Foucault was describing the history of the asylum, he wasn’t just constructing “the mad” as a certain type of person, he was also constructing the concept of madness and the spaces, like asylums, where the mad are relegated. This is similar for his descriptions of prisons as spaces (Foucault, 1977) and sexuality as a concept, not just a certain kind of person (Foucault, 1978). My own analysis takes on the linguistic constructions found in Willig and Edley’s work, as I use phrases like “Character as Creation” to describe the discourses that I find. Additionally, for clarity’s sake, I have attempted throughout my analysis to use the word “discourse” only when I am speaking about the concept of discourses. While the term discourse can also be used to refer to speech acts, I have chosen to instead use words like talk, speech, speech act, and excerpt.

Positioning

Positioning analysis is the study of the ways that individuals place themselves and are placed in social context through speech and action (Davies & Harré, 1990; Haste, 2004; Haste & Abrahams, 2008). Within a speech act, an individual can position themselves and others, directly and indirectly. For example, in a description of a romantic evening, an individual might purposefully position himself or herself as a smooth operator or a hapless oaf. Similarly, that individual’s conversational partner might

respond to their statements by accepting that the speaker is a ladies' man, or might instead position the speaker as a heartless cad.

Individuals are not always aware of the ways that they are positioning themselves or others. A simple statement like "I'm hungry," when said to a loved one, could position the speaker as unsatisfied and needing assistance, and position the loved one as caretaker. A statement like "You're the boss" may position the speaker as subservient or ironic, depending on the speaker's tone and body language. The "boss" being spoken to has the choice in their next statement or body language to accept this positioning ("You're right, I am") or to reject it ("We are a team"). Within these responses, the second speaker is positioning him or herself, and also positioning the first speaker. Unlike roles like "doctor" or "lawyer," positionings are not permanent, and are often fluid within the same speech act.

Every discourse makes available certain subject positions, and implicitly makes unavailable other positions. For example, the discourse of "marriage as economic partnership" makes available the positions of equal partner or spouse, while the discourse of "marriage as religious institution" makes available different positionings, for individuals joined together by God. It is not only individuals that can be positioned, but also groups, countries, and institutions (Harré & Moghaddam, 2003).

Harré and Moghaddam (2003, p. 5) argue that "positioning someone, even if it is oneself, affects the repertoire of acts one has access to." Good mothers can only act in certain ways, or they become bad mothers. Positions are not static, but constantly shifting in moment-to-moment interactions. Accordingly,

who one is is always an open question with a shifting answer depending upon the positions made available within one's own and others' discursive practices and within those practices, the stories through which we make sense of our own and other's lives. Stories are located within a number of different discourses, and thus vary dramatically in terms of the language used, the concepts, issues and moral judgements made relevant and the subject positions made available with them (Davies & Harré, 1990, pp. 45-6).

Frazer (1989) describes the power of viewing the world as constantly shifting and the impact that a positioning or discursive construction can have on an individual.

Gender inequality does not disappear in the face of feminist talk. But it seems clear to me that if gender relations are constructed and understood as social products which are in principle changeable, rather than as natural categories which are immutable, then the speaker is more empowered (as a gendered subject) in one case than in the other.

She argues the same for class relations and class identity. I argue that this is also true for conceptions of what is possible in terms of constructing and enacting a wide array of categories that we often talk about as naturally defined in a particular way, including ethnicity, ability and sexuality. What this means for my data analysis is that I am looking at the moment-to-moment positions made available to youth in this study both by their interpretation of the show *Glee* and the ways in which they talk about difference.

In my dissertation, I look at the ways in which youth positioned themselves within the conversations that we had about difference in the context of individual and peer-group interviews. I examine the language that the youth used to refer to themselves, to

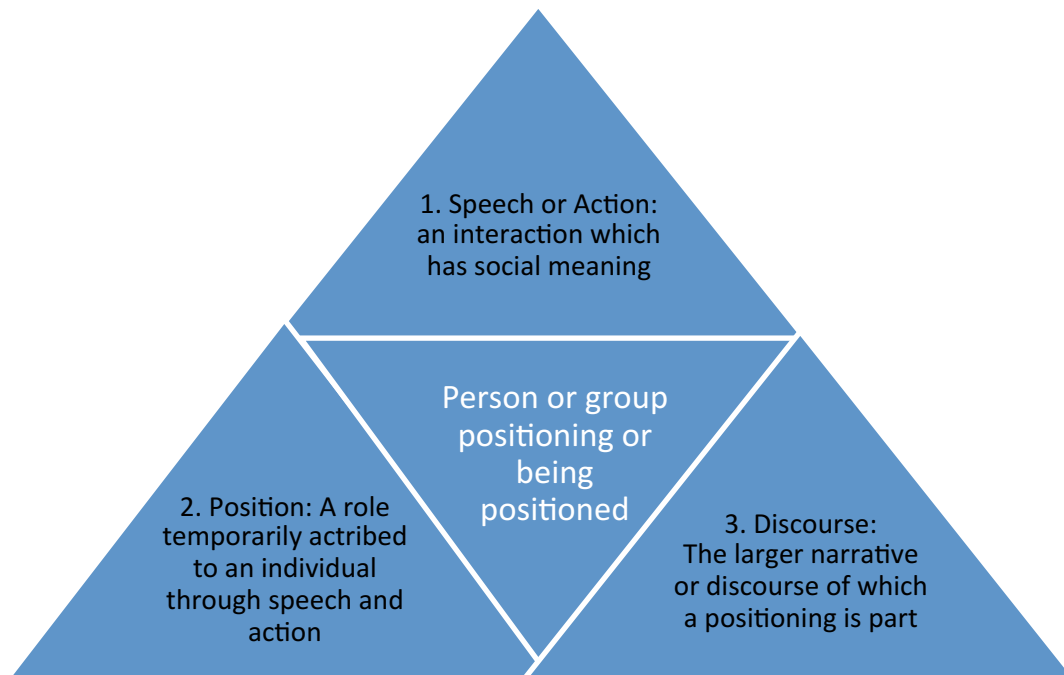
the characters on *Glee*, to people at their schools, and to others present in the conversations. In this way, my aim is to better understand how youth interpret and manage difference in their lives.

Youth in this study moved between the discourses and positionings that I have identified, sometimes within one description, one series of statements, or one sentence. In my analysis, I am attempting to identify the discursive options that youth have available to move between. In this way, I hope to create a framework of discourses and positionings that describes the landscape of possibilities available as youth construct difference.

Another Representation of Positioning and Discourse: “The Positioning Triangle”

The positioning triangle presented in Figure 1 outlines the four main components of positioning analysis. The positioning triangle is used by positioning researchers in their analysis of positioning in specific situations and types of speech (Bartlett, 2008; Boxer, 2003; Brock & Gavelek, 2013; Harré & Moghaddam, 2003; Moghaddam, Harré, & Lee, 2008; Sauerhoff, 2013). While positioning researchers often present these triangles, they most often focus primarily on the speech act and positioning made possible by that speech act over the discourses represented. In my own analysis, I use positioning triangles when I wish to present and investigate one discourse related to a particular discursive construction, and I use a modified FDA chart (p. 44) to present multiple discourses for one discursive construction.

Figure 1. The Positioning Triangle, Adapted from Moghaddam, Harré, & Lee (2008)



In many representations of the positioning triangle, the center of the triangle is blank. I have chosen to make what is being analyzed explicit by placing the person or group being positioned in the center of the triangle. This is the entity whose position in the world is being constructed, either by themselves or by others. The discourses and positionings surrounding this person help to construct their reality and their place in the world. For my purposes, the “person” in the center of the triangle will be the character or characters that the youth are positioning in their talk.

The first vertex of the positioning triangle is “Speech and other Acts.” In Willig’s (2008) conception, anything with a “tissue of meaning” (p. 127) is open for interpretation. Just as a person can position themselves with their words, they can position themselves with their dress and actions. An individual with pink hair wearing

ripped jeans is positioning themselves very differently from that same individual in a business suit and a bun. The vehicle that a person drives, the job that they have, the television that they watch, the music they listen to, and the way they decorate their home are all “speech or action” to be analyzed. An analyst might approach the text with positionings and discourses in mind, or might start with the text itself without preconception. Placing “speech and action” within the triangle encourages the analyst to remain close to the text.

The second vertex of the positioning triangle refers to the ways that individuals position themselves and others through their speech, a concept that is described above.

Traditionally, the third vertex of the positioning triangle is “storyline,” which is derived from Narrative Analysis (Harré, Moghaddam, Cairnie, Rothbart, & Sabat, 2009; Harré & van Langenhove, 1991). Within a conversation, a storyline describes the overarching story that speakers are telling together. Within that story, the speakers are positioned in certain ways, and they can accept or reject that positioning. While a storyline is not equivalent to a discourse, for my purposes, the two are alike enough to be used interchangeably. Both reference the larger construct that positionings are operating within.

For the sake of simplicity, within the positioning triangles that I use throughout my analysis, I will be replacing the traditionally included storyline with my conception of discourse, as described above. This modification is not without precedent. Other researchers have modified the positioning triangle formulation to suit their own analytic needs, as in the cases of the “positioning diamond” proposed by Slocum-Bradley in 2010

(which includes identities), and the “fourth vertex” of body position put forward by Harré and Moghaddam in 2008.

Analytic Framework: Foucauldian Discourse Analysis

The overarching analytic framework for this dissertation is Foucauldian⁷ Discourse Analysis (FDA). FDA encompasses both discourses and positionings, and acts as an umbrella, linking the two theories together and providing a way to investigate the “so what” of individuals using positionings and discourses in the world.

Foucauldian Discourse Analysis adopts a constructivist perspective. Within this framework, there is no single truth because individuals construct reality with the discourses and positionings available to them (Willig, 2008, 2013). Therefore, epistemologically, FDA is not a method for seeking the one truth, but for understanding better how individuals construct their realities. All knowledge is constructed, and the analyst using this framework creates discursive constructions which themselves could be analyzed within the same framework.

In order to introduce FDA fully, I have first addressed the concepts of discourse and positioning theory, which are two cornerstones of the analytic framework. I will now describe FDA in detail, and then provide examples, focusing heavily on discourse and positioning, using Foucault’s discourses of madness. Again, while I draw on Foucauldian Discourse Analysis in my work, I want to reiterate that I am not doing a complete FDA. Instead, I am using pieces of the framework in order to frame my own analysis.

⁷ or Foucaultian.

The Foucauldian Discourse Analysis Framework

Foucauldian Discourse Analysis was not introduced by Foucault, but instead draws on the ways that Foucault described the larger discourses at work in our society and the import and impact that those discourses and their associated subject positionings had in shaping the world that people lived in. A people's understanding of crime or madness or sexuality or government brings shape to the ways that these concepts are enacted in the world.

Researchers focusing on this methodology and theoretical framework for analysis do not agree on the best way to conduct a Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (Arribas-Ayllon & Walkerdine, 2008; Diaz-Bone, Bührmann, Gutiérrez Rodríguez, Schneider, Kendall, & Tirado, 2008; Kendall & Wickham, 1998). The method that I have chosen to use as a model for my analysis is that put forward by Willig (2001, 2008, 2013) in her book *Introducing Qualitative Research in Psychology*. I do not argue that this method is more correct than others put forward, just that it best fits the needs of my analysis. Willig focuses her analysis on Foucault's use of the interaction of positioning and discourse to better understand what certain ways of speaking make possible in the world. While several conceptions of FDA consider discourses as more static, changing over large periods of time, within Willig's conceptions, discourses can be contemporary, dynamic, and overlapping.

In Willig's own words, "Foucauldian Discourse Analysis asks questions about the relationship between discourse and how people think or feel (subjectivity), what they may do (practices) and the material conditions within which such experiences may take place" (2008, p. 113).

Although I am not using the methods of Foucauldian Discourse Analysis fully, I borrow from it two chief constructs: 1) the link between discourses and positioning, and 2) what speech and actions make possible in the world. Within this framework, positioning is a means to better understand the roles and positions that youth make available to themselves and to others through their speech.

“From a Foucauldian point of view, discourses facilitate and limit, enable and constrain what can be said, by whom, where and when (see Parker, 1992)” (Willig, 2008, p. 112). By looking at the ways that youth talk about difference, I will be able to explore both what they feel comfortable saying and what is taboo or off limits. I will also be able to explore the ways that things may be said. In his *History of Sexuality: Volume 1*, Foucault speaks at length about an “authorized vocabulary,” language that is and is not acceptable at different times when talking about sex and sexuality (Foucault, 1978). The ways in which youth position themselves and others, and what they consider to be appropriate and comfortable vernacular, particularly when talking about differences across ethnicity, sexuality, ability, or class lines, is telling of not only the relationships that youth have with the medium, in this case the television show *Glee*, but of the world in which they are placing themselves and others, and what they felt comfortable sharing with a straight, white, female researcher in her 30s.

As described by Willig (2008, 2013), there are six main components of Foucauldian Discourse Analysis. In Figure 2, I present them and the key questions that they ask the researcher to consider. Thus, using the theoretical underpinnings of FDA, I investigate not only the positionings that youth are using when they talk about difference and the discourses that these entail, but also the actions that are made possible in the

world through this language. Steps 2 (discourse) and 4 (positioning) of FDA have been described at length earlier in this chapter and overlap with the “positioning triangle” described on page 24. While what I am presenting can be used as a guideline for how to conduct a Foucauldian Discourse Analysis, I am using this structure primarily as an analytic framework to look at the ways that discourses and positioning connect, and what they together make possible in the world.

Figure 2. Foucauldian Discourse Analysis

Step in FDA	Key Question
Step 1: Discursive Constructions	What is the topic for investigation?
Step 2: Discourses	What discourses are evident through speech and positionings?
Step 3: Action Orientation	What is the benefit for the speaker in speaking in this way?
Step 4: Positionings	What positions are available?
Step 5: Practice	What actions are possible based on these discourses and positionings?

Step 6: Subjectivity	“What can be felt, thought and experienced through various positions?” (Willig, 2008, p. 117)
----------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

In Step 1 of FDA, *Discursive Constructions*, the analyst identifies the discursive construction that is under analysis (Willig, 2008, 2013). Discursive constructs can be found in everyday speech and include abstract concepts like love and home as well as more concrete concepts like mother and doctor. The constructs can be identified in any talk, including an informal conversation, the structured questions and responses in an interview, or any written work. Talk can be structured in order to elicit conversation about a particular discursive construct, as in the case of the interview, or it can be selected because of the naturally occurring presence of the discursive construct, as in the analysis of a novel or an observed conversation. FDA begins when the analyst chooses a discursive construct to investigate in detail. In Willig’s example, she uses the conception of a “relationship” as a discursive construct and analyzes the various ways that one participant describes a relationship within the reply to one question.

In Step 2 of FDA, *Discourses*, the analyst identifies discourses being utilized by the speaker. Again, discourses describe the various ways in which a discursive object can be constructed. In Willig’s example of relationship as the discursive object, speakers in her study used both economic and romantic discourses when describing their long-term relationships. A speaker’s discourses are not necessarily explicitly known to that speaker, and often a speaker utilizes more than one discourse at a time.

In Step 3 of FDA, *Action Orientation*, the analyst looks at what the speaker accomplishes by speaking about the discursive construction in a certain way. Questions

raised by Willig help to clarify the goal of this step. In this step, the analyst asks, “What are the implications for the speaker’s interactional concerns? To what extent do [the speaker’s words] fulfill functions such as assign responsibility or promote one version of events over another? How do they position the speaker within the moral order invoked by the construction?” (Willig, 2008, p. 120).

In Step 4 of FDA, *Positioning*, the analyst looks at the subject positions offered by the discourses associated with the discursive construct. In this case, what subject positions do the discourses make possible for the person using those discourses? For example, a romantic discourse of a long-term relationship makes possible the positionings of “lover” and “soul mate.” At the same time, an economic discourse of that same relationship makes possible the positioning of “partner” and “dependent.”

In Step 5 of FDA, *Practice*, the analyst looks at what is made possible in the world by constructing the discursive object with these discourses and positionings. In order to enact a discourse or related positioning, certain actions and speech acts are allowed while others are prohibited. A positioning limits what is socially acceptable to do while maintaining that positioning. For example, if someone wants to retain the position of “good mother” or “concerned citizen,” certain actions and speech are acceptable while others are not. Similarly, if one espouses the romantic discourse of relationships, then marrying for financial gain would be outside the allowable actions of that discourse. In these ways, particular discourses and positioning make some things possible in the world while prohibiting others.

In Step 6 of FDA, *Subjectivity*, the analyst looks at individuals’ subjective experience based on the positionings and discourses that they are using around a

particular discursive object. Because the researcher can never know what another individual is thinking or feeling, this stage is based more on speculation than any of the other stages. The analyst here looks at what can be experienced from within a particular subject positioning or in relation to a particular discourse.

Foucault's Madness: An Example of Discourse, Related Positionings, and What They Make Possible in the World

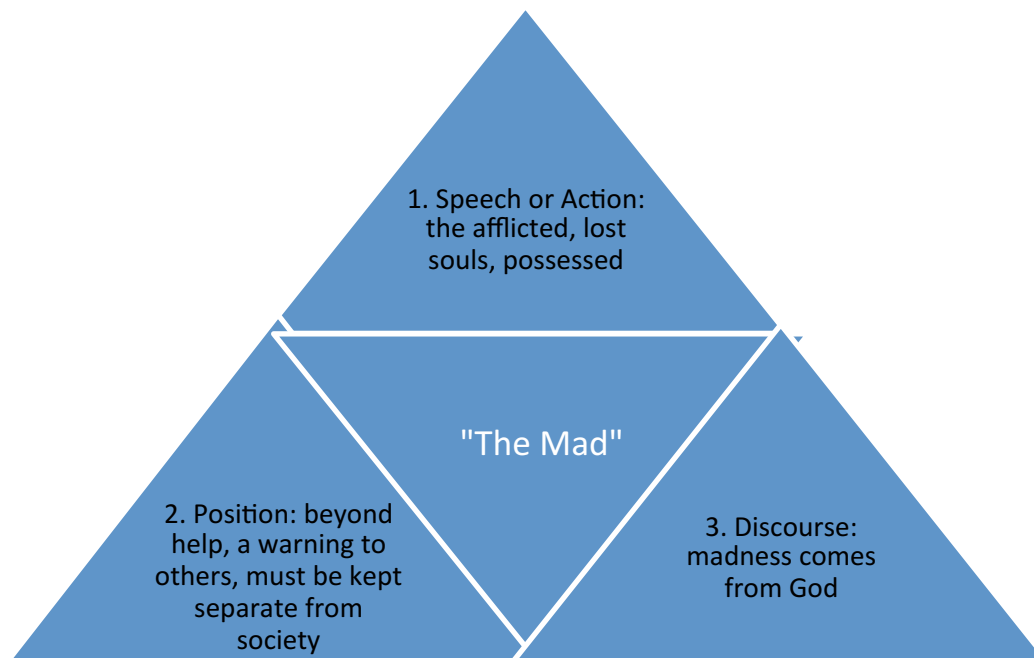
In *Madness and Civilization* (1988), Foucault writes about the evolution of the discourses of madness in Western society. In doing so, he traces the consequences of a discourse for those who live within its grasp. Below, I use the example of Foucault's history of madness to further explain the idea of a discourse, and the subject positions and actions that are made available through them. After I have introduced Foucault's discourses of madness, I will use positioning triangles and the Foucauldian Discourse Analysis framework to present these discourses and what they make possible in the world.

Madness as Punishment from God

In the early Middle Ages, madness, much like leprosy before it, was considered to be a punishment from God, and a reminder of God's power and generosity (in not giving everyone leprosy). The subject positions available under this discourse did not allow for doctors and patients but instead separated the afflicted from those who were not afflicted, and the afflicted were positioned outside of society. A "sane" citizen positioned the mad as a cautionary tale, and because of this conception, the doctors of the time did not concern themselves with madness and made no attempt to cure the mad. Instead, people

deemed “mad” were sent out of the cities, usually on boats, or sent to wander in the wilderness outside of city limits. This served to both send the mad on a pilgrimage and to remove them from general society.

Figure 1. Positioning Triangle: Positioning the Mad as Punished by God



Madness as Contagion

As it became more common to confine the mad in asylums, a new discourse of madness arose, that of Madness as Contagion. Within this discourse, the mad were positioned as unclean and something to be feared.

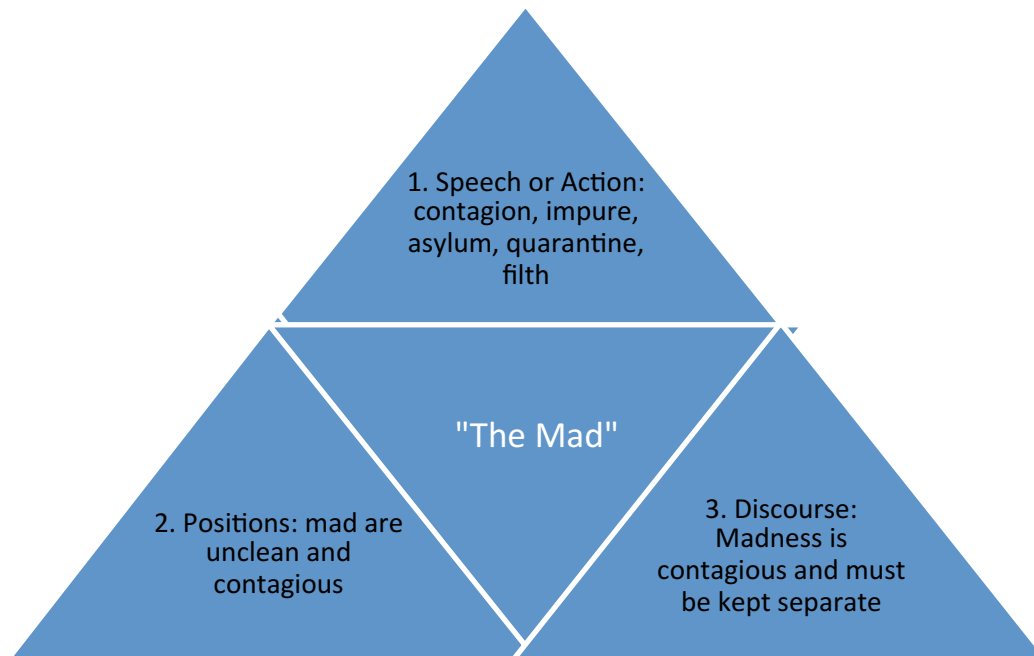
In many European cities, the mad were kept in what were once “Lazar Houses,⁸” formerly used to separate those who suffered from leprosy from the rest of society. In

⁸ Lazar Houses were named after St. Lazarus, a biblical leper. They were founded during the Crusades by the Order of St. Lazarus, a group made up of knights who had contracted leprosy.

these asylums, criminals and the mad were kept together without distinguishing one from the other. Both were treated as prisoners and lived in squalid conditions. Whether it was the filthy conditions of these asylums or the association with leprosy that they brought to mind, people began to associate these places of confinement with contamination and danger.

The populace became afraid of these asylums and the “evil” (Foucault, 1988, p. 202) that they contained, fearing that madness would seep from these institutions like poison and taint the very air that they breathed. Madness was conceptualized as rotteness and corruption, and the mad were positioned as both pitiable and repugnant. Doctors for the first time were concerned with madness; however, they were not concerned with its treatment or even diagnosis, but in the best ways to protect the sane from the threat of its corruption. In order to protect the citizenry, asylums were organized so that madness and “evil could vegetate there without ever spreading,” (p. 207). The language of sterilization, cleanliness, and order entered the world of the asylum not to protect those confined there, but to keep the festering malignancy of madness and evil from spreading to the sane.

Figure 4. Positioning Triangle: Positioning the Mad as Impure



Madness as Imbalance in the Body

A later conception of madness was the discourse of madness as an imbalance of bodily humors - the bile, phlegm, and blood that were believed to be held within the body and to balance the emotions and intellect. Because of this conception of madness, the mad were positioned as patients needing a cure. Doctors positioned themselves as experts on madness who were able to affect the madness of a patient. These new discourses and positionings changed the way that the mad were treated in the world. Doctors attempted to cure madness by acting on the body. Remedies enacted on patients included giving them smallpox in order to create pustules that would bring the humors containing madness to the surface, giving patients coffee or soap to consume in order to dry up their humors, and having patients ride horses in order to strengthen their bodily fibers.

Becoming too passionate was thought to have an effect on the humors, and so strong emotions like anger and sadness were frowned upon, especially in women.

All of these treatments were based on a conception of madness as being an imbalance of bodily humors. Doctors created their treatments based on this discourse, and patients were subjected to these treatments because of this conception. Medicine was not built around evidence, but a story of how the world worked. Thinking and speaking about madness in a particular way led to actions in the world, and real consequences for those who were considered mad.

Figure 5. Foucauldian Discourse Analysis Chart: Madness as an Imbalance of Humors

Step in FDA ⁹	Key Question	Example	What is Made Possible
Step 1: Discursive Constructions	What is the topic for investigation?	Madness	People now have a language to talk about the behavior of others, people can now label each other as a certain type of person (mad or sane) based on their behaviors
Step 2: Discourses	What discourses are evident through speech and positionings?	Madness as an Imbalance in Humors Words: depressive, hysterics, mad, inmates, asylum	People exhibiting specific behaviors are now classified as mad. People are sometimes classified into various categories of madness including “depressives” and “hysterics.”

⁹ This chart is adapted from one proposed by Willig (2001, 2008, 2013).

Step 3: Action Orientation	What is the benefit for the speaker in speaking in this way?	The mad can be separated from society and experimented on without compunction. Words: treatment, cure	As people conceive of madness as an imbalance in the body, medical professionals can seek to regain balance by using a variety of treatments.
Step 4: Positionings	What positions are available?	Parent/child jailer/inmate scientist/subject The mad are positioned as children, incapable of taking care of themselves. Doctors are positioned as scientists, conducting experiments and doing important work.	Because the mad are seen as not able to care for themselves, they are not consulted in their treatment. They are often separated from society, imprisoned, and sometimes chained and kept with criminals. Doctors treat the mad with little care for their physical well being, and make all decisions for them.
Step 5: Practice	What actions are possible based on these discourses and positionings?	People who are positioned as mad are forcibly removed from society, incarcerated, and subjected to a variety of treatments meant to restore balance to their bodies. The mad are positioned as children, unable to care for themselves, and their doctors are positioned as parents, deciding what is best for them.	This discourse of madness allows for the identification of special kinds of people and the creation of careers centered around madness. These careers include jailers and others whose role it is to separate the mad from society. This discourse also allows for the introduction of doctors experimenting with ways to treat this imbalance in bodily humors. Because the mad are conceived of as children, their caretakers make all decisions for them including how they will be treated.

			<p>Leper colonies are converted into madhouses.</p> <p>Those who are mad are expected to submit to any treatment deemed appropriate by their doctors, no matter the consequence.</p>
Step 6: Subjectivity	<p>“What can be felt, thought and experienced through various positions?” (Willig, 2008, p. 117)</p>	<p>The mad are stigmatized, powerless, and separate from “normal” people, doctors feel efficacious and just, regular citizens feel sane.</p>	<p>The experience of someone positioned as mad is not someone who <i>does</i> x, y and z, but is instead someone who <i>is</i> x, y and z. The mad experience a world with little control where decisions are made about their lives without their consent. The experience of a doctor is that of a scientist, with the goal of learning at the foreground and little concern for the mad. They are not his “patients” as much as test subjects.</p>

Madness as Mental Illness

While Foucault does not touch on modern medicine, it might be helpful to compare these discourses to the notions of modern medicine, with the discourse of Madness as Psychological Disorder or Mental Illness. In this conception, madness is the result of disordered thinking, personal trauma, and occasionally faulty neurotransmitters, and is firmly positioned within the brain. While asylums or institutions still exist, the majority of people with what was once referred to as madness now live in society among those who are “sane.” As a “disorder,” doctors assume that the mind can be reordered, and that both talk and drug therapies can have an effect over time, depending on the particular illness of the patient. The modern notion of madness as “psychological

disorder” allows for many with disorders who were previously separated from society to live within it. While this discourse allows for openness and freedom on the part of the patient, the stigma, forced separation, and moral quandaries that have accompanied madness are still a part of the terrain, though not a part of the current discourse.

While giving people smallpox may seem unreasonable now, if we consider the discourse of madness as something that literally needed to escape the body by breaking the surface of the skin, the treatment begins to make sense. Similarly, our current ways of thinking about madness as a host of psychological disorders and mental illnesses may be seen as primitive by those who follow us by two hundred years if they do not share our same discourse of madness as located in the brain. Discourses are how we organize our thoughts and actions, and they create real consequences for people in the world.

Revised Foucauldian Discourse Analysis Framework

Moving forward, I will focus my writing on Steps 1, 2, 4, and 5 of Foucauldian Discourse Analysis, performing what I will refer to as an abbreviated FDA. I do this in order to focus on what I consider to be the most important aspects of this analysis for my work, and also to allow for a simplified comparison across multiple discourses. In addition, I have modified the FDA framework put forward by Willig (2008) to include participant speech. In this way I can stay close to the text and provide direct examples of the discourses and positionings that I have identified. In Figure 6, I present this modified framework to present examples of various discourses of madness throughout history.

Figure 2. Revised FDA Comparison Chart: Madness

(1) Discursive Construction: Madness

(1) Speech	(2) Discourses	(4) Positionings	(5) Actions Made Possible in the World
<p>“it pleaseth our Lord that thou shouldst be infected with this malady” (Foucault, 1988, p. 6)</p>	<p>Madness is a Punishment from God</p>	<p>victim, leper, pilgrim, priest, madman</p>	<p>The mad are separated from society, either through exile or pilgrimage, or by locking them away in prisons and institutions. No one tries to cure the mad, only separate them from the sane. The mad are treated as a cautionary tale, and the receptacles of God’s wrath.</p>
<p>“These wards are dreadful places, where all crimes together ferment and spread” (Foucault, 1988, p. 203)</p>	<p>Madness as Contagion</p>	<p>infected/clean, leper</p>	<p>The mad are separated from society in institutions and asylums, which previously housed those suffering from leprosy. The idea of madness and leprosy intermingle, and madness is considered something that must be kept separate from society. Separation from society; stigma of disease, fear of contagion, not based in fact; need to be separate and ‘purified’ mixing the mad with those guilty of crimes</p>
<p>“their senses are depraved by a melancholic humor spread through their brain” (Foucault, 1988, p. 118)</p>	<p>Madness is an Imbalance of Humors</p>	<p>doctor/patient parent/child, jailer/prisoner scientist/subject</p>	<p>The mad are separated from society in institutions and asylums, Doctors take on the roles of parent and jailer, making all decisions for their patients, and subjecting them to a variety of “treatments” intended to cure an imbalance of the humors in the body. Because they view patients as mentally incapacitated, the patient’s own wishes are seldom taken into consideration. There was no concept of psychology, so doctors focus their cures on the body and not the mind.</p>
<p>Modern conception</p>	<p>Madness as Mental Illness</p>	<p>mentally stable/mentally ill</p>	<p>Because people’s behaviors are seen as the result of brain chemistry, health professionals prescribe chemical cocktails to change behaviors. Because people’s</p>

		doctor, psychiatrist, psychologist, therapist/ individuals suffering from bipolar disorder, obsessive- compulsive disorder, anxiety disorders	behaviors are seen as based in their experiences, psychologists, social workers and therapists use “therapy” or talk treatment to identify and change these behaviors. A variety of careers are created to work with the mentally ill, and the mentally ill are separated into hundreds of more specific conditions based on their symptoms.
--	--	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Conclusion

In the analysis that follows, I use the modified FDA chart as well as positioning triangles to represent the positionings and discourses that occur in the text of youth interviews. I use the positioning triangles to describe specific discourses, and the positionings that are associated with them. I use the abbreviated FDA chart to present multiple discourses for the same discursive object at the same time. I believe that the concepts that I am working with are complex enough that multiple representations of this information will serve the reader.

This analytic framework will first appear in Chapter 4, which is a description of my methods of data analysis. In that chapter I present the analytic methods of Foucauldian Discourse Analysis through an analytic case study describing my process of using this framework in practice. Afterwards each of my analytic chapters relies heavily on discourses and positionings through the framework of FDA.

Chapter 3: Methodology Part 1: Data Gathering

This chapter describes the decisions that I made in planning my data analysis and the reality of data gathering in this study. My goal was to better understand the discourses that youth use when talking about difference and the ways that they position themselves, the characters on *Glee*, their interviewer, and other youth in their lives. Because I had specific analytic goals, I was very concerned with gathering the richest data possible, and making sure that my methodologies would provide the specific data to answer the questions that I hoped to investigate. For this reason, I chose to use qualitative interviewing as my primary data-gathering methodology. While conducting interviews, I utilized existing data-gathering strategies, namely photo elicitation and pair interviewing, in new ways. Similarly, my data analysis (Chapter 4) utilizes positioning and Foucauldian Discourse Analysis together in innovative ways. For this reason, and in order to provide a firm foundation for the analysis to come, my methodological explanation chapters are extensive.

This chapter describes the ways in which I gathered youth discourse for analysis. I describe the initial design of the study with justification for my methods, the creation of protocols and interview materials, considerations for consent and confidentiality, as well as my methods for recruitment and conducting interviews. It ends with a description of my sample demographics. Chapter 4 continues with a description of my data analysis techniques.

Study Design

Experts in qualitative interviewing describe the importance of matching methodology with the research questions being answered (Light, Singer, & Willett, 2009; Rubin & Rubin, 2012; Seidman, 2006).

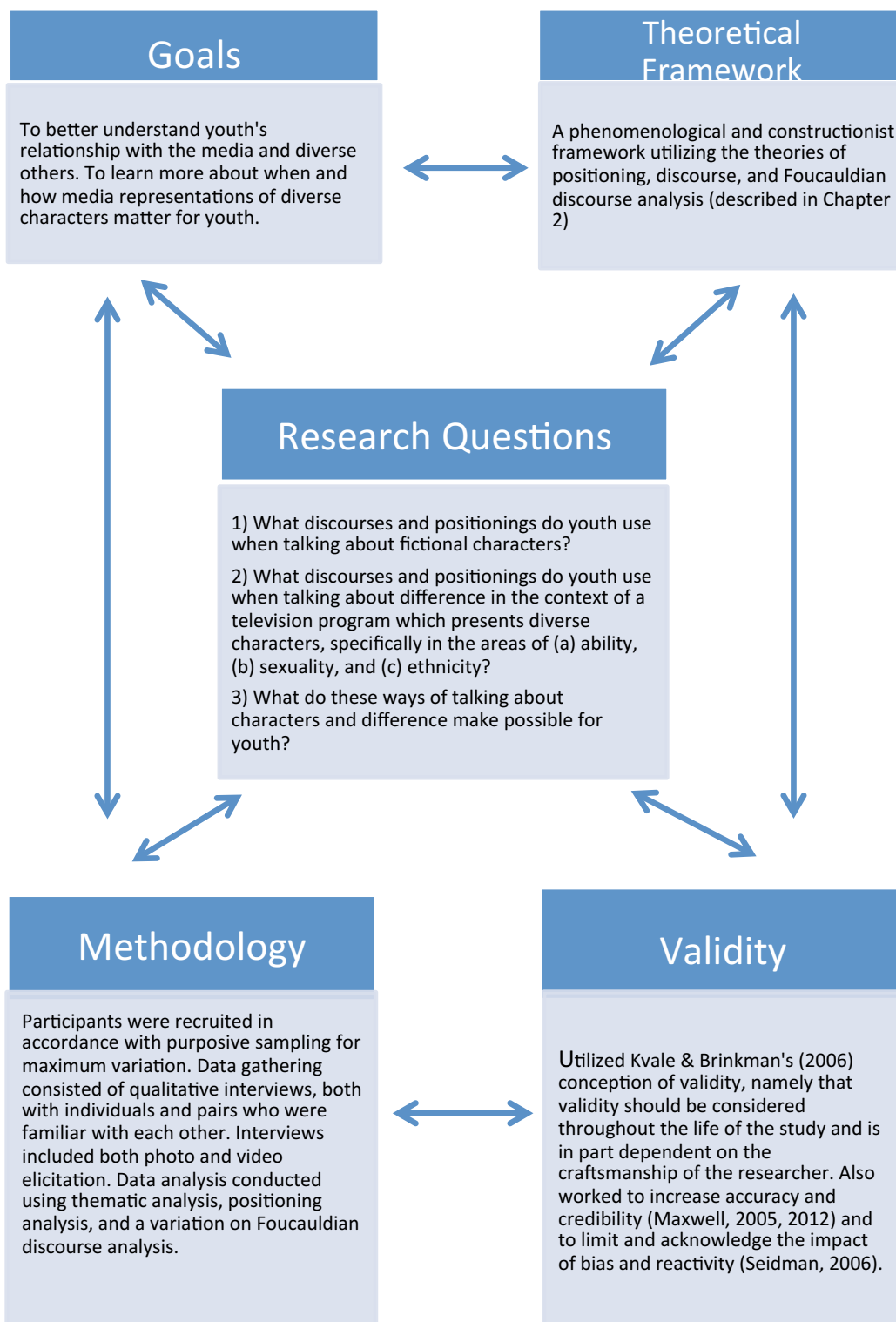
Maxwell (2005, 2012) goes a step further and describes goal, research questions, methods, validity, and a study's conceptual framework as all feeding into each other in an iterative process. Every piece must fit together in order to create a sound design. Not only must the methodology fit with the conceptual framework and the research questions, it must also work in harmony with the goal of the study and the study's conception of validity. Similarly, the methods of data analysis must work in concert with the methods for data gathering and sample design. The diagram below, modified from Maxwell (2012, p. 5) illustrates this internal coherence.

Figure 3. Maxwell's Internal Coherence



I present the elements of my own study design in Figure 8 below. I believe that this visual representation relays the interrelated nature of my study design. Decisions about each step were made in light of every other step, and the process for decision making was iterative. Representationally, this diagram acts as a snapshot of the study as a whole.

Figure 4. Internal Coherence for this Study



Each study element works in harmony with every other study element to create a coherent and harmonious whole. The goal of my study, to better understand when and how diverse character representations in the media matter for youth, is well suited to qualitative research methodologies and maps well onto the research questions that I have created. The questions that I ask do not seek one single truth, but can be answered within a constructivist framework and are intended to better understand the broader meaning that individuals make of both the media and of difference. The methods of interviewing and character card sorting that I chose for data gathering created a wealth of information for data analysis using positioning analysis and Foucauldian Discourse Analysis. My conception of validity works well with my iterative processes of research question revision and data analysis.

The Research Questions

Maxwell (2005, 2012) describes an iterative process in which research questions are not completed until a study is at its conclusion. Research questions can change throughout the life of the study, and in fact should change based on the data that a researcher is gathering (2005).

While the questions as originally conceptualized are rarely present at the end of a study, they serve an important purpose. “These early, provisional questions frame the study in important ways, guide decisions about methods, and influence (and are influenced by) the conceptual framework, preliminary results, and potential validity concerns.” (Maxwell, 2005, pp. 65-66; Maxwell, 2012). Because of the importance of these initial questions, I present them here. I began my research with the following five questions:

- 1) How do youth talk about the representations of individual difference on *Glee*, specifically difference in the areas of (a) human sexuality, (b) appearance (especially in relation to weight), and (c) ethnicity?
- 2) How do youth relate these representations to their own experiences?
- 3) Do youth report a change in their attitudes, understandings, or actions based on their viewing of *Glee* or other shows?
- 4) How do youth talk about the portrayals of bullying on *Glee*? What causes do they name for this bullying?
- 5) How do they relate these representations to their own experiences?

I matched my interview questions explicitly to these questions (see Appendix C) in order to ensure that the data I was gathering would be sufficient to address these areas of inquiry.

As I gathered my data and began analysis, it became clear that while I was still interested in all of these initial questions, several were no longer central to my analytic goals, particularly questions 4 and 5, which concerned youth understanding of bullying. Maxwell argues that “qualitative researchers often don’t develop their eventual research questions until they have done a significant amount of data collection and analysis” (p. 65) and that this iterative process is what leads to “well-constructed, focused questions” (p. 66).

Following this, in the end I focused on the first question: How do youth talk about the representations of individual difference on *Glee*, specifically difference in the areas of (a) human sexuality, (b) appearance (especially in relation to weight), and (c) ethnicity?

I then added questions specifically related to my methods of data analysis, as follows:

- 1) What discourses and positionings do youth use when talking about fictional characters?
- 2) What discourses and positionings do youth use when talking about difference in the context of a television program that presents diverse characters, specifically in the areas of (a) ability, (b) sexuality, and (c) ethnicity?
- 3) What do these ways of talking about characters and difference make possible for youth?

Choosing Interviewing as the Primary Means of Data Gathering

Gathering data through interviews best matched my goal of understanding the ways that youth talk about difference, because it allowed me to ask students directly about their understandings. Additionally, talking to students directly through interviews allowed me to privilege youth voice in my analysis (Cook-Sather, 2002; Luttrell, 2003), something that is not always done in research concerning youth and the media.

In this section, I first describe my decision to conduct both individual and pair interviews. I then describe the creation of my protocol, including the design and use of character cards, and the use of video clips. I end this section by describing the consent process for participants and their legal guardians.

Individual and Pair Interviews

I gave youth the choice of participating in a one-on-one interview or a pair interview. The majority of youth (20) chose to participate in individual interviews. I conducted an additional 9 pair interviews (18 youth) utilizing the same interview protocol. I gave youth the choice of participating in pair interviews for a variety of

reasons. In pair interviews, two youth who had not previously completed individual interviews were interviewed together. Their relationships included close friends, acquaintances, participants in the same after-school program, and siblings.

In the last twenty-five years, pair or “dyadic” interviews have gained prominence in the field of qualitative health research (Eisikovitz & Koren, 2010) and are most often conducted with romantic partners dealing with issues of health and ability (Caldwell, 2013; Eisikovitz & Koren; 2010; Morris, 2001; Sakellariou, Boniface, & Brown, 2013; Taylor & de Vocht, 2011). These “joint,” “couple,” or “dyad” interviews share characteristics of an individual interview and a focus group. Some researchers classify them as a type of interview while others classify them as a type of focus group. Morgan (1997) makes a distinction between a focus group and “interview or dyad interviews,” while Patton describes a dyadic interview as a kind of focus group conducted with an interviewer asking open-ended questions of two people who already know each other (2014, p. 476).

I have chosen to use this methodology with a new population, namely high school students who are familiar with each other. Allowing youth to participate in the interview with a partner alleviated some of the stress of participation (Edel & Fingerson, 2002; Patton, 2014) and allowed me to witness youth interaction (Morgan, 1997; Patton, 2014). At the same time, participants had enough time to answer each of the questions, and there was less chance of their voices being silenced (Krueger & Casey, 2009; Morgan, 1997; Patton, 2014), as is wont to happen in a larger group of 6 to 12 participants.

Protocol Design

I designed my protocol questions to focus youth talk on discussion of their relationships with and positioning of characters on the television show *Glee*, and their conceptions of difference. I aligned my interview protocol with the initial research questions of this study, but as I described earlier, those questions shifted over time. While there are questions in the protocol that became superfluous, they still provided ample data with which to answer my revised research questions. Appendix C describes the ways that my interview protocol aligns with both my initial and revised research questions.

The first interview questions asked students to list what kinds of television shows they watched, to describe the show *Glee*, and to describe characters on the show.¹⁰ They were then asked to sort the characters into categories using any criteria that they saw fit. They were asked to do this again using different criteria of their choice, and then once again as the character Sue Sylvester¹¹ would sort the characters. Only after all these activities were completed did I begin to ask questions specifically about the ways that difference was portrayed on the show. These early questions formed the backbone of my analytic work. The full protocol can be found in Appendix B.

I was careful not to use language that referenced the types of difference that I was interested in (sexuality, ethnicity, and ability) until later in the interview, in order to allow youth the chance to bring up these topics using their own language. Also, so as not color

¹⁰ In addition to research on best interviewing practices and my own work in creating an interview for my qualifying paper, my protocol creation is influenced by my work with Joseph Blatt, and the interview protocol that he created for student use in the course Growing Up in a Media World (HT-500) at the Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE). Additionally, my work with character cards is influenced by my work with Wendy Luttrell in her HGSE course Doctoral Research Practicum: Finding Culture in Talk and Images (2006-2008).

¹¹ For any reader not familiar with *Glee*'s characters, Appendix A includes my character cards with brief character descriptions.

their responses, I asked students for their own demographic information at the very end of the interview.

Character Card Design

While straightforward interview questions were able to accomplish most of my research goals, I also included questions that utilized a variation of photo and video elicitation. These activities served two purposes. First, having youth respond to video, as well as sort and describe character cards provided excellent data for the ways in which youth positioned characters. Secondly, researchers who interview youth recommend that interviewers use activities to make participants more comfortable (Edel & Fingerson, 2002).

To create the character cards, I included images of every *Glee* character that was a student, teacher, or school official that had been in more than 20 episodes (at the time that the cards were created in March 2013, *Glee* was airing its fourth of six seasons. In this season, new characters were introduced in leading roles, and I included these characters as well. I chose this cutoff to ensure as diverse a group of characters (in terms of ethnicity, sexuality, ability, etc.) as possible while still minimizing the chance that a participant would not recognize more obscure characters. I did not include any parent photos, as school life is both the focus of the show and the focus of my study and youth talk about adult characters was outside the scope of this study.

I used publicity stills from the season in which each character was introduced and chose, for each character, an iconic image with a colorful, monochromatic background and the character smiling at the camera. I focused on the headshot image (three-quarter shot including the shoulders), in which a character was featured alone. I purposely chose

stills where actors were in costume, to capture the image of the character and not the actor.

From these character images, I created 3-inch by 3-inch color-print cards (see Appendix J), which were laminated both so that students could feel free to touch the cards, and so they more closely resembled photographs. I used these cards with all of the youth that I interviewed.

Character Card Uses & Questions

At the beginning of each interview, the cards were either face down on my side of the table or in my bag. I did not want to have the cards influence the answers that came before their part in the interview, so students did not have access to the character photos until after they were asked what the show was about.

After that point, students were asked to help me spread out the cards on the table so that they could all be seen. This was done before I asked them about any of the characters. I recorded any comments made by the participants about characters while we were laying out the cards, before any questions had prompted them for a response.

Then students were then asked to remove any characters that they were not familiar with or had never seen before. This gave me insight into each participant's familiarity with the show and what seasons they had seen. In removing characters from the stacks, participants generally sorted themselves into one of three categories: recognizing only characters from the first season, recognizing characters introduced before Season 4 (when several members of the original group from Season 1 had graduated and new characters introduced), and recognizing all of the characters from all the seasons. Participants who recognized every single character were generally self-reported fans of the show.

In some ways, these cards limited the world of the subjects by referencing the frame of these particular characters (Lakoff, 2014). In this way, youth might have been limiting their conversation (either consciously or subconsciously) to discussion only of the characters laid out before them. For instance, no one mentioned Lauren Zizes (a student on the show), perhaps because she was not featured in a character card. On the other hand, several participants mentioned Burt Hummel (Kurt Hummel's father), despite the fact that he did not have a character card. In the same way, the cards might have referenced characters that would not necessarily come to mind without prompting.

After spreading out the photos, students were asked to "tell me about any character." They repeated this process for at least three characters and sometimes more, depending on the depth with which a participant described a character. Then students were asked if there were any characters that they particularly liked or didn't like. Students picked up the cards for these characters and described why they liked or didn't like them. A character sorting activity followed this, but the data from that activity will not be discussed in my dissertation analysis (see next steps, Chapter 9).

Using *Glee* Video Clip

Near the end of the interview, I screened a clip from Season 1, Episode 3 of *Glee*, titled "Acafellas." During this episode, Mercedes Jones develops a crush on Kurt Hummel¹². Rachel Berry and other female members of the glee club stage an intervention to convince Mercedes that Kurt is gay. Mercedes admits to Kurt that she likes him, and Kurt tells Mercedes that he does not like her, but that he likes Rachel instead. Mercedes breaks Kurt's windshield, feeling that he has been leading her on with his friendship. In

¹² Again, Appendix A includes character cards for each character along with descriptive information.

the scene that I screened, Mercedes meets Kurt to apologize for breaking his window, and he tells her that he is gay.

I included this scene because it deals explicitly with sexuality and how characters on the show choose to manage their difference with others. This scene also demonstrates how characters interact with their peers around their perceived difference. I believed that this scene would provide a good context for discussion. As my analysis progressed, this scene also provides a clear example of a character openly enacting their difference for youth to respond to.

While the interview protocol that I used for this study includes additional questions (see Appendix B), the questions and activities described above were the primary sources of data for my qualitative analysis. A more detailed description of the interview process follows information provided about students' consent and assent procedures.

Consent process

I created two consent documents for this study, one parental consent form to be read and signed by parents, guardians, and youth over the age of 18, and another student assent form given to youth, which they reviewed and signed at the time of the interview. Both documents contain the same information and have been reviewed and approved by Harvard University's Committee on the Use of Human Subjects (CUHS).

Both documents included information on the purpose of the research, a brief description of what the youth would be doing, and information on the voluntary nature of participation and the ease of withdrawal from the study. These forms also included information on the risks and benefits of the study, confidentiality, and the amount that

youth would be compensated (\$10). Parents and youth were able to indicate on the form if youth could be audio recorded and/or video recorded, and how those recordings could be used (for data analysis only or as a part of research presentations). Parents and youth were also able to indicate if they were comfortable with participation in one-on-one interviews as well as partner interviews, and if they were comfortable with the youth viewing a clip from the show *Glee*. Both documents were written as simply as possible for ease of understanding. Both the parental consent form and the student assent form are included in Appendices D and E.

Criteria for Recruitment

I recruited my sample from a large, liberal city in a conservative southern state and from the city's neighboring communities. At the time of the interviews, the city had a population of between 750,000 and one million residents, and was bordered by several smaller cities of between 50,000 and 100,000 residents. I created my sample through purposive sampling (Light, Singer, & Willett, 2009; Maxwell, 2012; Patton, 2014; Seidman, 2006) of youth. My criteria for participation were not used to exclude youth from participation but to determine the methods of recruitment. I worked to recruit a diverse, high-school-aged sample that watched *Glee* of their own accord and were familiar enough with the show to participate in all interview activities.

Diversity

My aim was to recruit as diverse as sample as possible across various lines of difference including sexuality, ethnicity, SES, and ability. For this reason, I specifically tried to recruit high school youth who identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender,

and queer (LGBTQ). It was important to both protect their privacy and to make the youth feel comfortable during the recruitment process and subsequent interviews.

I was very careful to protect their anonymity, and worked to ensure that there was no way that I could accidentally “out” a youth, especially when recruiting at high schools. I never asked youth in a Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) or at Youth Pride¹³ to provide their contact information and never passed around sign-up sheets. Also, my interest in recruiting LGBTQ youth was not included in the consent materials for parents, since some youth might have been open about their sexuality at school, but not at home. In order to recruit a diverse sample in terms of SES and ethnicity, I recruited at Boys & Girls Clubs of America at different schools throughout the city and in surrounding towns. I recruited at two schools where a majority of students qualified for free or reduced lunch, and recruited students through my work as a tutor for youth in affluent suburbs and neighboring cities to ensure a mix of youth from different socioeconomic groups.

I attempted to find ways to recruit youth with disabilities, but found this to be a group of students that was particularly difficult to access. Within my general sampling, I was able to recruit youth who identified as having physical and emotional disabilities. The specifics of recruitment at individual sites are described in more detail below.

Familiarity with the show

One of the criteria for recruitment was that participants must have seen at least five full episodes of the show *Glee*. If youth wanted to participate and had not seen the show, they had the option of watching five episodes before their interview. I set the requirement

¹³ Youth Pride is a local organization that acts as a safe space for LGBTQIA (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning, Intersex, and Asexual or Ally) youth.

at five episodes because the brunt of the interview required knowledge of the show *Glee* and its characters. I believed that seeing five episodes of the show would allow for enough familiarity for youth to talk knowledgeably about the show's main characters. While the majority of participants had seen more than the requisite five episodes, I did not require more so as not to limit the population that I could draw from.

At the same time, I was most interested in working with the youth who chose to watch the show based on their interest. I assumed that the minimal incentive that I was offering (a ten dollar gift card) would not be enough to incentivize people who were truly not interested in the show to watch it for over four hours, but I was also open to the idea that youth who were curious about *Glee* could be given this opportunity to explore the show.

To my knowledge, only one participant had no prior familiarity with *Glee* and watched five episodes in order to participate in the study. She was then able to recognize and provide commentary on a majority of characters and their discourses. The other participants ranged from having seen only the minimum five episodes to having seen every episode of *Glee* that had aired up to the point of their interview. Of those participants who had seen only a few episodes, the majority of them had seen a part of the first season.

High School Aged

Initially, I intended to only include high school students in my sample. While it is clear that middle and elementary school students are watching *Glee*, I was not actively recruiting from this population for my study. I made this recruitment decision because of the sensitive nature of both the content of the show and the questions that I was asking. In

order to achieve a diverse sample, I included some recent high school graduates as well as students in their final year of middle school. The students outside of my intended age range were recruited from Youth Pride, were fans of the show *Glee*, and were thoughtful and open in their responses.

I do not distinguish between the data of middle school students, high school students, and high school graduates for inclusion in my analysis. I do include the participants' ages along with other pertinent demographic information as context for the reader when I include direct quotations.

Conducting Interviews

Piloting process

I piloted my protocol, including the use of character cards and video clips, in March and April of 2013 with three high-school-aged *Glee* viewers. My goal was to determine if the questions were clear to the population I was interviewing and if these questions gave appropriate insight into my research questions (Light, Singer, & Willet, 1990; Maxwell, 2005; Seidman, 2006; Weiss, 1994). Overall, I found that the pilot went well and that youth in this age group were both comfortable discussing the portrayal of difference on the show and thoughtful in their reflection on the topic of difference. I made some surface changes to the interview protocol, cutting a few questions and adding others, but in large part the protocol that I utilized for my pilot interviews was the same one I used throughout this study.

Conveying Information about Consent and Assent

I collected data from 28 individual and pair interviews in 2013 (April through October). Students participated in either a pair interview or a single interview. When

participants were identified for the interviews, I gave them parental consent forms to take home and return. Once students returned a form, their interview was scheduled. During the first minutes of the interview, students were given a student assent form to sign and the purpose of the interview was explained to them again. I then walked participants through the assent form, which is nearly identical to the consent form that their parents signed.

I made sure that the risks for harm were clear (they might feel uncomfortable with a question and were free not to answer), that they could leave at any time, and that participation in the interview would have no impact on their schoolwork or their position in the after-school program, if relevant. I also ascertained whether or not their guardian had given permission for audio and videotaping the conversation, and if they felt comfortable with the recording as well. If they felt comfortable with this information, then they signed the assent form. No one who had scheduled an interview declined to participate or chose to end the interview early.

At this point in the interview process I also asked students to choose a pseudonym, and youth wrote this name on their consent forms. All names given for youth throughout this study are the pseudonyms that they provided.

Video recording and Analytic Voice Memos

I recorded all pair and individual interviews digitally, using both audio and video recordings, to enhance reliability as well as to provide richer data for analysis. Four interviews were not video recorded: three because of a logistical issue with the recording equipment or limitations of the space being used and one because the participant did not want her image recorded. All of these interviews were audio recorded.

After each interview, the text of the interview was transcribed in order to allow more accurate and in-depth analysis. Immediately after each interview, I recorded an analytic voice memo concerning my impressions of each session (Boyatzis, 1998; Emerson, 1995; Maxwell, 2005; Seidman, 2006). Voice memos included interesting patterns, possible improvements for protocols or methodological practice, and student responses that I found particularly insightful (Seidman, 2006). These memos served as an additional data source as well as an initial step in my data analysis.

Interview Spaces and Specifics of Individual Interviews

What follows is a detailed description of the process and spaces where I recruited and interviewed youth with additional information on how youth were recruited. This section begins with a description of the spaces where I recruited and interviewed a large number of participants and continues into a description of the spaces where I interviewed one or two youth.

Recruitment and Conducting Interviews at Youth Pride

I recruited the majority of my LGBTQ participants through the drop-in center at Youth Pride. Youth Pride is a local organization founded in 1990 and describes itself as “a safe space and ‘home sweet home’ for LGBTQIA youth” (organization website¹⁴). Their mission is to promote “the physical, mental, emotional, spiritual and social wellbeing of sexual and gender minority youth so that they can openly and safely explore and affirm their identities” (organizational website).

¹⁴ In order to protect the anonymity of the youth in my study, I have used pseudonyms for this organization and others, and will not be providing a link to their website.

Youth Pride is a warm and welcoming space converted from a single family, two-story home in the heart of the city. The furnishings are old and the air conditioning is spotty. Much of the interior is furnished with donations, and one day, an interview had to be scheduled around a couch pickup. I sat in on a few weekly group meetings of students at Youth Pride when I was recruiting. These would often start with an icebreaker that involved sharing something personal, including their name, their preferred gender pronoun, and a preference about food, music, or the like.

I spent four months at Youth Pride recruiting students and conducting interviews. I created fliers (Appendix L), spoke about my project at times when high school students were present, and worked closely with Charly Reyes, the director of the organization. Charly also put me in touch with the directors of several GSAs in and around the city. Even with these measures, I was not getting as diverse a sample as I had hoped, and it was necessary to expand my recruitment parameters in order to include as many LGBTQ youth as possible. At this site I recruited seven youth who participated in individual interviews.

All interviews of these youth took place at Youth Pride. Interviews were most often conducted in an upstairs room that was also used as an office by multiple people. The door closed, and the space was generally private, as the majority of youth spent their time on the first floor. In this space, I sat across from the participant and spread the character cards on a small, rectangular table between us. The camera was set up in the corner of the room, behind my right shoulder, focused on the participant and the table.

The other place where interviews were conducted was on the first-floor computer room with all the doors closed. There was not the same level of privacy in this space, as

people were almost always on the other side of the thin doors. No one being interviewed seemed particularly concerned by the level of privacy in either space. The only person who seemed tentative in any way was interviewed in the upstairs space. In the first-floor space, the participant and I would sit side by side at a computer table, and push the keyboards back to make room for the character cards and sorting activities.

Recruitment and Conducting Interviews at Molly Ivins High School After-School Program

Molly Ivins School for Leaders (MIS) is a public school serving young women in grades 6 through 12 in the city area. I recruited 13 total students there, and it was the space where I conducted the greatest number of interviews (five individual and four pair interviews). MIS is a “school of choice,” or one of the city’s magnet programs and specialized academies that parents and students can opt into. The school boasts that 100% of students were accepted to college upon graduation, with 60% being the first in their families to attend college. The school works to be geographically and ethnically diverse, and serves all 86 elementary schools in the school district.

Students must complete an application to attend MIS. Those who complete the application process and meet minimum requirements are placed in a lottery. Applications consist of an application form and letter, standardized testing scores, report card, and two teacher recommendations. Of the nearly 500 students who apply, 150 are accepted to the school. The school’s demographics “mirror that of [the] local community” with 61% Hispanic, 20% Caucasian, 9% African American, 8% Multiracial and 3% Asian

American¹⁵ (school website). This does not quite mirror the city demographics, which according to the city's website was 49% Anglo (Non-Hispanic White), 34% Hispanic or Latino, 7% African American, 6% Asian American and 3.4% other ethnicities in 2013. While MIS does over represent the city's Hispanic/Latino community, the school is still comprised of a diverse population of students, from all areas of the city and multiple socioeconomic contexts. My interview participants reflected that diversity.

Students were recruited through the head of the Boys & Girls Club who ran after-school programming on campus. Interviews were conducted in the campus library, most frequently in the Boys & Girls Club office at the back of the library and once in a small classroom within the library. The space was private, with occasional interruptions of staff needing something from their desks. The students and I sat across from each other at a small table, which was ideal for spreading out the character cards. Interviews were occasionally shortened in length to accommodate students' needs to catch a late bus.

Recruitment and Conducting Interviews at Other Interview Spaces

Other After-School Programs

I conducted interviews with several youth from other after-school programs. My process was to make initial contact with the director of the after-school program and to gain the program director's approval to recruit students. Charly Reyes from Youth Pride put me in touch with several directors of Gay Straight Alliances in Youth Pride's network, both in the city and in neighboring towns. Once I had permission, I would go in and talk to students, hand out consent forms for their parents to sign if they were under

¹⁵ Ethnicity labels are taken directly from the websites for the city, schools, and organizations. For this reason, the labels are not consistent. For example, Rennie High School uses the term "Latino" while Nueces Bay High School uses the term "Hispanic."

18, and then return the next time the group was meeting together. I would then interview youth who had returned their forms or schedule interviews with the youth for a future date. I did not collect the names of interested students at any of the Gay Straight Alliance meetings that I attended in order to protect confidentiality.

I created fliers that I hung at several after-school programs, and quarter-sheet handouts that I gave to students with their consent forms, but I rarely heard back from students through this method. The fliers and quarter sheets can be found in Appendices J, K, and L. What follows is demographic information for the schools that housed these after-school programs and a quick description of the recruitment and interview process.

Rennier High School: Rennier is a large, urban high school, with 82% Latino, 9% African American, 4% White and 3% Asian students. Of the more than 1500 students that attend Rennier, 89% are considered economically disadvantaged according to state measures. I recruited three students from an after-school program there. I initially made contact with the head of the Boys & Girls Club at Rennier, and talked to the youth present over the course of a week in late September 2013 to recruit participants. While multiple youth expressed interest in participating, in the end only three returned their consent forms and I conducted one individual and one pair interview. Interviews took place in the office of the program director, a five-minute walk from the space where informal activities were going on. The space was quiet, but because of logistics, including finding the students and bus scheduling, the interviews were sometimes hurried.

Nueces Bay High School: I made multiple trips to Nueces Bay High School, a school with almost 2400 students. The city of Nueces Bay is approximately 30 miles outside of the city limits. Students are 79% White, 15% Hispanic, and 4% Asian. I

recruited youth at this school in May 2013 through the Gay Straight Alliance, which met twice a week after school. While I made multiple trips to this school, in the end I conducted only one pair interview. The GSA met in a theater classroom, and we conducted the interview in a small, private room that was sometimes used as a performance space and was currently being used as a storage space for a program that distributed prom dresses to youth who could not afford them.

East City Prep: East City Prep is a public, open enrollment charter school located in a less affluent part of the city. The school is open to any student in the county, grades 2 through 12, through an application process. The population of the school is 86% Hispanic, 9% African American and 3% White. Ninety percent of students are identified as economically disadvantaged. I conducted a three-person interview at this school. I learned that the youth participating were in 8th grade (not 9th grade like I thought) once the interview had started. However, they had all watched the appropriate number of episodes, and were very interested in participating, so I conducted the interview despite their age.

South City Boys & Girls Club Summer Program: I interviewed one group of youth from the South City Boys & Girls Club summer program, with four girls who were strongly encouraged to participate by the program coordinator. The interview was conducted outdoors at picnic tables where many other youth walked by over the course of the interview. The youth were only partially familiar with the show. I shortened the interview significantly and did not use it in my overall data sample.

Purposive Recruitment and Snowball Sampling

Because of my work as a tutor and through my friends and acquaintances, the population that I had the easiest access to was a group of predominantly White, straight, able, middle to upper-middle class youth in suburban areas. Since I knew that I would be able to recruit youth in this demographic through my connections in the community, I sought out youth in other demographic groups through my purposive sampling at after-school programs and at Youth Pride to ensure a diverse sample. So while the youth that I describe in this section were recruited based on their convenience, they were part of a larger, purposefully diverse sample.

In all, I recruited eight youth through my personal connections, and interviewed five of them in their own homes and the other three in locations that were familiar and convenient to them. What follows is a description of how I made contact with these youth, a brief description of the schools that they attend, and a description of the interview space and any special circumstances that arose.

Interviewing Youth in their Homes

Cara and Allie: Cara and Allie are twin sisters that I tutored a year prior to conducting the interview. They were my first pair interview and the only participants that I knew prior to conducting the interviews. Cara and Allie attended a large, suburban school with a predominantly White population known for its academic rigor and football team. I met with Cara and Allie in their home, and we conducted the interview in a second-floor room used by the twins as a study room. The room had three rectangular tables set up in a U-shape, and I sat at the center to conduct the interview. We were alone in the home during the interview.

Enrique and Alex: I worked with Enrique and Alex's mother, and when I told her about my study, she volunteered to ask her children if they would be interested in participating, which they were. Alex was a fan of the show, and Enrique had watched it with his mother and sister. Their father worked as a national forest ranger, and I met them at their home down a dirt road 60 miles out of the city. I had breakfast with the family, and then interviewed Alex and Enrique one at a time at their dining room table. While the area was mostly quiet, family members did come through the room during the interview. I was only able to video record Enrique's interview, because once I started talking to Alex, my video camera ran out of power and there were no plugs in an area convenient to interviewing. Alex and Enrique attend Mount Freedom High School, a small school serving a rural community.

Kylie: I tutored a boy named Jack Spangler, and his mother put me in touch with Kylie, their next-door neighbor. Kylie was a friend of Jack's younger sister, and while Jack's sister did not watch *Glee*, Kylie was a fan. I scheduled a time to meet with Kylie at her home and met her and her mother there. Her mother was a professor, and was very interested in supporting research and exposing Kylie to what happens in graduate school. Kylie was more interested in talking about *Glee*. In order to have a private space, Kylie and I met outside on their back patio, around a small picnic table. There was a strong wind that day, and Kylie and I had to hold down the character cards to prevent them from blowing away. Because there were no power outlets outside, I was not able to video record this interview. We sometimes had to raise our voices to be heard over the sounds of the waterfall splashing into Kylie's pool, and the sounds of a weed whacker coming from the nearby Spangler home.

Interviewing Youth in Familiar Spaces

Beth and Joseph: Beth was a high school student taking college-level courses at a local community college where a friend of a friend of mine was teaching. Beth's teacher mentioned the study to Beth, and she contacted me through email. We arranged to meet at a local public library on a Saturday morning, and then went to a private room designed for study groups and meetings. The room was about 10 foot by 10 foot, and had one large, boardroom-style table with chairs around it. After we completed the interview, Beth asked if her boyfriend Joseph could participate as well. I interviewed him a few days later in the same room. Beth and Joseph both live in Henryville, a smaller, affluent community 30 miles north of the city.

Alice: Alice is the stepdaughter of a college acquaintance. A friend who knew that I was looking for youth to interview recommended that I contact Alice's mother. Alice was interested in being interviewed, and so we met at a Starbucks near her home. Her stepfather dropped her off and picked her up an hour later. While the coffee shop was busy, we were able to find a spot removed from other patrons for our conversation. When it came time to work with the character cards, we spread them out on a nearby table with a large lamp, and on a plastic carrying case in which I carried my interview materials. Because of the location, I was not able to videotape this interview. While there was music playing in the background and background conversation, the conversation was recorded with enough clarity for transcription. Alice attends a small, private school within the city.

Sample Demographics

The sample for this study is comprised of 39 youth in total. These youth were interviewed either individually (19 interviews) or interviewed in small groups of 2 or 3

students (9 partner interviews). The age range for the sample is from 12 to 19 years old with a mode age of 16, a median age of 16, and a mean age of 15.5. The sample was diverse with 28% of the sample identifying as LGBTQ and 18% identifying as having a disability. The sample consists of 67% female participants, 23% male participants and 10% transgender or questioning participants. Thirty-three percent of participants identified themselves as Hispanic or Latino/a, 31% identified as White or Caucasian, 23% identified as Black or African American, 8% identified as multiracial and 5% identified in another category (Southeast Asian, Italian).

The following charts give (with identifying information removed) the words that participants used to identify their grade, age, school, sexuality, ability, gender, ethnicity, and family structure. I labeled a student's sex, or biological gender to help identify students who were genderqueer or transgender. In the next chapter, I describe in detail my methods of data analysis.

Figure 5. Demographic Data of Participants¹⁶

Pseudonym	School and/or Program	Grade	Age	ethnicity	sex	gender	sexuality	disability	who do you live with	what do they do?
Joseph	Henryville High (neighboring city)	11th	17	White	male	male	straight	none		[[professional]]
Beth	Henryville High (neighboring city)	11th	17	White	female	female	heterosexual	none	family	father-entrepreneur; mother-director of Christian education
Tyler	Molly Ivins HS Afterschool Program	rising 10th	14	Caucasian	female	female	pansexual	social anxiety, mild OCD (it does not disable me), overcame nervous tics	parents	mother: applying for job at food/grocery co-op; father: developer for mobile & web ads
Kayla	Molly Ivins HS Afterschool Program	11th	17	Black/African American	female	female	no answer	none	mom	mom: accountant
Audrey	Molly Ivins HS Afterschool Program	12th	17	Caucasian	female	female	straight	none	both parents	goodwill industries, mom: secretary at St. Ignatius
Heide	Molly Ivins HS Afterschool Program	11th	16	multi-racial	female	female/ between	straight/ questioning	ADD, OCD	mother	massage therapist
Jasmine	Molly Ivins HS Afterschool Program	9th	14	Hispanic	female	female	straight	none	aunt & her boyfriend	owns rental house, veteran,
Enrique	Mount Freedom High School (neighboring town, rural)	11th	16	Hispanic	male	male	straight	none	mom, dad & sister	mom: works for university; dad: federal game warden
Alex	Mount Freedom High School (neighboring town, rural)	10th	15	Hispanic	female	female	straight	none	parents	coordinator for university; dad: federal game warden
Alice	Oak Park High, small private	rising 10th	16	White	female	female	demisexual, panromantic	ADHD, depression, social anxiety (mom considers it a disability)	mom & stepdad	dad works for AOL, mom is a -- contractor

¹⁶ Pair interview partners are indicated by color.

CJ	Rennier HS Boys & Girls Club	9th	14	American [[South East Asian]]	male	male	gay	asthma, anxiety, ADHD, Asperger's syndrome, depression	mom	teaches
Kylie	University Park HS	10th	16	White	female	female	straight	none	mother & father	college professor, professional
Warren	Youth Pride: Forrest Bend High	rising 11th	16	Caucasian/White	male	male	homosexual	none	mother and father	one is therapist one is a psychologist
Ely	Youth Pride: Germantown HS, Castle Tech High (neighboring town)	graduated	19	African American	male	male	homosexual	none	mother	hairstylist
Karl Marx	Youth Pride: home schooled	rising 10th	15	Ashkenazi Jewish	male	female	pansexual	heart condition, clinical depression, anxiety	mom & stepfather	customer service manager, unemployed
Deion	Youth Pride: Larson HS	9th	15	Caucasian	male	male	gay	none	mom	cosmetologist
DD	Youth Pride: Middle School	7th	12	White	male	male/female	gay	none	parents	medical field; dad exterminator
Lilly-Mae	Youth Pride: Realto High (neighboring city)	rising 12th	17	Mexican w/ some Native American	female	female	straight	"not anymore" emotional/communication (PTSD)	mom	teaches tennis
Caden	Youth Pride: Rio Valley HS (neighboring town)	graduated	18	Italian [[white]]	female	male	trans	none	dad	[[blue collar]]
Jennifer	B&G Club, South City	8th	13	Hispanic	female	female	straight	none	parents	computer fixing
Jazmin	B&G Club, South City	9th	14	Hispanic	female	female	straight	none	parents	cooking & nursing
Brittney	B&G Club, South City	8th	13	African American	female	female	straight	none	mother	manager at Uhaul
Shaunte	East City Prep	8th	13	African American	female	female	straight	none	Mom	unemployed right now
KeSha	East City Prep	8th	13	Latina	female	female	straight	none	Mom & dad	work at an office

Jeb	East City Prep	8th		13	Hispanic	male	male	straight	none		
Gracie	Molly Ivins HS Afterschool Program	10th		15	Hispanic	female	female	straight	none	parents, 1 sister, 2 brothers	roofer & nothing (mom)
Sarah	Molly Ivins HS Afterschool Program	10th		15	Hispanic	female	female	straight	none	mom, stepdad, sisters	clean houses, construction
Sofia	Molly Ivins HS Afterschool Program	10th		16	Hispanic	female	female	straight	none	parents, brothers, sister	construction, cafeteria worker
Carolina	Molly Ivins HS Afterschool Program	11th		16	Hispanic	female	female	straight	none	brothers, 1 sister, 2 dogs	Dad works for city transportation
Captain America	Molly Ivins HS Afterschool Program	12th		17	Hispanic	female	female	stright	none	both parents & sister	Dad: project manager, Mom: Kindergarten Teacher
Thor	Molly Ivins HS Afterschool Program	12th		17	half Hispanic, half White	female	female	straight	none	Dad	Senior Assignments Editor, local television channel
Nicole	Molly Ivins HS Afterschool Program			15	African American	female	female	straight	asthma	parents & my sisters	Dad: Graphic Designer Mom: Real Estate Agent
Charlie Ann	Molly Ivins HS Afterschool Program			16	African American	female	female	straight	none	Mom, Brother, Sister	Mom: IRS, Bro: High School Sis: Grad School
Che (classmate)	Nueces Bay HS GSA (neighboring city)	9th		15	Hispanic	female	either	pansexual	none	mom, brother, sister, dad (but	HR specialist: mom; Manager at grocery
Puckasaurus	Nueces Bay HS GSA (neighboring city)	11th		17	Caucasian	female	female	straight	none	mom	waitress
Sean Anderson	Rennier HS Boys & Girls Club	11th		16	African American	male	male	heterosexual	none		
Brittany Johnson	Rennier HS Boys & Girls Club	10th		15	African American	female	female	straight	none	mother	works for phone company
Allie (sister)	North River High School (suburb)	12th		18	White	female	female	straight	none	mother & father	lawyers
Kara (sister)	North River High School (suburb)	12th		18	White	female	female	straight	none	mother & father	lawyers

Chapter 4: Applying the Framework of Foucauldian Discourse Analysis to Positioning and Discourse Analysis

This chapter describes the methods which I used to analyze youth speech about the television show *Glee*. I have conducted an analysis using discourse and positioning analysis, and will be combining these two data analytic methodologies within the framework of Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA).¹⁷ As stated in Chapter 2, I am not conducting a full Foucauldian Discourse Analysis, but will be using it as a frame to look at the ways that discourses and positionings relate to each other, and at what happens in the world based on the positionings in discourses that youth use in their talk. For the sake of clarity, in this chapter I describe the methodologies that I have brought together under the framework of FDA as a “modified Foucauldian Discourse Analysis.”

I believe that the best way to explain my process is to present an example of my analysis. In this chapter, I will first describe the steps that I went through in my data analysis, and then I will lead the reader through a case study of my analytic methodology. I will present the positionings and discourses identified in my analysis of participant use of pronouns when describing Wade “Unique” Adams, a transgendered character on the show. I will discuss the choices that I made in this analysis and present my findings. While the analysis conducted in future chapters is not identical to this work, I believe that the progression is similar enough to provide a clear example of the process behind my analysis.

Conducting a Modified Foucauldian Discourse Analysis

Preparing for Modified FDA: Conducting a Thematic Analysis

Willig (1995, 2008) describes the preliminary steps in conducting a discourse analysis as selecting a text to analyze and finding the themes that are present in that text around the discursive object, or topic that you are interested in analyzing. For my purposes, the discursive objects that I was most interested in were “characters” and “difference.” I conducted a thematic analysis (Boyatzis, 1998; Maxwell, 2005, 2012; Seidman, 2006) focusing on youth talk about characters and difference using MAXQDA and Excel.

I began with etic codes describing the key types of difference I was interested in: ethnicity, sexuality, ability, gender, religion, appearance, and SES. I performed multiple lexical searches within MAXQDA for these words, coding any occurrences that I found. I then expanded my search to related words. After this point, I began going through individual transcripts looking for additional language that youth might be using to describe each concept.

When I found a code that consisted of specific words or phrases that I thought might be interesting, I conducted a lexical search within MAXQDA to identify other occurrences of those words and phrases in any of my interview transcripts. In this way, I was able to tell which constructions were widespread in youth talk and which were more particular to an individual. In my coding of text, I included the question that the youth was answering and any surrounding text so that in my analysis, I could stay as close to

¹⁷ The definitions and theoretical underpinnings of positioning analysis, discourses, and Foucauldian Discourse Analysis are described in detail in Chapter 2.

the youth's original choice of words as possible (Boyatzis, 1998) using the words that I heard youth use when discussing sexuality, gender and ethnicity as individual codes. Etic codes like "disability" and "ethnicity" became code groups that the newer codes fit within.

As an example,¹⁸ the code of "disability" became a group code that included the codes: OCD, obsessive-compulsive disorder, Down syndrome, paralysis, and dyslexia. I also coded common slang and euphemisms that participants used to describe these disabilities, including "special," "slow," "neat freak," "clean freak," "can't walk," "wheelchair kid," and "germaphobe."

In addition to coding for specific vocabulary, when looking for the discussion of disability, I also paid attention to "implicit constructions." Willig (2008) describes these constructions as the references in speech to concepts like sexuality without the overt use of identifying vocabulary. An example of this might be coding a youth who describes how hard it is to be Artie Abrams (a student character in a wheelchair), or another of the disabled characters, as a possible reference to disability even though the youth never specifically mentions disability.

Similarly, in my preliminary thematic coding of characters, I began with predetermined codes for every character represented on a character card. I added additional codes to this list for characters that were mentioned by youth but not represented on character cards. I also coded for emotion and relationship words that youth used when talking about characters, including "love," "like," "don't like," "hate," "friend," and "boyfriend." Because I coded with character names, I was able to identify

¹⁸ Appendix S contains a full list of thematic codes and associated groupings.

co-occurring codes of both difference and relationship with individual characters. This allowed me to see how youth were talking about individual characters in terms of their sexuality, gender, ability, and other types of difference.

In this initial stage of analysis, I conducted thematic coding of youth responses to every question in each interview. From this initial step, I found themes occurring in youth talk that I wanted to investigate further. I started to develop theories concerning the ways that youth were talking about characters and difference, and I chose to move forward with a subset of youth talk which I believed would allow me to best investigate these topics.

Beginning Modified FDA: Choosing a Subset of Data

After conducting my initial thematic coding, I decided to conduct a more in-depth analysis of a smaller selection of transcript text. I chose to analyze the responses of all participants to the same three requests, beginning with the request for students to "Tell me about a character." They were then asked, "Tell me about your favorite character or a character that you really like," and "Tell me about your least favorite character, or a character that annoys you." Students were then asked to describe those characters. If participants had already described a character, I would ask instead, "Why do you like or dislike them?" These questions were asked when the character cards described in Chapter 3 were spread out in front of them.

I chose these questions for analysis because I was specifically interested in how youth talked about characters on the show and how they talked about difference. The questions were open ended enough to allow for a range of responses. These questions

also occurred before I asked youth specifically about difference, and before I had used my own discourses and positionings of difference in our talk.

I used MAXQDA to identify all the responses to these three questions and created an Excel document with the student responses. I then identified any time when youth responses referenced any of the kinds of difference that I was most interested in. I coded these answers by hand using the broad, etic categories that I had used in my initial thematic coding: ability, sexuality, ethnicity, religion, gender, and appearance.

Once I had completed this initial coding, I separated out youth responses by the kinds of difference that they discussed, and looked for patterns in their descriptions. I then conducted a preliminary positioning analysis using this limited sample, looking at the ways that youth were positioning difference. Early in this process, I observed that when youth talked about sexuality, they often did not use labels like gay and straight, but instead described behaviors like dating, kissing, loving, and coming out. This initial observation led to the discourses of Being Different, Having Difference, and Enacting Difference, which I describe in Chapter 6.

Conducting a Modified FDA: Beginning with Discourses

Harré & Moghaddam (2003) outline the methodological procedure for using positioning analysis — the researcher enters the triangle through a speech act, a discourse, or a position. In this analysis, I consistently entered through the speech act to identify subject positions and discourses evident in individual speech. In large part, this was determined by my research methodologies: I started with interview transcripts as data, and therefore began my analysis with the speech of the youth in my study. Once I had identified positionings or discourses, I then used those as the entry point for further

exploration of the speech of youth. This was an iterative process, and at times I repeated this process beginning with the text, and at other times beginning with the discourses and positionings that I identified in the data.

I am primarily using Willig's conception of discourse as outlined in her discussion of Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (2008, 2013), but in conducting my analysis I also used several of the tools that Gee (2014) describes for identifying discourses. The tools that incorporated the use of grammar and vocabulary proved most useful.

Gee describes one of these tools as "looking at grammar as a speaker's tool for building structure and meaning." Within this tool, Gee recommends looking closely at sentence structure, sentence order, grammatical choices, and choice of predicates and subjects. By using this tool, I was able to identify the different verb choices that youth were making when describing difference. In this way I identified three discourses of difference: Being Different, Having Difference, and Enacting Difference.

I then used Gee's "Why This Way and Not That Way" tool (2014, p. 55). Within this tool, the researcher looks at the choices that youth make with their grammar, and begins to question why youth are making those choices. What is the importance of choosing to state that someone has dyslexia versus saying that they are dyslexic or that they have trouble reading? Could there be reasons behind these choices? Does one statement accomplish something different in the world than another? Gee states:

When we choose words and build phrases and sentences with grammar, we are giving clues or cues or recipes (whatever we want to call them) to listeners about how to construct a picture in their heads. Every aspect of the choices a speaker

has made has implications for the picture the listener is supposed to build in her mind.” (p. 71)

By thinking about the different pictures or conceptions that these phrases create in the listener’s mind, I was able to better understand why these discourses of difference might matter.

Once I identified the discourses, I broadened the scope of my analysis to the full interview transcripts in order to identify additional examples of when youth speech referenced them. I also then considered what positionings these discourses might make available for the youth in the study and for other people in their lives. This analysis laid the foundation for the analysis that I present in Chapter 7.

Conducting a modified FDA: Beginning with Positionings

When I did not begin my analysis with discourses, I started instead by noting the ways that youth were positioning characters and themselves through their talk. From these initial positionings, I worked outwards to identify discourses. An example of this is the analysis that I conducted in Chapter 5, where I identified a variety of ways that youth were positioning characters and then moved from those positionings to larger discourses. When youth talked about characters, they complained about them, they talked about how wonderful they were, or they yelled at them, as if the characters could hear through the character cards. Within their talk, they positioned characters as (for example) romantic interest, rival, enemy, or friend. From these individual positionings, I was able to identify a general discourse that acted as an overarching description for all. When youth position a character as a friend or a boyfriend or an enemy, they are positioning that character as if

that character is an actual person. From that conception, I came to the discourse of Character as Person.

Kendall and Wickham (1998) offer the advice that when identifying a discourse, the researcher should think about what can and can't be said in order to remain within the discourse. Many of youth's descriptions of characters did not fit within this discourse of Character as Person. They instead were using language that identified the character as a character. This included talking about storylines, plot, actors, directors, and the decisions that "they" made about the show. In order to encompass these pieces that did not fit within my original discourse, I created the partner discourse of Character as Creation. Any way that a participant positioned a character as a fictional work fits within this discourse.

After identifying these positionings and discourses through the framework of Foucauldian Discourse Analysis, I was able to consider what these ways of speaking about the characters make possible in the world for the youth I interviewed.

Final Steps in Modified FDA: Writing and Analysis

My process of identifying discourses and positionings was iterative, and continued well into the process of completing my dissertation. Willig (2008) describes writing as a final phase of analysis, stating, "The attempt to produce a clear and coherent account of one's research in writing allows the researcher to identify inconsistencies and tensions, which in turn may lead to new insights." (p. 103).

Willig also states that there is a likelihood that the researcher will need to return to their data in this stage of the process. For my own work, it was true that my both my analysis and argument developed over time, and I was able to clarify and support my

analysis thoughts more clearly as I began presenting my findings in writing. My key discourses and positionings have stayed largely the same, but the construction of my argument changed repeatedly throughout analysis and into the completion of the writing process.

What follows is a detailed description of my process of creating a modified Foucauldian Discourse Analysis using the case study of Wade “Unique” Adams, a transgender character on the show *Glee*. I describe the steps taken in conducting this analysis alongside my findings. It is my hope that this example of my analytic methods will answer any lingering questions about the methodologies utilized in the chapters that follow.

Case Study: A Modified FDA of Student Talk about Wade “Unique” Adams

Alex Newell plays Wade “Unique” Adams, a character who was born male (sex), but who identifies as female. Wade meets the students from the McKinley Glee Club at a competition, and confesses that he wishes that he could perform as “Unique,” his female alter ego. The members of the McKinley Glee Club, especially Kurt Hummel and Mercedes Jones, encourage Wade to perform as Unique. The character performs as Unique at that competition, and at the start of the next season, he transfers to McKinley High. It is soon clear that the character wants to attend school as Unique, which worries the members of the glee club. They decide that they will support Wade in his desire to be Unique and will try to make the glee club a place where she can feel accepted for who she is. Unique joins the show as a permanent member of the glee club. Below are pictures of Alex Newell dressed as Wade and as Unique.



The positioning that I describe here in terms of Unique's gender is not *the* positioning of Wade "Unique" Adams, but *a* positioning. At the same time that the positioning described here was ongoing, Unique was being positioned in multiple other ways by the youth that I was interviewing. Participants positioned Unique as part of the family, as strange and unusual, as gay, as transgender, as a man wearing women's clothing, as a victim of prejudice, and as a strong black woman. These positionings contributed to discourses of bullying and homophobia, of acceptance and tolerance, and of gender and ethnicity. Some of these positions and the discourses associated with them will be addressed later in this dissertation, but at this time I wish for them only to serve as an example of the many ways in which participants were positioning one character in terms of his or her difference from "the norm."

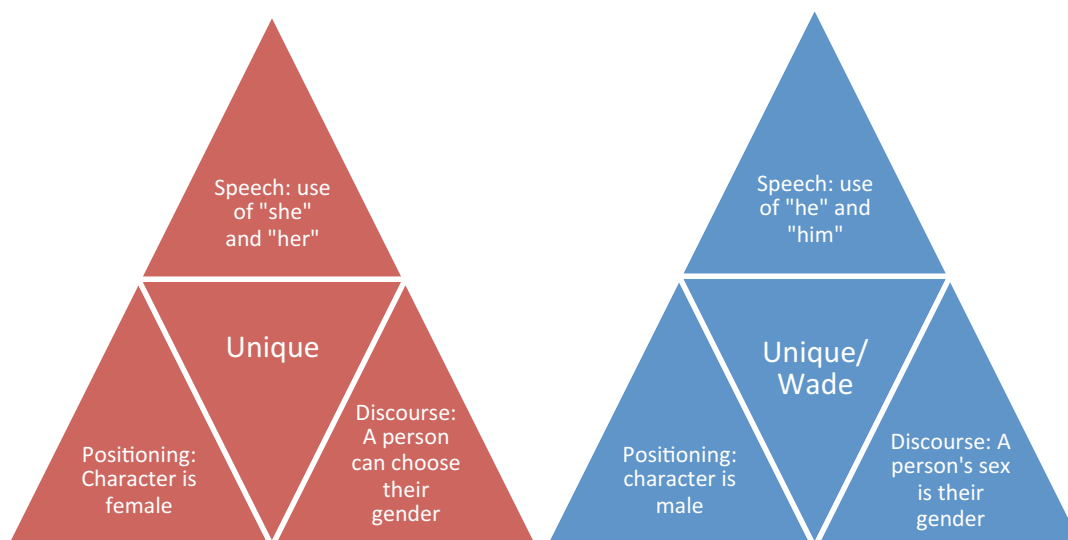
While Unique is being positioned in multiple ways both within the world of the show and by the show's audience, I chose as the focus of my analysis the ways that youth in my study were positioning the gender of Wade "Unique" Adams. In the description below and the chapters to come, I will focus exclusively on the ways that youth position

characters and what those positionings and the associated discourses make possible in the world.

The Positioning Triangle

Before comparing discourses and positionings using the framework of Foucauldian Discourse Analysis, I used a modified positioning triangle (Bartlett, 2008; Boxer, 2003; Brock & Gavelek, 2013; Harré & Moghaddam, 2003; Moghaddam, Harré, & Lee, 2008; Sauerhoff, 2013) to begin my analysis. When using a positioning triangle, an analyst can use any of the vertices of the triangle (positioning, discourse, speech) as a starting point.

Figure 6. Two possible positionings of Wade "Unique" Adams



Because I was conducting my analysis without preconceived notions or theories, I started with youth speech gathered from interview transcripts. I started with youth speech and looked at the multiple ways in which that speech positioned the characters that youth

were talking about. From there, I moved on to the kinds of discourses that encompassed these different kinds of positioning and speech, and then moved to the positions made available by those discourses.

After I had identified the positionings and discourses made available by youth speech, I then looked at what these constructions might make possible in the world and how these constructions might influence youth construction of reality. In the excerpts below, I include the pseudonyms for the youth that were speaking and the labels that they gave themselves for age, ethnicity/race, sexuality, gender, and ability. I believe that these labels will help the reader in their own interpretation of the data provided.

In youth talk, youth positioned Unique's character as male or female in many ways. Most obviously, youth referred to Unique using male or female gender pronouns or referred to the character as he or she, male or female. In addition, whether youth referred to the character as Unique or as Wade positioned the character's gender. In the analysis below, I provide examples of youth speech and the ways in which their descriptions of the character positioned the character as male or female, and sometimes both. I will first provide examples of youth speech that positioned Unique as female, and then examples that positioned Unique as male and the discourses related to these positionings. I will then describe my own positioning of the character, and my movement between gender pronouns. Finally, I will describe what these positionings and discourses make possible in the world both for Unique and for the youth who were describing Unique.

Positioning Wade "Unique" Adams as Female

Youth positioned Unique as female in a variety of ways. When Deion, who identified as a fifteen-year-old, White, able, gay male described the character in question,

he stated, “Unique. She’s proud to be herself. She dresses in drag and comes to school in drag.” In this case, he was using the character’s preferred name, “Unique,” and describing “her” actions. By using female pronouns here, Deion positioned the character as female.

When Warren, who identified as a sixteen-year-old, White, able, homosexual male described the same character, he said, “but even in the show Unique is forced to be Wade a lot of time at least when she is at school right.” Warren did not say that Unique is forced to dress like Wade, in male clothing, but that she is forced to be Wade, when “she is at school.” It’s clear from this description, that Warren was positioning Unique as female, and positioning her as female even when she is “being Wade.” In this description, dressing in men’s clothing is a denial of self.

CJ, who identified as a 15-year old, American, gay male with anxiety, ADHD, and Asperger’s, went a step further, and corrected me on my pronoun usage. He instructed me that for a MTF (male-to-female) transgender person, “she” and “her” are the correct pronouns to use. At the same time, he called Unique a “transgender guy,” which could refer to the fact that Unique is MTF or could be an inconsistency or fluidity in his positioning. In the speech below, he was positioning Unique as female, and making sure that I did the same.

INTERVIEWER: Did you know that now they have a character with Down Syndrome?

CJ: [gasps] No.

INTERVIEWER: And a character who is transgender?

CJ: Okay, yes, I knew about the transgender guy.

INTERVIEWER: You know about the tra-, you heard about him?

CJ: Yes. And it's her, by the way.

INTERVIEWER: Oh. Crap. Yes. So you heard about Unique?

CJ: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: You heard about her? Thank you for correcting me.

CJ: Yeah, it's because I, my boyfriend is transgender, and he's FTM.

INTERVIEWER: Female-to-male?

CJ: Yes. And so he has girl parts, but he prefers to be called he.

Similarly, when Tyler, who identified as a 14-year-old, Caucasian, pansexual female with social anxiety described whether or not the depiction of Unique was a good representation of a trans person, she stated that she believed that Unique identified as a woman, and the show should therefore make more of a display of both the phobic treatment that Unique would receive and Unique's anger at being called by the name "Wade" when she identifies as a woman.

INTERVIEWER: And what do you think about Unique?

TYLER: Unique, I think, is a – it's difficult to say whether or not it's a good representation of a trans person.

INTERVIEWER: Okay.

TYLER: I think it's sort of a poor one. Um –

INTERVIEWER: How so?

TYLER: Ah, well, there's a lot more transphobia than is addressed in the show, as well as among faculty and parents, but also, I think that the faculty and parents

didn't deal with them the same way. Like they were not allowing her to dress as a woman –

INTERVIEWER: Um-hmm.

TYLER: in school which I – that is just something that doesn't happen. I've never heard of them – I've heard of them not allowing things with bathrooms but ne – it's never been 'you can't dress this way'.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. Just because you think it was exaggerated?

TYLER: I think that was exaggerated. Um, I think that the parents were a little nonchalant about

INTERVIEWER: Okay.

TYLER: Ah, also that Unique is called Wade sometimes and called, ah, Unique sometimes, where that, that could just be a very innocent gender, but I think it's – I feel like, ah, Unique does identify as Unique – as a woman.

INTERVIEWER: Um-hmm.

TYLER: There should be more anger, I think, at the – being called Wade.

INTERVIEWER: Okay.

TYLER: And they also don't, um – I have a trans-boyfriend. Ah, there is a lot of dysphoria about appearance that – you don't see that really. There's –

INTERVIEWER: So you feel like –

TYLER: It's a big part of their lives.

INTERVIEWER: You feel like Unique's reaction doesn't seem upset enough at certain things?

TYLER: Yeah. I mean – yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Okay.

TYLER: She's just takes it –

Tyler admitted that this could be an “innocent” gendering mistake, but one which she did not believe that Unique would let stand. Tyler consistently used female pronouns when describing Unique. She also argued that it was inappropriate for the school not to let Unique enact her true gender. At the same time, as she was arguing that the show should deal with transphobia more, she was arguing that while schools might limit bathroom usage, it was unrealistic to believe that they could stop Unique from dressing to her gender.

All of the participants who were consistent and clear in their use of female pronouns identified as LGBTQ. While I was recruiting students at Youth Pride, a common exercise that I observed was for youth to go around in a circle, and as an ice breaker, introduce themselves with their name, their preferred gender pronoun, and an answer to a question that varied from session to session. These youth specifically did work to honor the gender choices of the people around them. In addition, two of the respondents in this section have a partner who identified as trans, making them more familiar with the preferred use of language for transgendered individuals.

Positioning Wade “Unique” Adams as Male

Kylie, who identified as a 16-year-old, White, straight, able female was very explicit that she considered Unique to be male. Kylie stated, “I have never come across anyone like Unique, who is a boy that dresses like a girl. Like not in school, but like outside of school sure, but like not in school, but I guess like maybe other kids do. I go to private school so maybe that is why.” In addition to positioning Unique as “a boy,” Kylie

also used the character's preferred, female name of Unique. This was common for the youth who positioned the character with male gender pronouns. While using Unique's preferred name, she was also stating clearly that Unique is a boy, and he is a boy that dresses like a girl, not a girl who is transgender.

Karl, who identified as a 15-year-old, female, Ashkenazi Jewish, pansexual said about Unique, "I like, I have no problem with Unique's gender or sexuality. I just find at times Unique's personality to be annoying. It has nothing to do with like being phobic in any manner, it just that sometimes he gets on my nerves. He is like the sassy gay friend that goes wrong and is no longer sassy, he's just annoying." In this discourse, Karl was positioning Unique as a gay male, and one that is portraying a stereotype of a "sassy" gay male. While later in the interview, Karl described identifying as female, she does not use female gender pronouns for Unique.

Other youth chose not to use the character's chosen name of Unique and instead referred to the character as Wade (the character's name) or Alex (the actor's name).

NICOLE: So then Alex, first of all because he catfished, actually I saw that coming. I was like, because they were like, "No it is not her. It is not her." So I was thinking, well maybe it is I mean not Alex, what is his name?

CHARLIE ANN: Unique.

NICOLE: Unique. Maybe it is Unique.

In this exchange, and throughout her talk about Unique, Nicole, who identified as a 15-year-old, straight, African American female with asthma, was positioning the character as male. She was using the actor's name (Alex) and not the character's name, and when she asked for the character's name, her friend Charlie Ann supplies "Unique," and not

“Wade,” using the character’s female name. When Charlie Ann, who identified as a 16-year-old, straight, able, African American female, called this character “Unique,” she was possibly positioning the character as female, while Nicole, was consistently positioning the character as male.

Discourses Associated with Positioning Wade “Unique” Adams

In order to determine what discourse or discourses were associated with positioning Unique as female, I utilized Gee’s “Why This Way and Not That Way” tool (2014, p. 55). I asked myself why some youth might speak about Unique as though she were female while others chose to speak about her as though she were male. Students who were positioning Unique as female in their talk were using the discourse of Gender as Fluid or Gender as Choice. Within this discourse of gender, people can choose their gender, or at the very least they can choose the gender pronoun that individuals use to refer to them. I then asked myself a question based on Gee’s description of this tool: What pictures might someone who was hearing this speech build in their mind? My answer was that if someone heard youth describing Unique as “her,” they would assume that she was female. If someone had no prior knowledge of this character, and heard her described as “she,” the picture that would come up in their mind would be that of a biological female. Just as if they heard someone describing Unique as “he” or a “boy” or as “Wade,” they would have a picture in their mind of a biological male.

One of the effects of speaking about Unique as a female is that this discourse will reinforce to listeners that she is female. This honors Unique’s wish to be thought of and talked about as though she is a female. By positioning Unique as a female, the speakers were also positioning gender as something that Unique can decide for herself. In this

way, I came to the discourses of Gender as Fluid and Gender as Choice. Both represent the conception of gender as something that can be changed by an individual, in this case by Unique.

Individuals who were positioning Wade/Unique as male through their speech were not honoring Unique's choice to be spoken of as a woman. While this could be for any number of reasons, the result is that they were choosing to refer to Unique by his sex, and using his sex to determine the way that they spoke about him. From this train of logic, I came to the discourses of Gender as Static and Gender as Sex. Within this discourse, people are born with a gender, and their actions, beliefs, or intentions do not change this gender. I wish to be clear that I am not arguing that individual youth are necessarily thinking about the nuances of sex and gender when choosing a pronoun, although it is clear that some in this study were. Instead, I am arguing that the ways that youth speak reflect discourses that describe ways of thinking about the world. Whether these discourses are used consciously or subconsciously, each represents a different way of viewing the world and each makes something different possible in the world.

The Fluidity of Discourses and Positionings: My positioning of Unique

In my role as interviewer, I was not always clear on how to refer to transgender youth. In an excerpt above, it is clear that CJ was teaching me what he considers to be the right way to describe Unique. Throughout my interviews, I referred to the character as both "he" and "she." In fact, I once described Unique to a participant as, "He's new. She's transgender."

It was my goal to try to let the participants guide the discussion. At the same time, I made choices that may have affected the ways that some participants positioned the

character. For instance, I chose to use a photo of Wade “Unique” Adams in male clothing for the photo card. I thought of this as a more neutral choice, and yet it was still a choice that could imply how I was gendering this character. At the same time, I generally referred to the character by her chosen name of “Unique.”

By trying to affect a neutral gender positioning for the character, I ended up positioning the character as both male and female at different times. I am by no means the only individual in this study that moved between positionings and discourses. In fact, one of the key characteristics of both discourses and positionings is that they are fluid and can change in moment-to moment interactions. In future chapters, I will discuss the ways in which some youth’s speech used only one positioning or discourse while others straddled two or more discourses within the same speech act.

What this positioning and these Discourses create in the world

The following Revised FDA Analysis Chart, which is described in more detail in Chapter 2, describes the hypothesized actions and construction of reality made possible by each set of discourses and positionings on gender.

Table 1. Modified Foucauldian Discourse Analysis Chart: Gender (Willig, 2008)

(1) Discursive Construction: Gender

(A) Speech or Action	(2) Discourses	(4) Positionings	(5) Actions Made Possible in the World
“She is at school.”	Gender as Fluid Gender as Choice	Male, female, man, woman, boy, girl, trans-man,	By using female gender pronouns and the name “Unique,” youth are positioning Unique as a female, and

	Gender as Self-Determined	trans-woman, transgender person, transsexual, cisgender, genderqueer, MTF, FTM	by doing so, accepting Unique's character's positioning of herself as a female. In accepting this positioning, youth are respecting Unique's choice of gender, and in turn accepting that a person can choose their own gender, and that that choice should be respected. If an individual accepts that a person can choose their gender, this would impact the way that they talk to a transgender individual, and it would also imply that that individual had certain rights based on their choice.
Unique is a "boy that dresses like a girl."	Gender as Static Gender as Set at Birth Gender Based on Sex	Male, female, man, woman, boy, girl transvestite, drag queen	By using male gender pronouns, youth are positioning Unique as male. Whether they are doing it consciously or unconsciously, they are rejecting Unique's positioning of herself as female. If an individual views people as having genders that match their sexes, then they will refer to the sex of an individual and not their chosen gender.

Positioning Wade "Unique" Adams as a male or a female character makes certain actions possible in the world, both for Unique and for those who are positioning him or her. If youth are using the pronoun "she" and positioning Unique as a woman, then they are using the discourse of Gender as a Choice, and Unique is has the action available of choosing her gender. If this is the case, other actions would be possible and not possible for Unique and for those around her. Those who speak to and about Unique would be expected to use her chosen name and gender pronoun and would be expected not to refer to her with masculine name or pronouns. Unique herself would probably be expected to style her clothing and hair according to her chosen gender.

Much in the lived experience of an individual can change with a pronoun. In this way, the discourses and the positioning that people use to talk about gender become a system for organizing reality. And a person's choice of discourse begins to have consequences for other people in the world.

This is not only true of gender, but of the ways that individuals talk about any of the concepts that we use to describe our world. In the chapters that follow, I will use the methodologies presented here to investigate youth talk about the television show *Glee*. My primary goal is to identify positionings and discourses that youth use to talk about fictional characters and difference with a secondary goal of considering what these ways of speaking might make possible in the world.

Chapter 5: Speaking about Characters as Person or Creation

In this chapter, I focus on talk where youth are describing characters. The youth in this study moved fluidly between speaking about characters as though they were real people and speaking about characters as though they were the creation of the individuals producing the show. When talking about characters as though they were people, youth would profess love or hate for characters, or romantic or sexual feelings, or feelings of disappointment and pleasure. They would use the same kind of language that a person would use talking to or about any friend. They would yell at the characters and talk to them directly when they were frustrated with characters' decisions and actions.

When youth spoke about characters as a creation or product, they would talk not about the "people" on the show, but about the decisions of actors, producers, writers, and directors. They would talk about themes and stereotypes and scripts and storylines. Often they would talk about parasocial relationships not with the characters, but with the actors playing those characters, again expressing admiration or romantic feelings, and in the case of Cory Monteith, an actor on *Glee* who died of a drug overdose during Season 4, participants expressed sadness and grief.

Youth moved fluidly between these two ways of talking about characters. Characters were often described at the same time as both a person and a creation. In the analysis that follows, I will first look at the language that youth used when describing the characters as people, and then at the language that they used to describe the characters as creations. This will build a foundation for future work where I will contribute to the understanding of parasocial relationship theory by looking closely at the language that

youth use to describe characters, to describe difference, and to describe their relationships with characters

This fluid movement between the two ways of positioning characters is important because of what these two kinds of talk make possible for the youth who are using them. Talking about a character as though they are a person allows youth to express feelings of closeness and relationship with characters. It allows youth to identify with characters in the same ways that they identify with other people in their lives, and this concept is the basis for Chapter 7. In the context of this study, talking about characters as though they are people allows youth to talk about sometimes difficult topics like prejudice and bullying and the experience of being different in a neutral way, separated from their lives but within the familiar context of a character's life on the show.

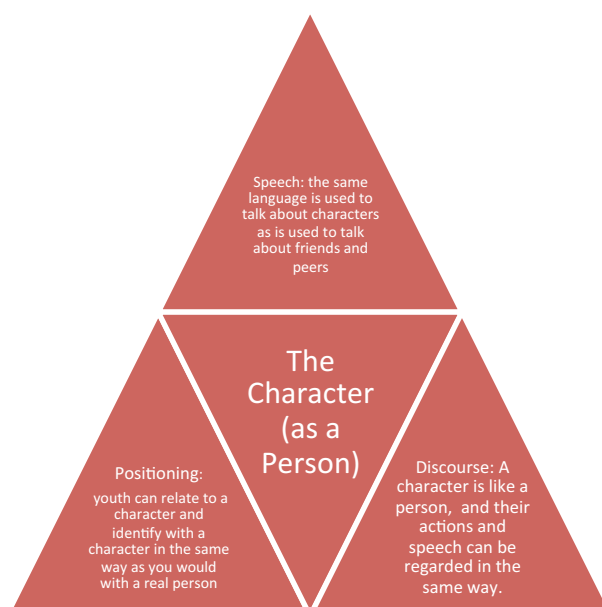
Talking about characters as the creations of producers, writers, actors, directors, and countless others allows youth to talk about the decisions of characters and the storyline of the show in a theoretical manner. They are able to act as media critic, sharing their knowledge of the production process, and providing insight into the ways that they believe youth should be represented in fictional programming. All youth in this study moved fluidly between these two discourses and ways of positioning characters, allowing youth the possibilities that are available when they talk about characters as people and when they talk about characters as creations.

For my purposes, being able to identify when youth are talking about characters in each of these ways allows me to better distinguish between youth recommendations for how producers should represent difference and youth recommendations for how individuals should interact with those who are different. This allows me to distinguish

between when youth are speaking intellectually, critiquing the representation of difference, and when they are speaking more emotionally, personally relating to the characters and the content.

In this chapter, I will primarily address the following research question: What

Figure 7. Positioning Triangle: Characters Positioned as People



discourses and positionings do youth

use when talking about fictional characters? I will address this question using the framework of positioning theory (Davies & Harré, 1990; Moghaddam, Harré, & Lee, 2008) and Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (Willig, 2008), as described in Chapter 2. These frameworks will allow me

to use youth talk about characters to identify the positionings and discourses that they are using to describe these characters. I will use the framework created in this chapter to investigate the ways that youth are discursively constructing the idea of “character” in their speech and actions. This chapter begins to answer the pieces of questions 2 and 3 (from Chapter 2) centered around youth talk about characters, and lays a foundation for creating more robust answers to these questions in future chapters.

Using the discourse of Character as Person

There are several ways that youth in this study positioned characters as though they were people in the world. Within their speech acts, youth talked about characters

using the same language that they would use to talk about people. They positioned characters as people who made good or bad decisions, who were likeable or unlikeable, who they would want to be friends with or would absolutely not want to be friends with. In this section, I describe the ways that youth language positioned characters as people within the discourse of Character as Person.

One way that youth talked about characters was by ascribing responsibility for actions or personality characteristics to the character themselves. Another way that youth talk indicated that they were using the discourse of Character as Person was when they would talk directly to a character. A final way that they used the discourse of Character as Person was when they used the language of strong emotion when referencing a character. Expressing strong emotion for a character or expressing a wish to have a relationship with a character indicated that youth were positioning that character as someone to feel strongly about, or as an object of desire.

A final indicator that youth were using the discourse of Character as Person was a lack of language that described the character as though they were a creation. A lack of even common production language like “character” and “episode” indicated that for at least a particular stretch of dialogue, youth were not positioning that character as a piece of a show.

Describing a character’s actions, thoughts and feelings

When youth positioned a character as thinking, feeling, and acting, they were positioning that character as an agentic individual within the discourse of Character as Person. In these descriptions, youth stated that characters made things happen, without ever referencing the writers and producers who made the decision to have characters take

certain actions. They stated that characters felt or thought in a certain way, without ever referencing the actors who portray the characters. This character positioning was among the most common used by youth in this study.

In the following excerpt, Sophia was responding to the request to choose a character card and describe any character on the show *Glee*.

SOPHIA: Yes. So Quinn [Fabray] was like a popular cheerleader and like everybody wanted to go out with her like in the first season and she like... she was with Finn and she like, sort of like, I guess she cheated on Finn with Puck and she got pregnant from... well I guess it was... whatever... and she got... she got pregnant and kinda like brought down her status, I guess you could say and then... that's when she um, she joined the glee group and they like accepted her like fully and helped her with whatever she needed and were there for her when she like had the baby and whenever she was struggling and when she had that car accident and she couldn't walk.

Sophia described the actions associated with Quinn's storylines as things that Quinn did herself, positioning Quinn as someone who can take action and make things happen, if only within the world of the story. Never in this excerpt did Sophia reference that she was talking about a character on a television show. All of her language could have been used just as easily if I had asked her to describe an acquaintance at school. She did not describe having a relationship with Quinn and did not use any language indicating that she had emotional ties to Quinn, but her speech was similar to the speech she would have used to describe someone that she knew in passing. Sophia attributed actions to Quinn

throughout her description. *She* joined the glee club. *She* cheated on Finn. *She* got pregnant.

In DD's description of the cheerleaders, he ascribed intention and thought to these characters more than action.

INTERVIEWER: Okay, who else is annoying? Anybody else?

DD: Um. Gosh. I'm trying to... I really feel that the cheerleaders are the most annoying ones 'cause they know that they're... that they think that they're all that and a bag of chips, so basically the cheerleaders.

DD positioned the characters as thinking in a particular way, just as any person might do, supporting the larger discourse of Character as Person. As DD described it, the cheerleaders know that they are wonderful. He was not annoyed by an action of theirs but by a thought or attitude that he attributed to the characters.

Several youth would go beyond talking about the actions and feelings that were evident on the show, and talk about the unstated motivations of characters and the decisions that characters were making. When Heidi described why she didn't like Finn Hudson, she stated, "He made a lot of dumb decisions, and he could have avoided a lot of them." This description ascribed agency to the character, and positioned the character of Finn as a person able to make choices. This positioning supports the discourse of Character as Person.

Similarly, Thora's description of Sam Evans described Sam's nature and ascribed positive intention to his actions.

THORA: And Sam's just the cutest. He is always like gung ho and wanting to help people out, like even when Blaine had his little feelings toward Sam he, he

didn't like freak out on him. He was still like "You're my best buddy," like, "Yay gay people." But Sam's just like the odd ball who like... Even know how controversial it may be, 'cause he was like "Yay gay people!" And he just doesn't even realize that he's doing something weird. Or like that he's making a statement really. He was just like, "Yeah, I don't care. I love these people."

In this excerpt, Thora positioned Sam as accepting and a good friend, using the discourse of Character as Person. At the same time, she positioned Sam's behavior as strange. This is an example of the kind of youth talk that can say something not just about a character, or about the world of the character, but also about the world of the speaker. Thora described liking Sam's character because he is accepting of his friends who are gay. She described Sam as someone who will choose his friends over peer pressure, and who is so sweet-natured that he does not even "realize that he's doing something weird." By positioning Sam as "weird" for being open and accepting of his homosexual friends, Thora gave information about what is considered appropriate in her own environment.

The excerpts provided here are examples of youth positionings of characters that support the discourse of Character as Person. There are numerous other examples throughout each of the interviews of youth ascribing action, thoughts, and feelings to the characters.

Talking Directly to a Character

In the following examples of youth discourse, the youth spoke directly to characters. Often they were doing so with vigor, and admonishing the character for an act that they considered to be foolhardy. When youth talked directly to a character, they were positioning the character as someone that they could talk to, and supporting the discourse

of Character as Person. This type of youth speech was not as commonly used by youth in my study. It may be used more frequently with youth who are fans of the show and who have stronger parasocial relationships with the characters.

In the first example of youth talking directly to a character, Nicole was admonishing the character Blaine Anderson for cheating on his boyfriend Kurt.

NICOLE: I mean yeah engaged. I thought Kurt was going to say no, because he is just like this. Then I thought he was going to say no, but then he didn't. *Blaine, you shouldn't have cheated on him!* [emphasis added]

In this speech act, Nicole was positioning Blaine as a bad boyfriend, and as a person that she could talk to, even if he would not respond back. In the italicized text, Nicole was speaking to Blaine directly, using the second-person pronoun “you” in the same way that one would talk to any person. Nowhere in her speech did Nicole reference the fact that Blaine is a created construct, or that producers and writers made the decision that Blaine would cheat on Kurt. Instead, Nicole was simply showing her displeasure with Blaine for his bad decision.

A distinctive bullying behavior utilized on *Glee* is “slushie-ing” or throwing a frozen slush beverage in someone’s face. Another example of youth talking directly to a character occurred when I asked youth if they remembered a particularly important slushie-ing moment. Warren responded with this moment:

WARREN: Okay, Kurt was definitely slushied and Kurt was wearing a skirt.

INTERVIEWER: Oh so he got slushied when he was wearing a skirt.

WARREN: Yeah, but yeah, I mean *come on Kurt, you should have seen that coming* but yes I definitely remember that one, so Kurt got slushied for wearing a skirt first. [emphasis added]

Warren positioned Kurt as someone who had made a bad decision, and as someone who he could address directly. Warren talked to characters multiple times throughout his interview. In this excerpt, he was chastising Kurt for not anticipating the bullying that would occur as a result of dressing in a non-gender-normative way. His speech was informal, and he addressed the character by name using second-person pronouns. He talked to the character as though Kurt was a person who had made a decision that Warren deems unwise.

America¹⁹ described both Kurt and Blaine as annoying to her, and again addressed Blaine directly in her speech.

AMERICA: Yeah. And then Kurt's just annoying me.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah Kurt does [Inaudible 0:19:36].

AMERICA: Because it's like, can you just be happy? No, you know Blaine's kind of annoying me because he's being like, "I want to get married." *You're not even a senior in high school.* [emphasis added]

THORA: He's still like 18.

AMERICA: You haven't even grad... It would be like you and me coming to school and being like, "Hey guys! Got engaged."

THORA: Except for we don't have boyfriends.

¹⁹ While I largely let youth choose their own pseudonyms, I did make some adjustments to encourage readability. Captain America became America. Thor became Thora, and Karl Marx became Karl.

America disagreed with Blaine's choice of proposing to Kurt. She spoke to the character directly, almost as though she was trying to talk sense into him. She then compared this situation to hers and Thora's. She did not criticize the storyline for being unrealistic or the producers for creating an unrealistic situation, instead she talked directly to the character for making what she believed to be a poor decision.

This excerpt also includes an example of a participant narrating a character's lines. In this case, America repeated Blaine's line, "I want to get married." Of all participants, America would most often describe the plot of the show as though she were acting out a play, at times picking up character cards and gesturing with a particular card when she was speaking that character's lines. This particular speech and action pairing was outside the scope of this analysis, but may be an indicator of strong parasocial relationships with a show and a character.

While the other specific positionings described in this chapter were fairly common, talking directly to a character was rare. Only a few youth talked directly to a character, and of those who did, a few did it more than once. Most often the youth who talked to the characters described themselves as having a strong connection with the show, and once again, this behavior may be an indicator of strong parasocial relationships with a show's characters. Positioning a character as someone that can be spoken to and even chastised supports the discourse of Character as Person.

Using the Language of Emotion and Relationship

Individuals also expressed strong emotions towards the characters. They directed these feelings of love and hate, and sometimes of sexual attraction, towards the characters themselves, not towards the producers or the actors. Once again, with their talk, youth

were positioning characters as people and as recipients of their strong emotions. This positioning supports the discourse of Character as Person.

When I asked Gracie and Sarah if there were any characters that they didn't like, or who they found annoying, Gracie took on the stronger language of "love" and "hate." While Gracie and Sarah also described hating characters on the show *Glee*, specifically Sue Sylvester, Becky Jackson, and at times, Kitty Wilde, I think that Sarah's description of *The Vampire Diaries* best exemplifies her emotional relationship with fictional characters. In the exchange that follows, the only context necessary is that Silas is a vampire and a villain, while Stefan is a vampire and one of the show's protagonists.

SARAH: I hate Silas.

INTERVIEWER: Who do you hate?

SARAH: Silas. He's with *The Vampire Diaries*. It is so horrible what he's doing. He's so horrible and it's not even funny. He can never die so he created a doppelgänger that could die and that was Stefan so what Silas did... he's a horrible person. He staked him right here (points to her chest), locked him in this thing and threw him under the river. So since [Stefan]'s a vampire, he comes back to life and then dies, come back to life and dies. Silas is over here controlling people and killing people. It's horrible, and I'm like, "*You've got to fight, Stefan! You have to go back. What's wrong with you?*"

INTERVIEWER: I feel like you're going to tear up.

GRACIE: I am.

SARAH: Okay, safe circle.

INTERVIEWER: No. This is good. You've got good empathy for vampires.

In Gracie's description of Silas, she positioned him as a horrible person (vampire), one that she hates, and by doing so used the discourse of Character as Person. Other youth used the same language to describe characters by saying, "I hate Sue" or "I love Kurt." In each of these instances, the youth were positioning characters as being the recipients of strong emotion. In addition to talking about hating Silas, Sarah was talking directly to Stefan, both encouraging and chastising the character. Sarah's voice caught a few times as she was describing the plot of the show and talking about the characters, and when she spoke directly to Stefan, she did so passionately. At the end of her description, I legitimately worried that she was upset and tried to lighten the mood with a joke.

Gracie and Sarah continued to use the language of love and hate in response to my language of liking and disliking. Gracie and Sarah both spoke with emotion about several characters on *Glee* and showed real investment in the characters and the show.

Other youth used indicators of both discourses at the same time. When Charlie described Blaine, she references the fact that he is a character. She then proceeded to talk about him as though he was a person. This was a common occurrence in youth speech, and it may indicate that while youth were talking about characters as though they were people, they were at the same time aware that they are characters in a production.

CHARLIE: I will tell you about my favorite character, Blaine. Brittany [S.

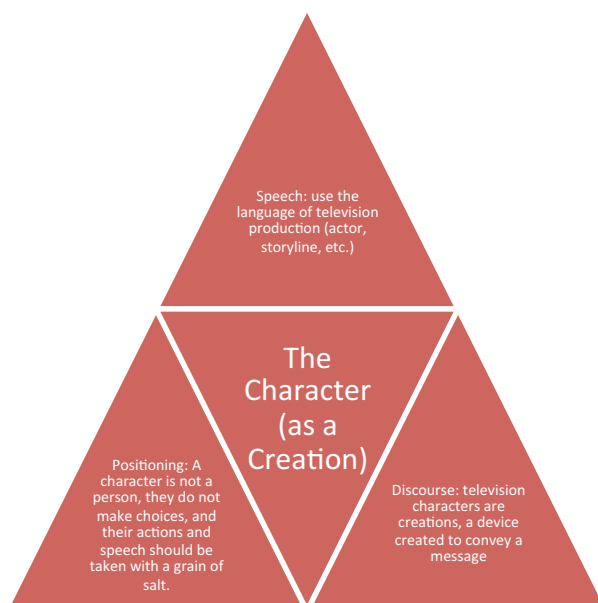
Pierce] refers to him as Blaine Warbler, I don't know his last name, I don't know.

He goes to the Dalton Academy at first—that is why he is wearing the uniform. I immediately fell in love with him when he sang Kurt "Teenage Dream."

Not only was Charlie stating that she loves Blaine, she was stating that she fell in love with him. This is only one example of participants who described having feelings of love

or sexual attraction not for an actor, but for a character. DD in another interview described his sexual attraction to the character of Kurt by saying that he would like to “ride that bus” (slang which I have never heard before, and which I assume he made up himself). Lilly-Mae said in her interview that it was a shame that Blaine is gay because she wanted to “be with him.” Positioning a character as a romantic or sexual interest positions them as a person, someone who can be the object of this affection, and uses the discourse of Character as Person.

Figure 8. Positioning Triangle: Characters Positioned as Creations



The preceding three sections

describe the main ways that youth position characters using the discourse of Character as Person. Youth positioned characters as individuals who take action, who have thoughts, who can be spoken to and hated and loved. While this talk is not surprising based on the research already established in parasocial relationship theory (Banks & Bowman, 2014; Cohen, 2003; Horton &

Wohl, 1956; Kanazawa, 2002; Theran & Newberg, 2010), this analysis gives insight into the kinds of talk that can be seen in youth who have these relationships with characters.

Using the Discourse of Character as a Creation

There are several ways that youth in this study positioned characters as though they were the creation of the show’s “producers.” In this case, I am defining a producer

as anyone who works to produce the end product that is the character seen on screen. This includes actors, directors, writers, costume designers, and producers. While youth were likely to reference some categories of producers more than others, all youth in this study seemed aware that there are people working to bring characters to life. When youth used this language of media production when talking about characters, I describe this as using the discourse of Character as Creation.

Most often in youth speech, they positioned the character as creation by talking about the actors on the show, by using the language of television production, and by talking about the “they” who made the decisions that drive *Glee*’s story and character development.

Talking about the Actor Playing the Character

Youth talking about the actors who play the characters is one example of participants in this study referencing the inner workings of the show. While some individuals referenced the actors in passing, others were emotional in their descriptions of the characters. When asked why she liked the character of Blaine, Beth replied:

I really like the actor who plays [Blaine] because he was Harry Potter in a Harry Potter musical that him and his college friends made up. He wrote most of it and it’s so funny. It’s all on YouTube if you want to look it up. He’s really talented and I love him and his character is cool because he goes from being at a private school where he was the star of everything or whatever to McKinley with everyone else because he loved Kurt or whatever. He gave up, I guess, his fame – if you want to call it that – to be more of a background dancer, but be with people

that mattered more to him. I think that's a cool theme that people are what make experiences good, not necessarily what you're doing.

In this case, Beth was positioning Blaine as a character, played by a living person. This positioning falls within the discourse of Character as Creation. She liked the character in part because of Darren Criss, the actor who played Blaine, and the work that he had done previously. In Beth's talk, it was clear that at least some of her connection to the character of Blaine was linked with her connection to the actor who played him. Beth stated that she "loves" Darren Criss while thinking that the character that he played was "cool." She expressed stronger emotion towards the actor, and through her talk positioned Blaine as a character brought to life by Darren Criss.

Cara also described liking the character of Blaine because of the actor who played him.

INTERVIEWER: Who's your favorite character or who was your favorite character and why?

CARA: Darren Criss.

INTERVIEWER: Why?

CARA: Whenever he comes in the show gets like ten times better. Number one, he's attractive. Number two, he's talented. Number three, storyline is feasible.

Those are my reasons.

In Cara's speech she positioned characters as things brought to life by an actor, and supported the discourse of Character as Creation. When Cara picked up the character card, she did not say the character name, but instead labeled the image with the name of the actor who played him. She did the same with Mr. [Will] Schuester's character card,

stating, “This is Matthew Morrison. I think he’s super talented. I know that he ends up with this girl and she’s like a germaphobe. He’s good. He’s a good actor too.” In both examples, Cara referenced the actor playing the character, replacing the illusion of the character’s world with the reality of actors doing a job well.

Heidi was another individual who talked about the actors involved in the show production. She said of the character Noah “Puck” Puckerman, “I remember liking Puck only because he had the same birthday as me. The actor himself. So I was like, that’s cool, so we’re now friends.” In Heidi’s speech, she reported feeling a connection with the actor who played Puck. She stated that she and the actor who played Puck were friends. Within this parasocial friendship, she was positioning the character Puck as secondary to the actor who played him.

When youth talk about being friends with an actor or loving an actor, this is an example of another type of parasocial connection. This parasocial connection with the actor playing a part is what Stever (2003, 2011), Giles and Maltby (2004), and others describe in their work with youth and television celebrities. In these studies, they document youth as feeling a connection with celebrities and other actors, even though they have never met and probably will never meet those individuals.

A special case where multiple youth talked about an actor was in the case of Cory Monteith, who played Finn Hudson. On July 13, 2013, Cory Monteith died of a drug overdose. The character of Finn Hudson died in the episode “The Quarterback” which aired on October 10, 2013. The show did not reveal a cause of death for Finn, but focused on the impact of his death on the other characters. While about half of my interviews took place prior to Monteith’s death, several of my interviews with youth took place

between the death of the actor and the death of the character. I purposefully finished collecting data for this study before the episode “The Quarterback” aired. I did not specifically ask youth to talk about Finn Hudson or Cory Monteith. At the same time, I did not remove his character card from the pile, because he was one of the show’s leads until his death.

Youth had a range of responses to the deaths of Cory Monteith and Finn Hudson. Some youth did not mention it at all. Other youth talked about it unemotionally, with some thinking that I had insider knowledge about what the producers of the show would do. And some youth were obviously heartbroken.

CJ: And I, I think we all miss Cory.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah, it's really sad, isn't it?

CJ: No, like, when I heard about that, I broke down crying.

INTERVIEWER: Really?

CJ: I took in such a deep breath that my mom looked at me and then I like, started crying. I didn't even breathe out. ****laughs****

Gracie and Sarah expressed a similar reaction in their interview. Both were tremendously saddened by the death of Corey Monteith, and yet, with the moments that they described, it was almost as if they were sadder about the character dying.

GRACIE: I fangirled every day this week. With Sarah. We like cried and laughed and everything.

INTERVIEWER: You cried? What made you cry?

SARAH: Cory’s dead.

GRACIE: Cory’s dead.

INTERVIEWER: I know. Are you guys sad?

GRACIE: Yes. I saw the promo, and I was bawling for like 30 minutes afterwards and then Rachel, whatever, she's like, "I got the part."

SARAH: When she's crying.

INTERVIEWER: Was Rachel crying?

GRACIE: Yes. And then Kurt with the jacket. Oh. That one was sad.

SARAH: That one was sad.

INTERVIEWER: It's just so tragic that they have to – it's sad.

SARAH: We're crying on the phone together tomorrow.

GRACIE: Yeah. We are.

INTERVIEWER: Oh. Yeah. You're going to watch it and you're going to cry? What do you think they're going to do about it? What do you think the story that they're going to use is?

GRACIE: You know when he was in college, maybe he was in a car accident. I don't know. Maybe.

SARAH: I read online they're doing the drug abuse, and they're going to do a public announcement about it.

GRACIE: Really?

SARAH: Yes. They're going to little proms.

INTERVIEWER: Like to say this is what happens...?

SARAH: Drug abuse.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think that's a good idea?

GRACIE: It's the way they do it.

SARAH: Yeah.

It is clear that Gracie and Sarah had a strong attachment to both the character of Finn and to Cory, the actor. They described crying over promos for “The Quarterback,” especially because of the reactions of the other characters. They described themselves as crying when they saw Rachel crying for Finn, and when they saw Kurt holding Finn’s letterman jacket. This is what Cohen (2003) describes as a parasocial breakup. Not only did they lose an actor, they and the characters that they care about lost something more. Giles (2012) explains that at times, the loss of a character can be as upsetting to fans as the loss of a celebrity. In this case youth were experiencing both simultaneously. So while they were talking about the actor by name, they were talking primarily about the impact that his loss would have on the show, especially the emotional loss of Finn for the other characters. While they may have been positioning Finn as a creation, dependent on an actor for life, they were at the same time positioning the characters of Rachel and Kurt as people who had lost a friend.

Using the Language of Television Production

When youth used the language of media production, this positioned characters as artistic creations and fit within the discourse of Character as Creation. The language that youth used included words like character, storyline, and actor. For example, Alice responded to my request that she tell me about Brittany by stating, “She’s stupid, but she’s adorable. And she was a minor character, but they made her a major character because her one-liners were so amazing.” Alice knew the difference between major and minor characters, and realized that Brittany’s character was promoted because of the actor Heather Morris’s comedic timing. She described the people who work behind the

scenes to make this decision as “they,” which I will discuss more in the next section. It is clear from her speech that she understood something of the world behind the scenes, and that in this instance she was positioning Brittany as a character whose fate was controlled by those behind the scenes.

Participants using the language of show production had various levels of fluency with the vernacular. Enrique used his own words to describe the effects that Rachel’s character had on the show.

ENRIQUE: I kinda like... I do like Rachel. Not... not like, I guess not her character, but the effects that her character has on the show. ‘Cause um, like I said earlier you know she’s a, she’s a drama bomb. She creates, you know, a lot of the big movements, you know in the...

INTERVIEWER: So she moves the story?

ENRIQUE: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Okay.

ENRIQUE: She’s one of the big movement factors.

In this excerpt, Enrique positioned Rachel as a character who moved the story with her actions. He talked about the effect that the character had on the show, positioning Rachel as a fictional character meant to serve a specific purpose, within the discourse of Character as Creation. The actions of the character made things happen within *Glee*’s plot, mainly by creating drama.

In the following excerpt, Ely described why he was not fond of the character Tina Cohen-Chang.

INTERVIEWER: So you like most of them.

ELY: Yes. I will say I don't dislike her [Tina], but I don't particularly care for her character as much. Tina. Because I don't feel like they went very deep into her story.

Ely positioned Tina as a character on a show controlled by others. This positioning fits within the larger discourse of Character as Creation. Ely made it clear that it was not Tina that he disliked, but the choices that had been made for Tina's character and the stories written for her. Ely was not referencing actions or attributes of the character herself, but a failure of those who had created and scripted her character. Ely talked about Tina's story in much the same way that a television critic would critique a lack of story development.

Talking about “Them:” Youth using “They” and “Them” to refer to the Producers involved in Making Show Decisions

While some youth used the correct titles to describe the people who work behind the scenes on a television show, more often youth described these people as “they” or “them” – the unnamed force behind the show's production. At times, I myself unintentionally used the language of “they” and “them” to describe these individuals.

In her description of the character of Sam Evans, Thora used a nickname (“Trouty Mouth”) that was given to him by another character on the show, demonstrating her depth of understanding and familiarity with the show. She then went on to talk about a storyline on the show where Sam's family was homeless, and to help make ends meet, he went to work as a stripper.

INTERVIEWER: So pick a character and tell me about them.

THORA: Trouty Mouth.

INTERVIEWER: Tell me about Trouty Mouth.

THORA: I liked his story. Like when they first made him a character because his family was homeless and they were living in a hotel and they... and he was stripping and it reminded me of [pause] Channing Tatum. I think that's where the inspiration... [America giggles.] Like maybe. Because that was the big whole thing. Channing Tatum was a stripper so they made Sam a stripper. Well, that's what I think happened.

While in other parts of her speech she positioned Sam's character as a person, in this excerpt she was positioning Sam as a created character, and part of a story told by those producing the show. Thora critiqued Sam's storyline, and hypothesized that the decision to make Sam a stripper was based on Channing Tatum. She does not specify if she is talking specifically about Channing Tatum's performance in the movie *Magic Mike*, or his own history as an exotic dancer.

Ely provided an analysis of the character of Rachel Berry, focusing on the decisions that producers made to portray her in a certain way.

ELY: Her personality is she's kind of like the star. She feels like she has to be in the center of attention. Her personality is also mirrored in her singing voice. It's strong. So a lot of power behind it. She has a big range. It's beautiful, and those are the things that they try to represent in her character. Her beauty. How she's strong-willed, because she wants to be the captain and all that kind of stuff. She's also Jewish, and her dads are gay, which brings us to Kurt.

Ely talked about Rachel's character as a star with a beautiful singing voice who liked to be the center of attention. And then he described how "they" have decided to portray her this way. He does not specifically state who "they" are, but he gives "them" the power to

make decisions about the character, and imbues them with artistic intentions and abilities to show that a character is strong by giving her a strong voice. By talking about those who were working to create a character and who made decisions about how a character would sound and act, Ely was positioning the character as without agency, controlled by “them” and using the discourse of Character as Creation.

In the following excerpt, Karl was responding to the question, “What do you think of the way they portray different kinds of people?” This is a question that more commonly received responses that positioned the characters as creations. Mirroring my language, he began with a description of what “they” do.

KARL: I think at times that they draw from stereotypes and that they try and make them more positive, but you know Brittany is the stereotypical dumb blond.

Rachel is the Jewish American Princess and I can say that because I am Jewish.

In this excerpt, Karl was not criticizing Rachel for being a Jewish American Princess. Instead he criticized the “they” who created Rachel and drew from stereotypes to create her. Talking about stereotypes at all removes the conversation from the world of lived experience to the world of perception and representation. A person who exists in the world is rarely referred to as a stereotype, while the term can be often used with television characters.

Karl positioned himself as able to call Rachel a “Jewish American Princess,” a term which is often used in a derogatory manner by members outside of the Jewish faith, because he too is Jewish. He positioned himself as a part of the group “Jewish” and positioned Rachel in the same group, which in his estimation allows him to say certain things that people outside of this group are unable to say. Karl was able to make these

criticisms of the portrayal of ethnicity and, to some extent, gender, because he positioned the character as a creation of those who work on the show. He was not critiquing Rachel, but those who created her.

What these two character discourses makes possible

Youth were able to do different things with their speech when using the discourse of Character as Person than when they were using the discourse of Character as Creation. When youth were positioning a character as though that character had thoughts and feelings and agency, they were able to relate to that character as they would to a person. They used the same language that they would use when talking about a person, and they expressed emotion, and even talked about friendship and love for characters.

When youth positioned a character as though they were part of a fictional program created by directors, producers, and actors, they did not express those same connections and emotions with characters. They may have expressed feelings and perceived relationships with the actors who played the characters, but not with the characters themselves. Individuals using this discourse were able to critique or praise the decisions that the producers of the show were making without criticizing a favorite character. They were also able to talk analytically about the show's content and storylines, positioning themselves as expert in the conventions of television storytelling.

All youth in this study moved between the two discourses of Character as Person and Character as Creation and the related positionings in their speech. While some used one discourse more than the other, all dynamically moved between the two discourses, often within the same answer to a question and sometimes within the same sentence. Many of the excerpts from youth speech in this chapter position characters both as people

and as fictional creations, and in my analysis I have chosen to highlight one positioning and discourse over another.

This movement between discourses and ways of positioning characters matters because youth do not talk about characters in static ways, which implies that they also don't think about characters in static ways. A young person does not always talk about a character as a person, in the same way that they do not always talk about a character as a collection of decisions made by producers of the show. While youth do seem to exist on a spectrum between usually talking about a character as a construction and usually talking about a character as a person, every youth in this study used both ways of positioning characters.

This fluid movement between discourses is important for another reason: different things are possible for youth when they position characters as creations and when they position them as people. In the fifth step of Foucauldian Discourse Analysis, I look at the positionings and discourses that youth are using, and hypothesize what this particular way of speaking makes possible in the world. In the case of Character as Person, youth are able to express emotional attachments and relationships with characters and to talk about issues that they face in their own lives by referencing the lives of the characters. In the case of Character as Creation, youth are able to show their understanding of television production, act as television critics, and discuss the ways in which difference should be portrayed on television. The chart below describes this analysis in more detail.

Figure 9. FDA Chart: Discourses of Character

(1) Discursive Construction: Character

(A) Speech	(2) Discourses	(4) Positionings	(5) Actions Made Possible in the World
<p>“Blaine, you shouldn’t have cheated on him!” Speech acts include directly speaking to a character and referring to a character using the same language used with another person.</p>	<p>Character as Person Character as Friend Character as Romantic Interest</p>	<p>Character is positioned as a friend or acquaintance through participant’s speech. Character is positioned as having a strong connection with reality.</p>	<p>With the discourse of Character as Person, youth are able to speak about a character as though they were a real person. Youth can thus express romantic feelings, strong emotions, and attachments to these characters in much the same way they would with a real person. Youth can also identify with a character, expressing a connection with them in the same way they would identify with another youth.</p>
<p>“I don’t particularly care for her character as much. Tina. Because I don’t feel like they went very deep into her story”</p>	<p>Character as Creation Character as Acted, Written, Directed, Produced</p>	<p>Character is positioned as part of a work of fiction. The character is a media product, and thus has a limited connection with reality.</p>	<p>With the discourse of Character as Creation, youth are able to separate a character from reality through their speech. By using the language of television production, and referencing the individuals who are responsible for creating a character, youth are able to speak about the individuals making decisions to bring this character to fruition. This allows youth to critique the show’s producers, and the character as a part of the text of the show, making the criticisms more academic than personal. Youth are able to demonstrate</p>

			their acumen, showing knowledge of both the television production process and sharing their views on how difference should be represented.
--	--	--	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Discussion: Building on this Analysis

Many studies have shown that youth have relationships with characters similar to the ones that they have with real people in their lives (Banks & Bowman, 2014; Cohen, 2003; Giles, 2012; Hoffner & Buchanan, 2005; Horton & Wohl, 1956; Kanazawa, 2002). While these relationships were evident in youth speech, most youth in this study moved between the discourses of Character as Person and Character as Creation when speaking about characters, often within a few sentences or a few words. This movement and recognition leads to a more complicated understanding of what it means to identify with a television character. While an audience member may talk about a character as though they are a person, and worry about a character and their future, they also are aware that they are the creations of writers, producers, directors, and actors.

This movement between discourses will act as a frame for the analysis in future chapters. Throughout the life of this study, people have asked me if I am looking at the show as a media product or using the show to talk about the real world. My answer throughout has been the same: *both*. The discourse of Character as Person allows my analysis to bridge the gap between looking at the ways that youth talk about characters and their sexuality or ethnicity or ability and looking at the ways that youth talk about people in the world and their sexuality or ethnicity or ability. Studies have shown that

people view and judge characters in much the same way that they view and judge people (Cohen, 2003; Giles, 2012; Hoffner & Buchanan, 2005; Kanazawa, 2002; Perse & Rubin, 1989).

At the same time, the Character as Creation discourse can also act as a roadmap for the times when youth do not identify characters and behaviors as true to life. When they talk about the producers who make the decisions or the writers who create the storylines or the actors who bring a character to life, they are not talking about characters as reality, but as a carefully constructed, and often flawed, *representation* of reality.

These distinctions will be integral to exploring youth talk in the chapters to come. Additionally, these distinctions add a new layer to Parasocial Relationship Theory,²⁰ which argues that youth develop relationships with television characters in much the same way that they do with people in their lives (Banks & Bowman, 2014; Cohen, 2003; Giles, 2012; Hoffner & Buchanan, 2005; Horton & Wohl, 1956; Kanazawa, 2002; Theran & Newberg, 2010). Youth may identify with a character, but that does not mean that they *always* relate to a character, or that they always consider a character to be their friend. Most youth move between these discourses, recognizing on some level that this is a character, even as they talk about that character as they would a friend or acquaintance. Youth don't *only* see a character as a creation or a person just as they don't *only* identify with or not identify with a character. Youth in this study moved smoothly between talking about characters as though they were creations and talking about characters as though they were people, often as if they were friends or acquaintances. And the ways that they talk about those characters change as they watch a program or talk about it later.

²⁰ There is further description of Parasocial Relationship Theory in Chapter 1.

Chapter 6. Discourses of Difference: Being, Having and Enacting Difference

This chapter answers the question: What discourses and positionings do youth use when talking about difference in the context of a television program that presents diverse characters, specifically in the areas of (a) ability, (b) sexuality, and (c) ethnicity? For this chapter I analyzed youth transcript data from qualitative interviews using the frameworks of Foucauldian Discourse Analysis and positioning analysis. Analyzing youth talk about difference in this context gives insight into the way that youth were experiencing the show and the ways that they constructed these issues more broadly.

I have identified three discourses of difference that youth used when talking about characters on the television show *Glee*: Being Different, Having Difference, and Enacting Difference. When youth talked about a character using the discourse of Being Different, they often used static cultural labels. In contrast, with the discourse of Having Difference youth often described characteristics of the person or the difference, whereas the discourse of Enacting Difference was often illustrated by the actions associated with a difference. These three discourses were not fixed. Youth moved between these discourses, even within the same utterance. As I will demonstrate in this chapter, youth deployed these discourses of difference in their talk about sexuality, ethnicity, and ability. While the discourses of Being Different and Enacting Difference were common across youth talk about all kinds of difference, the discourse of Having Difference (or more often Having the Characteristics of Difference) was less common in talk about sexuality and ethnicity. All three discourses were common in youth speech about ability.

These discourses provide a useful framework to interpret how youth were constructing difference for characters on the show and in their own lives. It is important to understand how youth were employing these three discourses about difference, because each discourse allowed youth to do something different in the world. When youth used these discourses to describe characters, they were positioning these characters in particular ways and at the same time positioning themselves. Based on these positionings, it may have been easier for youth to consider difference to be a choice or something that a person is born with, to consider differences as malleable or fixed, or to consider differences as separate from or part of a person's identity.

Discourses of Difference: A Framework

To better describe why the specific language choices that youth made when describing difference matters, I am going to use as an example the act of conveying information that a person is diabetic. For context, let's say that I am talking with someone planning a lunch meeting. I need to get across the information that Sally, who will be attending the meeting, is diabetic. There are several ways that I can choose to convey this information, and every way that I choose to convey that information positions Sally in particular ways.

I could say, "Sally is diabetic." In this construction, diabetic is a predicate adjective describing Sally. She is diabetic just as the sky is blue and a rabbit is furry. Diabetic is a way to describe Sally and who she is. Similarly, I could also say, "Sally is *a* diabetic." In this form of speech, diabetic is a predicate noun and the word "is" acts much like an equal sign in a mathematics equation. In this construction, Sally is defined by the word diabetic. In this method of speech, I am indicating that diabetes is a part of Sally

and that, at least in this description, diabetes is a defining characteristic. Both of these descriptions fit into the discourse of Being Different or, in this case, being diabetic. With this discourse, the difference is a part of a person, and largely unchanging.

I could also choose to say, "Sally has diabetes." In this construction, diabetes is something that Sally has and not something that she is. Much like a person has a foot or a car. It is descriptive, and it is relevant, but it is not how Sally is defined. I would also add into this category the trappings of diabetes that Sally might have, including a description of Sally as "the girl with the insulin pump." This description fits into the discourse of Having Difference. With this discourse, diabetes is something that Sally has. It may be unchangeable, but it is also not defining.

I could also choose to tell the host, "Sally can't eat sugar" or "Sally doesn't eat sugar." Instead of using the word diabetes or labeling Sally as diabetic, I might instead describe the actions involved in having diabetes. Moving away from the example of the planned lunch, there are many actions that might be used to describe a person with diabetes. Sally might give herself insulin shots or check her blood sugar every morning. I could use these actions related to diabetes to describe what Sally can and cannot do, should and should not do, or does and does not do. This description fits into the discourse of Enacting Difference. In this kind of discourse, the person is not labeled by their difference, and is instead described by the actions that accompany that difference.

Table 2. Modified FDA Chart: Diabetes

(1)²¹ Discursive Construction: Diabetes

(A) Speech	(2) Discourse	(4) Positioning	(5) Actions Made Possible in the World
<p>Sally <i>is</i> a diabetic.</p> <p>Sally <i>is</i> diabetic</p>	<p>Being Diabetic</p>	<p>Diabetics are specific kinds of people.</p>	<p>Sally can be labeled by her disability, and her disability is defining. People who do not have diabetes can talk about someone with diabetes as a certain kind of person. People can use the label to separate or group people who are diabetic.</p>
<p>Sally <i>has</i> diabetes.</p>	<p>Having Diabetes</p>	<p>Diabetes is something that a person might have.</p>	<p>Sally is not defined by her disability in this utterance, but it is considered worth noting. Diabetes is something that Sally has, not the kind of person she is.</p>
<p>Sally <i>doesn't</i> eat sugar.</p>	<p>Enacting Diabetes</p>	<p>The person described is someone whose actions are or should be different from people who are not diabetic.</p>	<p>With this discourse and positioning, certain actions are expected of Sally. She is not labeled as being a certain kind of person, but she is someone who should or shouldn't do certain things and who does and doesn't do certain things. People may expect her to enact her disability in particular ways, and may judge her based on her enactment.</p>

²¹ The numbers 1, 2, 4, and 5 reference the four steps in Foucauldian Discourse Analysis which I am focusing on in my analysis. The letter (A) references one corner of the positioning triangle.

These descriptions of Sally convey similar information, but they do so using different discourses. I argue that these discourses position Sally in a variety of ways, and make actions for Sally and for those around her available in the world. Different discourses lead to different positionings of Sally as well as different positionings of those providing lunch for Sally, of the individuals speaking about Sally, and of other diabetics in the world. These are the same three discourses that I will apply to youth description of difference.

In this chapter I will describe the ways that youth used the discourses of Being Different, Having Difference, and Enacting Difference when they described the ability, ethnicity, and sexuality of characters on the show *Glee*. I have made the choice in this chapter and the next to identify youth speakers by the gender, sexuality, ability, ethnicity, and age labels that they provided about themselves. I believe that this is important to do in order to give the reader a context for who is speaking and how they identified themselves at the time of the interview. I also believe that while this information is not always relevant for particular discourses, the information can at times shed light on the ways that individual youth were constructing a particular type of difference.

Discourses of Difference: Talking About Emma Pillsbury

Youth used all three discourses of difference in describing ability. They described characters as being disabled in some way, as having disabilities, and as enacting their disabilities through action, or lack thereof. In their language, youth rarely used the word "disabled" or other words to indicate the same concept. Instead, they described specific conditions that might fall under the umbrella of disability. These included dyslexia, Down syndrome, obsessive-compulsive and anxiety disorders, and physical paralysis.

Figure 10. Character Card for Emma Pillsbury played by Jayma Mays



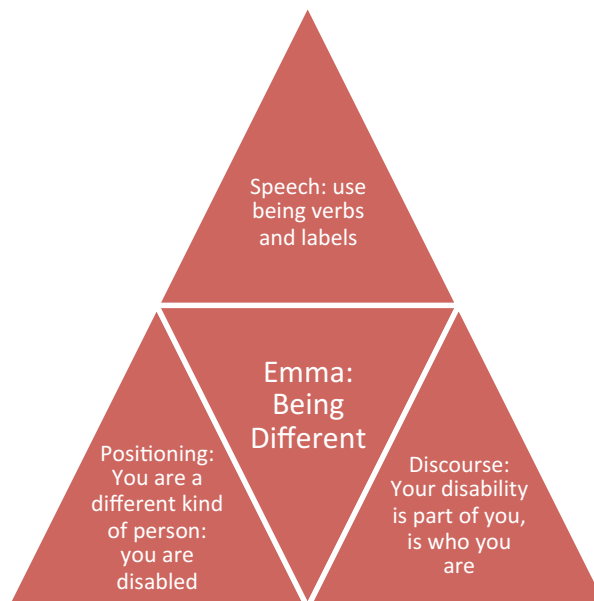
Emma Pillsbury is the guidance counselor at McKinley High School portrayed by the actress Jayma Mays. Her character premieres in the first episode of Season 1, and she is alternately friends with and the love interest of glee club coach Will Schuester. From the first episode of the show, the producers make it clear that Emma Pillsbury has an extreme form of obsessive-compulsive disorder. In Episode 1, she is seen eating her lunch while wearing plastic gloves and meticulously cleaning each grape before she eats it. In that episode she tells Will that she has trouble with “messy things.” Later, in Season 2, she formally sees a therapist and receives medication for her condition. At the end of the episode she wears a shirt that says “OCD” on it during a glee club activity. (*Glee*, Season 2, Episode 18, “Born This Way”).

While Emma Pillsbury’s actions clearly reference her disorder in every episode that she appears in, the language of OCD does not surface consistently on the show, and is not mentioned explicitly until Season 2. When asked explicitly to identify characters with disabilities, not all participants recognized Emma Pillsbury as a character who has one. Of the participants who did reference her condition when describing the character, participants are split between describing Emma using the discourses of Being, Having, and Enacting her disability.

Being OCD

Figure 11. Positioning Triangle. Emma: Being Different

When participants described Emma Pillsbury, several used the discourse of Being Different. Some participants used the formal terminology of “OCD” or “obsessive compulsive” to describe Emma, as one participant stated, “she is Miss Pillsbury and she is the counselor and she is really like OCD and kind of like crazy.”



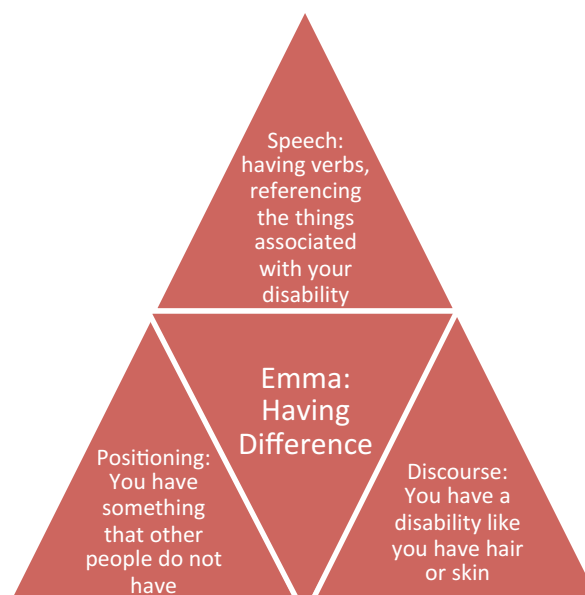
Other participants (two) described Emma as a "germaphobe," labeling Emma as someone who is afraid of germs rather than someone who is obsessive and compulsive. Other participants used less formal language, labeling Emma as a “clean freak.” Whatever language youth used to describe Emma, they were positioning her as someone who “is” that thing. Emma “is” a clean freak or a germaphobe or OCD. This positioned Emma as a different kind of person, one who is something that other people are not.

Few participants described Emma Pillsbury as disabled, choosing instead to label her with more specificity. This is true as well of other characters who might have been described as physically disabled including Artie Abrams, a character in a wheelchair, and Becky Jackson, a character with Down syndrome. Youth chose to describe these characters using language specific to their individual disabilities and not to describe them as “disabled.”

One participant who used this language did so in response to a question about which characters were disabled. Heidi, who identified as a 16-year-old, multiracial, straight/questioning female with OCD and ADD responded, “Yes. There’s Becky, who is mentally disabled. Artie is in a wheelchair, so that’s physically disabled. If we were to really get down to it, they all have their problems. Emma is OCD. That’s technically classified as a disorder.” Here she was using medical language, talking about Emma’s “disorder” and using that language to position her as disabled. She also stated that OCD is “technically” a disorder, implying that she might not agree that Emma should be positioned in the same way as the characters of Becky and Artie.

Two youth described the extent to which Emma is OCD. Ke\$ha, who identified as a 13-year-old, straight, able, Latina female described Emma early in the interview as a character who annoyed her. She stated, “Yeah. Not that I don't like [her but] she annoys me because she is like such a clean freak. I mean not that I don't like that, kind of a clean freak. But she is like extremely like a clean freak.” Emma is not just a clean freak, but she is a particular kind of “clean freak.” Here, Ke\$ha was trying to be clear that it was not that she had a problem with “clean freaks,” but she did take issue with someone who had an extreme form of the condition. When asked if any characters have a disability, Audrey, who identified as a 17-year-old, straight, able, Caucasian female, identified Becky, Artie, and Emma.

Figure 12. Positioning Triangle. Emma: Having Difference



She included Emma because “cause she’s super OCD to the point where it... it is, um, unhealthful or unhealthy.” In this positioning, someone with a lesser form of OCD may or may not be considered disabled.

The discourse of Being OCD positions Emma as a specific kind of person, one who is defined by her disability, belonging to the group of people who can be labeled in this way. It also allows for others to position themselves in opposition to the group of people labeled as such. If a youth can position Emma as a “clean freak” and a “germaphobe,” then they can also position themselves as different from this kind of person. That is, they can position themselves as the kind of person who is normal and not “crazy.”

Having OCD

When other youth described Emma, they described her not as a person who *is* something, but as a person who *has* something. One participant described Emma by stating, “She is the school counselor. She has, um, very extreme obsessive-compulsive disorder.” This participant was using the formal terminology for Emma’s condition, and stated clearly that this condition is something that Emma has. The youth also positioned Emma as having an extreme case of this disorder, allowing for the existence of people with less extreme cases. Jazmin who identified as a 14-year-old, straight, Hispanic, able female stated, “and this is the counselor, Ms. Pillsbury, and she has a phobia. I don't know what it's called. I think OCD.” Both descriptions positioned Emma as having a condition, whether it is a phobia or a disorder.

When Beth, who identified as a 17-year-old, straight, White, able, heterosexual female was describing Emma Pillsbury, she also described her condition.

Let's see. Who else can I talk about? We've got Miss Pillsbury. She's got psychological issues, mostly OCD, but she has a lot of trouble like trusting people. She becomes friends with Will, the glee [club] teacher. At the time he's married but eventually gets divorced and they are in love but there's a lot of twists and turns in that story. She just struggles to make connections with people.

Especially with her OCD it's hard. It's actually not that prevalent. They don't show a lot how her disease makes it hard for her to do that but it is always in the way.

In Beth's description of Emma, OCD was something that she had, it was not something that she is. In addition, Beth was positioning Emma both as a person with OCD and as a character created by show producers who decided whether or not to show the difficulties that OCD causes in the character's life. It is clear from Beth's language that she could see how OCD made it hard for Emma as a person, but that this was not something that she believed that the show producers focused on for Emma the character.

Each of these speech examples positioned Emma as having something that is different from what other people have. She is not positioned as a specific kind of person, but her difference is noted as setting her apart from others who do not have her disorder or phobia.

Enacting OCD

Several youth described Emma either solely through her behavior or by describing her behavior in conjunction with labeling her condition. Within this discourse, Emma is not a certain kind of person, but she does do certain kinds of things. In this case, she does actions associated with her disability. One youth when asked to describe Emma,

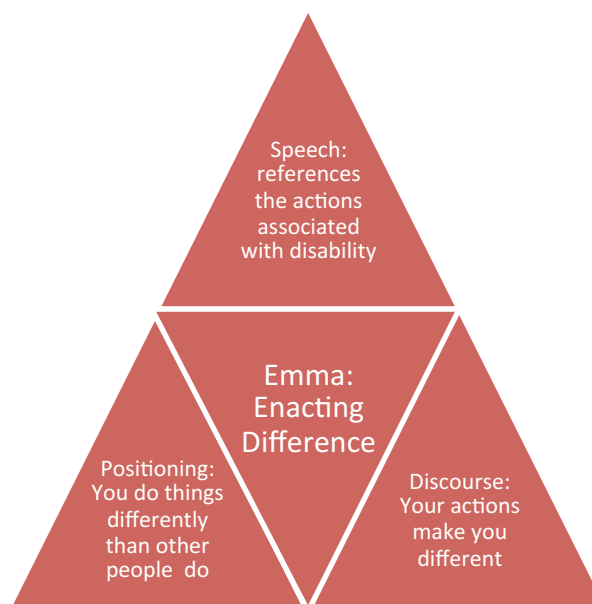
described her cleaning “every single grape.” This tells me not what she thinks the character *is*, but what the character *does*.

Nicole, who identified as a 15-year-old, straight, African American female with asthma described having an issue with Emma’s enactment. In response to a question about the way that the show portrays Emma’s disability, Nicole said, “Not all OCDs is

like how Emma does it... That’s how everybody thinks like everything has to be straight and clean. But sometime it is not that, I don’t know.” Here she seems to be pushing back on a definition of OCD as purely physical action. At the same time, she was still using the discourse of Character as Person, talking about not the way the show portrays Emma, but troubling the way that Emma “does” OCD. She was arguing that there are multiple ways to enact OCD, and that the show is portraying only one enactment. She expressed concern that people already believe that OCD is “keeping everything straight and clean,” and she had trouble with the idea that *Glee* was reinforcing these ideas.

Warren, who identified as a 16-year-old, White, able, homosexual male described feeling sympathy for Emma based on her enactment of her difference. Warren stated that he appreciated what the show was doing because he hadn’t:

Figure 13. Positioning Triangle. Emma: Enacting Difference



been really exposed to it but now I kind of know what it's about basically its really powerful, I mean to see her like cleaning like that and then crying while she is cleaning. Really, I totally appreciate the disability and the little by little, the internal struggle she has and you know she is one of the nicest people, like why does all of this stuff have to happen for her. And I feel really very bad for her and I really wholly sympathize with her.

Warren described his emotional reaction to Emma's character, using the discourse of Character as Person. He described how her enactment of "crying while she's cleaning" helped him to appreciate her disability. For Warren, the physical manifestations of this difference were what struck a nerve.

Other descriptions involving action described a change in Emma's condition. Carolina, who identified as a 16-year-old, Hispanic, straight female, talked about Will Schuester helping Emma to "get over her obstacles and like stop being so germaphobic." In this case, referencing the action of improving a condition allowed Carolina to express the dynamic state of OCD.

While someone can be positioned as Being Germaphobic or Having Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder within the discourse of Enacting Difference, both the positioning of the condition and the condition itself can change over time. Thus, this discourse allows for a less static positioning of the character with the condition and, by extension, of people in the world.

Use of Multiple Discourses

When participants described Emma Pillsbury's character on *Glee*, they moved fluidly between the three different discourses. For example, Tyler's description of Emma

included both the label of her obsessive-compulsive disorder and the action of her constant cleaning. She stated, “She is the school counselor. She has, um, very extreme obsessive-compulsive disorder. Always cleaning stuff.” This was Tyler’s initial description of the character, and it included a description of her Having OCD and Enacting OCD. Deion similarly labeled the character, stating, “Um... Emma. She’s a clean freak, but she got over her... her uh... clean... her OCD...” In this description, Emma is a clean freak, but at the same time it is something that she “got over” in the past. So while this is something that she is, she has also been able to “get over it” to at least some extent. While her label may not have changed, her enactment has.

When Ely, who identified as a 19-year-old, African American, homosexual male, described Emma, he did so using the discourse of Character as Created. Ely stated:

I like how they go into her OCD thing and go into the whole marry thing with Will. How you meet her parents, and you see how parents are and why she is the way she is. So going to that whole back story was really cool, and I like that she’s supportive,

Ely described the show’s creators going into “her OCD thing” and showing the origins of her disorder. In this description, it is not just Emma who is acting and reacting, but the show’s producers who have chosen this particular enactment for her. Another youth similarly used the Character as Creation discourse. Joseph, who identified as a 17-year-old, able, White, straight male stated that Emma “represented the people with OCD.” He was positioning her character as a creation, and as a representative for people in the world who have this disability.

Almost every youth in these examples used the discourse of Character as Person when describing Emma’s condition. Only a few discussed the decisions that show producers made when creating and writing this character. Because of this, youth speech when they discuss Emma more closely mirrors the ways that youth might talk about a person in the world with the same disorder.

What these Discourses Make Possible

The following table describes the discourses and positionings associated with youth speech and what those positionings and discourses make possible in the world.

Table 3. Modified Foucauldian Discourse Analysis Chart: Constructing Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder

(1) Discursive Construction: OCD (Disability)

(A) Speech	(2) Discourses	(4) Positionings	(5) Actions Made Possible in the World
“Emma is a germaphobe.”	Being OCD Being Germaphobic	Obsessives and compulsives are specific kinds of people. Germaphobes are particular kinds of people.	Emma can be labeled by her disability, and her disability is defining. People who do not have OCD can talk about someone with OCD as a certain kind of person. People can use the label to separate or group people who have this mental illness.
“She has a phobia, I don’t know what it’s called. I think OCD.”	Having OCD Having Germaphobia	Obsessive-compulsive disorder or a phobia is something that a person might have.	Emma is not defined by her disability in this utterance, but it is considered worth noting. OCD is something that Emma has, not the kind of person she is.
Emma “stopped	Enacting OCD	The person described is	With this discourse and positioning, certain actions are

<p>being so germaphobic.”</p> <p>Emma “cleaned every grape.”</p>	<p>Enacting Germaphobia</p>	<p>someone whose actions are or may be different from people without a phobia or OCD.</p>	<p>expected of Emma. She is not labeled as being a certain kind of person, but she is someone who may be more organized, clean, and obsessed with germs than the majority of the population. People may expect her to enact her disability in particular ways, and may judge her based on her enactment. This language can also reflect change in Emma’s enactment, i.e., improvement in her condition.</p>
----------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

One thing that I found in youth talk was that when youth were criticizing a character, they did so more often when they were using the discourse of Enacting Difference. I believe that youth felt more comfortable criticizing a character in this way than for being or having difference. For example, Ke\$ha seemed hesitant to criticize Emma for being a clean freak, but she was willing to criticize Emma’s actions.

KESHA: Yeah. Not that I don't like [her but] she annoys me because she is like such a clean freak. I mean not that I don't like that, kind of a clean freak. But she is like extremely like a clean freak. Like she cleans everything, even her grapes before she eats them. I mean like washing them is okay but like.

INTERVIEWER: Rubbing each one?

KESHA: Yes.

According to Ke\$ha, it may not be okay to say that you don’t like someone for who they are, but you can say that you don’t like someone for what they do.

Describing the choices that a producer or director made in creating a character can leave a similar space for criticism. Joseph, who identified as a 17-year-old, able, White, straight male described the portrayal of Emma's character.

And Emma, I think they over exaggerated it. I don't know if they meant – they probably meant over exaggerated but the OCD. She has a severe case of OCD, but they didn't do that very well, and they told her to get some medicine for it.

He was using the discourse of Having OCD when describing Emma, but by talking about the decisions of the production team using the discourse of Character as Creation, he was still able to criticize the enactment of disability, in this case an enactment wrongly chosen by the producers.

Sexuality

Heterosexuality has clear actions identified with it: openly dating someone, secretly dating someone, liking someone, loving someone, kissing someone, having sex with someone, and not having sex with someone. The same is true for homosexuality, with the added actions of coming out (or not) to family, friends, and sometimes strangers. While all of these actions and more are available to a person based on their sexuality, not everyone does all (or any) of these activities at a given time. In addition, sexuality involves a multitude of labels. Someone might be described as straight, gay, homosexual, heterosexual, LGBT, LGBTQ, LGBTQIA, or transgender. Some labels are formal while others have a familiar tone, and some are antiquated and unused by this generation (sissy)

while others are reclaimed (queer) and still others are so new as to have been previously unfamiliar to this writer (demisexual, panromantic²²).

In their descriptions of characters and other discourses related to the television show *Glee*, participants used a variety of actions and labels to describe characters and their sexual or romantic relationships with other characters. When youth were describing a character and chose to say something about their sexuality, they generally did so using the discourses of Being Different and Enacting Difference. In the analysis that follows, I identify the discourses that youth were using in selected descriptions of two homosexual characters who have central roles on the show: Kurt Hummel and Blaine Anderson.

Kurt is an original member of the glee club, and came out to his friends and family during Season 1. When Kurt was being bullied at McKinley High, he moved to a private high school for a time and met Blaine, an openly gay student. Kurt and Blaine develop a friendship and then a romantic relationship. Both characters are described in more detail in Appendix A. I have chosen not to use every reference to character sexuality here for the sake of brevity and to prevent repetition, as additional youth talk about sexuality is highlighted both later in this chapter (in my analysis of the ways that youth talk about the sexuality of the character Santana Lopez) and in Chapter 7 (where I discuss the ways that LGBT youth identify with LGBT characters).

²²As defined by participants, someone who is demisexual is not attracted to another person without first experiencing a strong emotional bond, and the term panromantic refers to the ability to love anyone regardless of their gender.

Being a Sexuality

Figure 14. Character Card for Blaine Anderson played by Darren Criss



Several youth, when describing individual characters, included words labeling that character's sexuality. When DD, who identified as a 12-year-old, White gay male, was asked to describe Kurt, he stated, "Um, basically he's an outgoing, really awesome character, which he is gay."

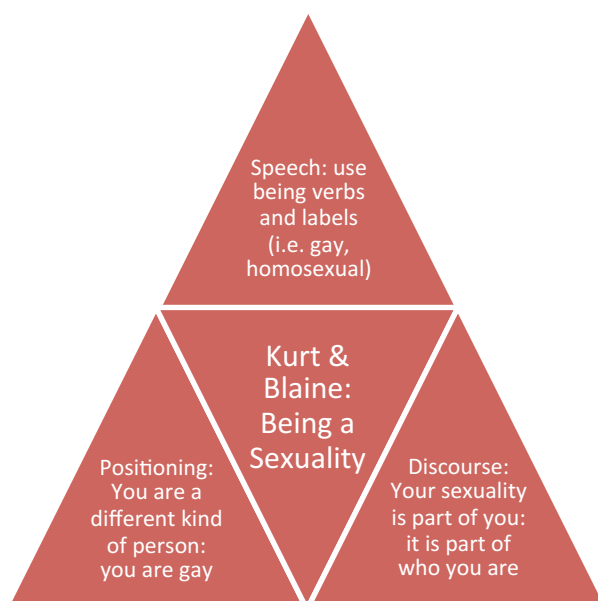
This positioned Kurt as a specific kind of person in the world, someone who is gay. At the same time, this positioning allowed for other kinds of people in the world, those who are not gay.

"Gay" was the label that participants most commonly ascribed to male LGBT characters. Audrey, who identified as a 17-year-old, straight, White female described both Blaine and Kurt as Being Gay. She said that, "with Blaine, no one cares if he's gay. And so you get that side of it and then with Kurt, he used to be bullied by [Dave] Karofsky for being gay." She was talking about the consequences that arose in each character's life for being a certain way. When Puckasaurus, who identified as a 17-year-old, Caucasian, straight female referenced Kurt in passing, she also described him as gay. She talked about a plotline where Mercedes had feelings for Kurt. Puckasaurus stated, "Yeah, she kind of - she seemed a little vulnerable at some points, like whenever she thought that Kurt was into her, even though he was totally gay."

Describing Kurt as "totally gay" denotes an interesting trend in youth speech. Not only did youth position Kurt as being gay, they positioned him as having a more than

usual enactment of gayness. Later in the interview when Puckasaurus was asked why Kurt might be bullied she said it was “because he is very, very, very, very gay.” Beth, who identified as a 17-year-old, White, heterosexual female, described Blaine as “pretty gay” but “pretty masculine.” These descriptions may be about the ways that characters are enacting their sexuality, or about the ways that they are enacting their gender.

Figure 15. Positioning Triangle. Kurt and Blaine: Being a Sexuality



When I asked Sean, who identified as a 16-year-old African American male, if he was talking about a particular character, he indicated that he was talking about Kurt by saying, “No, the... the homosexual.” In this speech act, Sean did not label Kurt as a homosexual man or a gay student, but as “the homosexual.” Sean had a halting

way of speaking, but this pause could still indicate hesitation, or searching for the correct phrase to use with an unfamiliar adult.

Participants commonly used labels of sexuality to describe characters. This use of descriptive labels with the word “is” can be seen as positioning a character’s sexuality as permanent, since a person is generally not described as being able to change who or what they are. Using this construction also opens up the use of a variety of vocabulary and labels for sexuality, including students’ use of the words gay, homosexual, lesbian, and bisexual to describe various characters.

Having a Sexuality

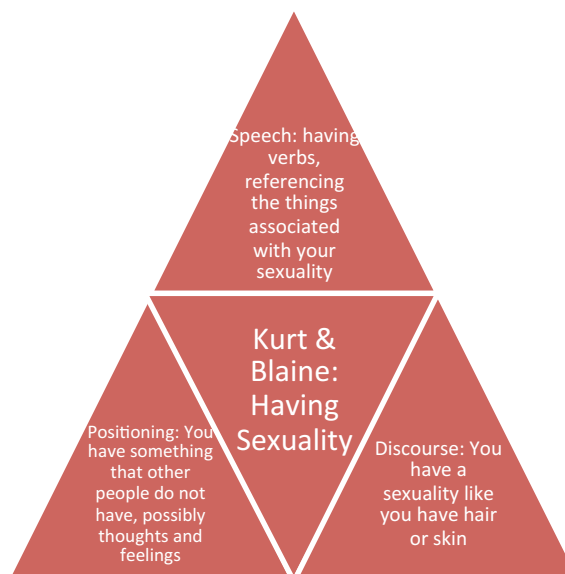
Youth used the discourse of Having Sexuality less commonly than other discourses of difference. This may have been less common in youth speech because of the ways that we construct sexuality in the English language. For instance, I might say that I am heterosexual, or that I date a man, but I generally do not say that I have

heterosexuality. If we extend this discourse to include not just having the difference itself, but having the characteristics or traits that accompany that difference, then the discourse of Having Sexuality did appear in youth talk. This discourse appeared in the ways that youth described characters having feelings for members of the same or opposite sex.

One participant described the character of Kurt by saying, "Kurt has feelings for Blaine." This language did not position Kurt as a certain kind of person, and Kurt did not have to act on these feelings. The character can choose whether or not to act on these feelings, but not whether he or she will have feelings.

When I asked Ché, who identified as a 15-year-old, pansexual, Hispanic female, if she was still watching *Glee* when Santana's character came out of the closet, she stated, "Not come out, no. I saw through when she was like had feelings." Before Santana could

Figure 3. Positioning Triangle. Kurt and Blaine: Having Sexuality



act on her feelings, she first had to have them. In this way of speaking, having feelings can be positioned as a step on the path to coming out.

Heidi, who identified as a 16-year-old, questioning, multiracial youth with ADD and OCD, described the confusion of a character coming to terms with their sexuality. She described Blaine, saying,

There was a lot of confusion. I remember Blaine thinking, what if I'm straight? I don't remember. I don't know. Because it's a feeling you get. It's not really something you know, so it's hard to really capture that, though, on film or just anywhere, because as adults, people are 95, and they're just like, oh, my god, I'm gay. I didn't know it. It's just one of those things that just happens, so I don't think they could possibly capture it really on film, but they've tried so far.

In this description, a person doesn't know that they are gay until they get the feeling, and it could happen at any time. In this positioning, people could have feelings for quite some time without moving to the more permanent discourse of Being a Sexuality. At the same time an individual can enact their difference by questioning their sexuality. This description again implies a lack of choice. The character cannot choose whether or not to have feelings, only how to act on them. It is interesting to note that this fluid description of sexuality comes from a youth who describes herself as questioning her sexuality.

While Thora, who identified as a 17-year-old, half-White, half-Hispanic, straight female, was describing the character of Sam Evans, she described a time when Blaine had feelings for Sam, a straight, male character. Thora stated,

And Sam's just the cutest. He is always like gung ho and wanting to help people out, like even when Blaine had his little feelings toward Sam he, he didn't like freak out on him. He was still like "You're my best buddy," like, "Yay gay people." But Sam's just like the odd ball who like... Even know how controversial it may be, 'cause he was like "Yay gay people!" And he just doesn't even realize that he's doing something weird. Or like that he's making a statement really. He was just like "Yeah, I don't care. I love these people".

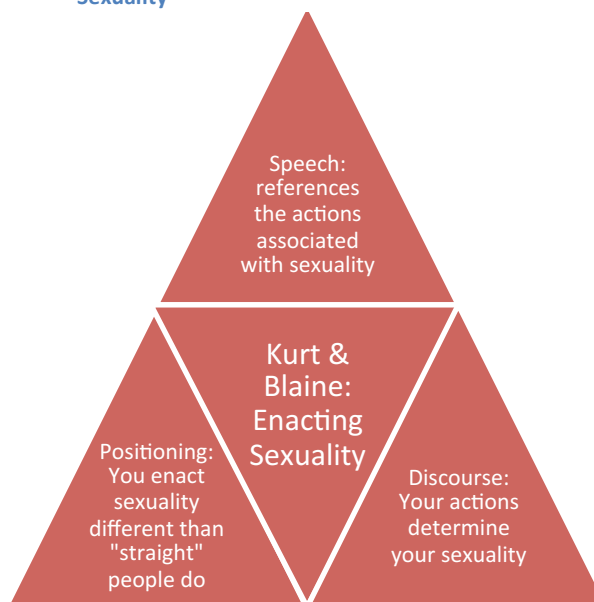
In addition to describing Blaine having feelings for Sam, she took care to describe how Sam responded to these feelings. In this description, Sam was positioned as enacting his heterosexuality in an appropriate way by being open-minded and caring in the face of what might be considered by some to be an awkward situation.

With this discourse of Having Sexuality, people are positioned as having or not having feelings for certain people and for certain kinds of people. Having these feelings does not define you as a certain type of person within the discourse. In this positioning, a person does not choose their feelings of attraction. The choice comes in how they act on these feelings.

Enacting a Sexuality

Some youth descriptions of characters included only information about enactment of their sexuality without providing any language that labeled that character. In describing

Figure 16. Positioning Triangle. Kurt & Blaine: Enacting Sexuality



Kurt, several participants referenced his sexuality through his actions. They did not use the labels of gay or straight, masculine or feminine, but instead described the behaviors associated with being LGBTQ.

A common way for youth to describe both heterosexual and homosexual characters was by describing their relationships with other characters. These descriptions included but were not limited to, dating a member of the same sex, loving a member of the same sex, being in a relationship with someone of the same sex, and having a physical relationship with members of the same sex. It was not uncommon to hear language like, “Kurt dates Blaine” or “Blaine and Kurt are going out,” when I asked youth to tell me about one of these characters.

This same information was often used to describe straight characters as well. While straight characters were not often labeled as Being Straight, several of them were described as Enacting Straightness.

One common action described by youth was “coming out” or telling a friend, family member, or even a stranger that you are gay. When Ke\$ha, who identified as a 13-year-old, straight, able, Hispanic female first described Kurt, she talked about his coming out to his father. She said, “Because I think it was Episode 5, he told his dad that he was gay. Which I thought that it was pretty brave of him even though his dad already knew. He is like very fabulous.” In this description, Ke\$ha positioned Kurt as the brave person who came out to his father. Kurt’s sexuality is implied through the description of this enactment.

Tyler, who identified as a 14-year-old, Caucasian, pansexual female also described Kurt’s coming out in response to this same question. She described Kurt

without labeling his sexuality, and then she stated that one reason that she liked Kurt was because there was “a lot of drama with him and his father and, like, coming out to him and, yeah, his father’s support and that, that was touching to me.” She was describing an action that Kurt took in relation to his sexuality, and describing this action, in effect, provided the information that Kurt is an LGBTQ character. At the same time, she was describing an emotional response to the character and his actions, using the discourse of Character as Person.

Gracie, who identified as a 15-year-old, straight, Hispanic female, when describing Blaine did not use the words “coming out” but instead described the instant when Blaine tells Kurt that he is gay. She stated:

Blaine. Yeah. Blaine. Blaine Warbler, they call him, and then [Kurt] asked them, “Are you all gay?” He’s like, “Oh, no, no, no. They’re perfectly straight. They both have girlfriends. I’m just gay,” and then they create a beautiful friendship. He’s just so beautiful and perfect, and it’s not even funny.

By describing Blaine telling Kurt that he is gay, she conveyed to me the information that Blaine is gay without labeling him. Instead, she repeated the ways in which the character labeled himself, describing the way in which he enacted his sexuality.

In Puckasaurus’s description of Kurt, she described the actions that he took to enact his sexuality. Puckasaurus stated:

And he discovers who he is and he is not afraid of that. He just gets so gay! He's always been gay. He wears the gayest outfits - the gayest. He knows he is going to get beaten up for that, he knows people are going to judge him for that, but he does it anyway because he knows who he is and he is not afraid of it. And

sometimes he gets a little too, you know, intense on it and that is why Finn kind of blew up at him. And that's why I hated Finn for a small amount of time, but I still loved him. Kurt's great.

While LGBT characters were often described with discourse labels of both Being a Sexuality and Enacting a Sexuality, this was not the case for heterosexual characters. Most often, heterosexual youth were not described with the labels of straight or heterosexual, but by describing the heterosexual romantic relationships that they had with other characters. For instance, when describing the character of Rachel Berry, no youth labeled her as heterosexual or straight, but many did reference her romantic relationships with multiple male characters. For instance, Kylie, who identified as a 16-year-old, straight, White female described Rachel by stating:

Okay, Rachel. She has a really annoying personality in the beginning and everyone hates her but she is a really good singer and she really is in love with Finn but he is dating Quinn and so she is like trying to like make him love her and then they finally get together and she sings a lot.

It was relevant to Kylie's description that Rachel loves Finn Hudson and that she is taking action on the feelings that she has for him. But it was not important to Kylie's description to label Rachel as straight. This is one example of a common occurrence. Most likely, Kylie and others did not feel the need to label Rachel as straight in the same way that no youth in this study felt the need to label a character as able. Majority groups can often be taken as a given.

Using Multiple Discourses of Sexuality

Youth talk often moved between two or more discourses when addressing sexuality. Heidi, who identified as a 16-year-old, straight/questioning, multiracial individual with ADD gave an example of this fluidity. When describing Blaine, she said, "Yes. This is Blaine. He's gay. He's a homosexual, and he was in a relationship with Kurt." She gave me information on both the labels that can be used to define Blaine (gay, homosexual) and information on Blaine's enactment of his sexuality. Her use of both gay and homosexual to describe Blaine may indicate that she was unsure which label would be most appropriate to use in conversation with an unfamiliar adult, in this case moving from less to more formal.

Audrey put forward a particularly interesting description of Enacting Sexuality and Being a Sexuality. In her description of Kurt, she posited that he was choosing his enactment of his sexuality, in part because of pressure from those around him. Audrey stated:

AUDREY: Yeah, at least we want have a repeat of that. Um, so he's... he's got issues because I think that he feels a lot of pressure either to be stereotypically gay or to be super straight and he obviously doesn't support those... the whole like "I have to be straight" thing, but I think that he might push his gayness out there, like the stereotypical um, be... act as the stereotypical gay guy, not whether or not that's part of his personality. I mean I'm not... I'm not... [cross talk]

INTERVIEWER: Why do you think he does that?

AUDREY: Um, I think it's a defense technique 'cause he's... cause like that way if anyone makes fun of him, it's for... in his head, it's... they're making fun of the stereotypes...

INTERVIEWER: And not him.

AUDREY: ...and not me personally. So...

She viewed Kurt's behavior as a choice to separate his enactment of sexuality from who he really is. She believed that he was "pushing his gayness out there" in order to fit into the strict dichotomy of sexuality that people perceive. At the same time, she talked about this as a character choice, not the choice of show producers. She positioned Kurt as a person able to make decisions, and able to choose this enactment for himself.

This description was in direct contrast to Joseph, who identified as a 17-year-old, White, straight male who described Blaine using the language of Character as Creation.

Blaine. He came into the second season after Kurt was being bullied by Karofsky, I think, and his original purpose was to be perfect really. They needed a confident gay guy who was confident with themselves and really had no flaws. And that's what they did in the third and fourth season. They started to have flaws with him, but he was on the show and he showed Kurt that it was okay. Kurt already knew that it was okay, but he really just helped through the whole struggle.

Joseph described Blaine as being a certain way, and at the same time he described the actions that the show's creators had taken to make him this way. Because of the demands of the storyline, Blaine's purpose was not just to "be perfect" or to be a "confident gay guy." His purpose was also to act as a role model for Kurt, showing him that things would be okay in the end. So by creating a character who *is* a certain way, the show's creators were able to have that character enact their sexuality in a very specific way. In this description, Joseph was positioning both the character and the show's producers who have designed the character to be this way.

What this Makes Possible

Each of these discourses of difference made something different possible in the world for these youth. Talking about sexuality as a static characteristic allowed youth to identify with that characteristic if they perceive themselves to *be* the same way. Taking on the label of gay or straight formally, and openly identifying with someone else who shares that same moniker has not always been possible (Blank, 2012; Foucault, 1978). This identification process is described in more depth in Chapter 7. Similarly, describing an enactment of a character’s sexuality allows for more flexibility and choice. While you cannot choose what you are, you can choose what you do. Moving between the two discourses allows for a conception of sexuality as both stable and fluid.

Table 4. Modified Foucauldian Discourse Analysis Chart: Sexuality

(1) Discursive Construction: Sexuality

(A) Speech	(2) Discourses	(4) Positionings	(5) Actions Made Possible in the World
“Kurt is gay”	Being a Sexuality Being Homosexual	People who are gay or homosexual or LGBTQ are certain kinds of people who can be labeled in certain ways.	Kurt can be labeled by his sexuality, and his sexuality is defining. People of any sexuality can describe someone who is gay or homosexual as a certain kind of person. People can use a variety of labels to describe this character, and do, including gay and homosexual. People can position themselves and Kurt by their choice of vocabulary.
“Kurt has feelings for Blaine”	Having a Sexuality Having	A person might have thoughts or feelings about a	Sexuality is something that Kurt has, not the kind of person he is. While the language of having

	Thoughts, Feelings, or Characteristics of Homosexuality	member of the same sex; a person may have a sexual preference	sexuality was less common in this sample, it is more frequently used in describing the kinds of sexual preferences and sexual orientations that people have. Within this discourse, someone could have thoughts or feelings without ever acting upon them. Those thoughts and feelings do not necessarily make someone a certain kind of person.
“Blaine and Kurt are going out”	Enacting a Sexuality Enacting Homosexuality Enacting a Sexual Preference or Orientation	The person described is someone whose actions are different from people who are enacting a different sexuality.	With this discourse and positioning, certain actions are expected of Kurt. He is not labeled as being a certain kind of person, but he is someone who may be expected to have romantic and physical relationships with other men. People may expect him to enact his sexuality in particular ways, and may judge him based on that enactment. Within this discourse people are able to speak about more and less “stereotypical” vs. “appropriate” enactments

Race and Ethnicity

When I asked youth to choose a character card and describe that character, youth often mentioned a character’s sexuality and ability when that character was in a minority group (LGBTQ or disabled) as a way of identifying that character. This was not true for ethnicity. Seven characters that I assigned character cards to were in a minority ethnic group. Participants only mentioned ethnicity in descriptions of two of these seven characters.

This is particularly striking for some of the characters who were described by the greatest number of participants. Youth chose to describe Santana Lopez, an able, LGBTQ, Latina female, in 15 of the 29 interviews I conducted. In 8 of those descriptions, she was described as Being or Enacting a sexuality. No participant described her by describing her ethnicity. While this was true for open-ended character description, later in the interviews, when I began asking specifically about ethnicity and race, youth talked about it openly.

This finding could be about colormuteness (Pollock, 2005) and cultural trends that prohibit mentioning race. Or it could be about youth not feeling comfortable talking to me about race as a researcher coming from a very different subject positioning (Eder & Fingerson, 2002; Maxwell, 2008). Because youth spoke so seldomly about ethnicity in the earlier questions, I will use additional data from later in the youth interviews to supplement this section of my analysis.

I believe that my analysis of Being a Race or Ethnicity is very similar to my description of Being OCD and Being a Sexuality, and for the sake of brevity I will bypass this section. The discourse of Having an Ethnicity, or more accurately, Having the Characteristics of an Ethnicity, was used extremely rarely in youth speech. This could be because this particular construction does not work as well for ethnicity as for other constructs, or this trend could be particular to my data. As a result, while I will include both of these discourses with their related speech and positionings in the modified FDA chart at the end of this section for reference, I focus my analysis for this section solely on the ways in which youth describe characters Enacting Race and Ethnicity.

Enacting a Race or Ethnicity

A number of youth described a character's ethnicity using the discourse of Enacting Ethnicity. For example, when asked her opinion of the way that *Glee* portrayed characters of different ethnicities, Kylie said, "Well I will just pick them out...well, sometimes Santana speaks in Spanish and she like talks about her abuela and stuff but then it is probably these two [Unique and Mercedes Jones] like they talk about being like strong Black women a lot and they are pretty sassy." Kylie did not explicitly state the ethnicity of any character, instead she described the characters' enactments of their ethnicity. She did not position Mercedes as someone who was a strong, Black woman. Instead she positioned the character as someone who talks about her ethnicity.

Other participants used multiple discourses to answer this question. During Charlie and Nicole's pair interview, Charlie described Mercedes and Santana by talking about the characters both Being and Enacting their ethnicities.

INTERVIEWER: Okay, what do you think about the way they show different ethnicities?

CHARLIE: I mean not as much. I mean like Santana she is very proud of her Latino. Latino Heritage and then Mercedes is...

NICOLE: She is very Black.

CHARLIE: ...very Black yeah.

INTERVIEWER: So what do you mean by that?

NICOLE: I don't know she acts Black. I don't know how to...

CHARLIE: Like at first and then, like at first she was disrespectful. She had like an attitude but then she kind of checked herself and that kind of thing.

Charlie and Nicole, who were 15 and 16 years old, both identified as female, straight, African American high school students. When describing Santana, Charlie said that Santana was “proud of her heritage.” In this way, Charlie described Santana’s ethnicity without directly labeling Santana as someone who is Latina. Instead, Santana is someone who is proud of who she is. While Charlie and Nicole described Mercedes as Being Black, they both also attempt to describe how Mercedes is Enacting Blackness.

Charlie and Nicole, who both identified as African American, described Mercedes as being “very Black.” They both agreed with this description, and described the actions that Mercedes took to make herself “very Black” as “acting Black” as well as being disrespectful and having an attitude. Although the linguistic construction of being “very Black” fits within the discourse of Being an Ethnicity, the “very” indicates a degree of adherence and could mean that they are describing not just her Being an Ethnicity but Enacting an Ethnicity.

Later in the same interview, Nicole described Alex Newell, the actor who portrayed Wade “Unique” Adams, a transgender, African American character, saying, “Alex tries to be Black but it doesn’t really work. I mean I guess it does, but he tries to be like a sassy Black woman.” In this description, gender and ethnicity are joined together. While Nicole (grudgingly) accepted that Alex’s enactment of Blackness is “working,” she did not accept Alex as a “sassy Black woman.” In this construct, gender and ethnicity are joined together with a particular attitude (sassiness), and in her estimation, Alex is not successful in his enactment of this combined construct. It is interesting to note that Nicole is using the actor’s name and not the character’s name in her description. This could

indicate her use of the Character as Construct discourse, or could indicate confusion over the name of the character and the name of the actor.

America's description of the end of the romantic relationship between Tina Cohen-Chang and Mike Chang, both Asian American students, brings up similar questions about the enactment of ethnicity. She questioned a storyline by saying, "I don't like how they said Mike broke up with her because she wasn't Asian enough. I was like, 'What?!' And, I don't know." It is clear that she was confused by the judgment that Mike's character places on Tina's character; Mike's statement about Tina does not make sense through the lens of the Being an Ethnicity discourse. Within that discourse, individuals are positioned as either Being Asian or Not Being Asian. But, within the discourse of Enacting Ethnicity, individuals can be positioned as taking on a particular enactment of their ethnicity, or perhaps here, enacting a particular cultural identity. An enactment of ethnicity and cultural identity can be more or less traditional and involve various activities that are judged to be more or less in line with Asian culture. Within her statement, America also separates herself from this exchange between Mike and Tina by positioning the characters as creations. It is "they" who made Mike say this incomprehensible thing to Tina, so it can be put aside as a decision of the producers and not an interaction occurring in life.

Table 5. Modified Foucauldian Discourse Analysis Chart: Race and Ethnicity

(1) Discursive Construction: Race and Ethnicity

(A) Speech	(2) Discourses	(4) Positionings	(5) Actions Made Possible in the World
"Quinn is a	Being a Race	People who are	A person can be labeled by his or

<p>very prissy kind of White girl.” “She’s one of the only Black people on the show”</p>	<p>or Ethnicity Being Black</p>	<p>Black, Latino, Asian or White are certain kinds of people who can be labeled in certain ways.</p>	<p>her race or ethnicity, and that race is defining. People can describe each other based on their race or ethnicity. Certain labels for race and ethnicity signify different things. For instance, labels supplied by the government hold different meanings and make different things possible than familiar labels used within an in-group. Similarly, people within an out-group can use labels of race and ethnicity that are separating and hurtful in ways that people within an in-group cannot. People can position themselves and the show’s characters by their choice of vocabulary and their choice of whether or not to label a character’s race or ethnicity.</p>
<p>She has “dark skin” “That’s a difference in skin tones.”</p>	<p>Having Characteristics of a Race or Ethnic Group</p>	<p>A person might have characteristics often identified with one ethnic or racial group.</p>	<p>An ethnicity or a race is something that a person has, not who or what they are. Within this discourse, a description of physical characteristics can be used in place of an ethnic or racial label. While youth in this study did not use the descriptions of race or ethnicity as frequently they included descriptions of skin color, hair texture, eye shape, and other features commonly associated with race and ethnicity.</p>
<p>She is “acting Black” She is “speaking Spanish”</p>	<p>Enacting a Race or Ethnicity Enacting Blackness</p>	<p>The person described is someone whose actions are different from people who are enacting a different ethnicity or race.</p>	<p>With this discourse and positioning, certain actions are expected of individuals based on their ethnic and racial affiliation. In this construction, the speakers do not directly label the characters by their ethnicity, but talk about the actions related to that ethnicity. Within this discourse people are</p>

			able to speak about more and less “stereotypical” vs. “appropriate” enactments. In this construction, one may try and fail to enact an ethnicity that they were born into or the ethnicity of another group.
--	--	--	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Case Study: Descriptions of Santana’s Sexuality through the lens of Discourses of Difference

The complex ways that youth were using these discourses and positionings were apparent when youth described Santana Lopez’s story arc on *Glee*.

In the first season of the show, Santana is a cheerleader who sleeps with a number of football players and other male characters. At the same time, she shares kisses with her best friend Brittany S. Pierce, another cheerleader. They spend most of their time together and link pinkies when they are walking **in** the hallways. As the show goes on, Santana realizes that she is in love with Brittany, and only wants to be with women while Brittany dates both men and women. Santana is outed at school by another student, and comes out to her grandmother (*abuela*), who disowns her. After this point Santana only has romantic and sexual feelings for and relationships with other female characters. The ways that youth describe this transition rely heavily on the discourses that they are using to talk about sexuality. In the sections that follow I will describe three viewpoints that youth put forward regarding Santana’s sexuality and the relationship that these views have with youth use of



discourses of sexuality. Youth in this study described Santana as 1) being a lesbian that has changed her enactment of her sexuality, 2) changing from a straight or questioning character to a lesbian character or 3) having an enactment of sexuality that is confusing or unrealistic.

1) She was always a lesbian, she has just changed her enactment

When some youth described Santana's character, they described her as changing the enactment of her sexuality. It is not her sexuality itself that changes, just her actions. Multiple youth described her as a "closeted lesbian" or as someone who had a secret or something that she needed to accept within herself, but definitely, something that was always there.

When Heidi who identified as a 16-year-old, questioning, able, multiracial female, described Santana, she said, "She was, at first, a closeted lesbian, and then she came out. She's typically described as very mean." Within this description are the discourses of both Being and Enacting Difference. Even before Santana said anything to anyone about her sexuality, she was a lesbian, and she was in the closet. What has changed is her enactment, by coming out of the closet, or openly revealing her sexuality to others. Within this discourse, Heidi positioned Santana as not changing who she is, but what she does.

Many participants also described Santana as mean. Here, Heidi does not position Santana as mean necessarily, but as someone who is positioned as being mean. Jazmine, who identified as a 14-year-old, able, straight, Hispanic female, also referenced Santana's meanness in her talk, and she explained this behavior by linking it to Santana's enactment of her sexuality. Jazmine states:

Santana, at the beginning of the show, she's a cheerleader, and she's really, she's kind of mean to a lot of people 'cause she has a secret. And later in the like third or second season, it, she turns out to be a lesbian. That makes her find herself a little more, because she joined glee club.

Jazmine's description explicitly links Santana's mean behavior to her hiding her sexuality. She described being a lesbian as a "secret" that Santana is hiding. She also implied that Santana was able to "find herself a little more" because she joined the glee club. She may be positioning the club as a safe space for identity exploration. Throughout Jazmine's description, she was using the discourse of Character as Creation. She referenced the show and the seasons. I would also argue that "she turns out to be a lesbian" is a turn of phrase often used to describe when something surprising is revealed about a television character.

Carolina and Sofia, who both identified as straight, able, 16-year-old, Hispanic females described Santana as being afraid to tell her grandmother about her sexuality.

SOPHIA: She was like really... She was scared. Santana was scared to tell her because she like might have already known what her reaction was going to be and like her reaction was like a bad one. She like kicked her out of the house. And she didn't like want to accept the fact that she was a lesbian.

INTERVIEWER: Mm-hm.

CAROLINA: Or to her friends either. Or to herself.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah. She was reluctant?

CAROLINA: Mm-hm.

Sophia described Santana being a lesbian as a fact, and uses the discourse of Being Different. Carolina adds that Santana didn't want to admit this to her friends "or to herself." In this conception, Santana has been a lesbian, but has not been willing to accept it or to enact it publicly before now.

Tyler, who identified as a 14-year-old, pansexual, Caucasian female with social anxiety also began her description of Santana by referencing the fact that Santana is a lesbian and that before that she was a closeted lesbian. Tyler is using the discourse of Being LGBT, and it is clear from her talk that Santana was a lesbian even before she told anyone that she was a lesbian.

TYLER: Um, she's a lesbian. She was closeted for a long time in the cheerleader – part of the cheerleaders. She was pretty much in love with her best friend. Had a short on and off relationship with that person, Brittany. Then, she came out of the closet right before the end of her senior year.

INTERVIEWER: Um-hmm.

TYLER: And went to college. Got butcher.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. How so?

TYLER: Um, just the way that she dressed and the way she talked. I feel like because she's – I felt like it was kind of perpetuating the stereotype of, like, the "you're a lesbian now." You have to be dressed tougher and –

Tyler went on to describe Santana's enactment of her sexuality. She described the actions of being in love with and having a relationship with another female character as well as coming out of the closet. She then went on to describe the way that Santana's character changed after coming out of the closet. She described how Santana "got

butcher" and elaborates that this change is reflected in the way that Santana dressed and talked. Tyler complained that this was a stereotypical choice on the part of either the character or the show. She seems here to be pushing back on the stereotypical enactment of sexuality.

Her phrase "you're a lesbian now" is in opposition to the discourse of sexuality that she is using, that of a change in Enactment and not Being. With this phrase she could be pushing back on the idea that someone can "become" a lesbian. In this way of speaking or thinking, when you come out, you become a lesbian. This conception is in direct opposition to Tyler's own discourse. In her description of the character, Santana's enactment of her sexuality has evolved, but her sexuality has always been there. It has not arrived with her decision to enact her sexuality openly. The descriptions of Santana's sexuality that follow from other youth may be what Tyler is pushing back on.

2) Santana was straight or questioning or bi, and now she is a lesbian

Another way that youth described Santana's sexuality is by stating that her sexuality has changed; specifically, that she has changed from the kind of person who was straight or questioning or bisexual into someone who is now a lesbian. In this set of descriptions, the youth used the discourse of Being Gay (or Being a Lesbian) and most often described a change from Being one sexuality to Being another, as opposed to the first group's descriptions, which describe a static state of being a sexuality with a change in enactment.

Beth, who identified as a 17-year-old, White, able female said of the character, "Santana, at the beginning of the show, just likes to have sex with anyone really. She's just omnisexual, whatever that is. She ends up being a homosexual with her best friend,

Brittany." In Beth's description, Santana is omnisexual and then she is a homosexual. She was one thing and then the other, so it is not her enactment that has changed, but what she is. By positioning Santana as being one thing and then another, she also positions sexuality as something that can change over time.

Later, Beth describes the evolution of Santana and Brittany's relationship:

Then Santana and Brittany - they were always really close friends and they talked about their lady kisses that they would have when they were still technically straight. They both just really had a lot of sex with everyone then realized... I think Brittany is probably bisexual because she dates both guys and girls. Santana just kind of realized in one season that part of why she was so conflicted all the time was because she was in love with Brittany. So they, yeah, became lesbian. Or I guess they already were or she was.

Beth describes Brittany and Santana as "technically straight" at the beginning of the show. Even though the enactment of their sexuality involves "lady kisses," their enactment also involves having sex with men. Beth takes great care to get the labels right, labeling Brittany now as a bisexual and Santana as a lesbian. She vacillates between positioning Santana as someone who became a lesbian, and positioning Santana as someone who has always been a lesbian, despite her behaviors.

Another description of Santana described her as unsure of her sexuality when the show first started. America, who identified as a 17-year-old, Hispanic, straight, able female stated, "And they showed the questioning. Because Santana wasn't sure at first and she was like being all like with every guy she could and trying to be defensive about

it." In this description, America does not label Santana but describes her enactment of her sexuality. Her actions include questioning her sexuality and sleeping with men.

Warren, who identified as a 16-year-old, White, homosexual male described Santana's change similarly:

I like how Santana seemed like she was straight or maybe bi at first and she came out later and she was like "I'm pretty sure that I'm a lesbian" type of thing, and then Brittany is obviously bi, but Santana was you know she was like sleeping with every guy she can get type of thing, and then she was having like you know I don't even know what it was with Brittany on the side but then eventually she developed those feelings and she just admitted it to herself and then admitted it to everybody else I thought that's really powerful and that's how it happens usually like you don't know it at first and you think you might be normal and then you're like "well no, not really" but I really like that she again evolved in her character that way.

He labeled Santana as Being LGBT and then talks about her evolution and questioning.

At the same time, he talked about Santana "admitting it to herself," implying that Santana was a lesbian before she was ready to acknowledge it.

Each of these descriptions of Santana has her starting out as one thing and changing to another. It is not only her behavior that is changing, but also the term that can be used to define her. Her labels change on the basis of her actions, and are not a static part of her.

3) She was having sex with male characters, so this change makes no sense

For a smaller group of participants, Santana's storyline did not make sense as a change that a person would go through or something that a person would do. Kylie, who identified as a 16-year-old, White, straight, able female described Santana's change by saying,

At first I didn't really see Santana coming because in the first seasons, she was like really into dating all the boys and like doing a bunch of stuff with them and then in one episode, she and Quinn hooked up which was really weird, yeah.

In Kylie's description of Santana, the fact that she was dating male characters and in physical relationships with male characters made her transition to doing these things with female characters "really weird." Kylie chose not to use any labels to describe Santana, never referencing the discourse of Being LGBT. Instead, she focused on Santana's actions, which are non-normative. It may be coincidental that Kylie is only using actions to describe Santana's sexuality, or it may be that Kylie is unsure of how to label Santana, and so chooses not to. At the same time, Kylie is using some language of television production, referencing the discourse of Character as Creation. While she was talking about Santana as though she were a person, she also referenced the facts that these changes happened during certain seasons and episodes, positioning Santana as a character under the control of producers who may be responsible for these "weird" choices.

Joseph, who identified as a 17-year-old, White, straight, able male was more explicit in his description of Santana's character arc.

JOSEPH: I think sometimes *Glee* does what their fans want them to do, and I think they wanted a lesbian on the show. I think they looked at everyone and went, who would be a good lesbian?

INTERVIEWER: Santana.

JOSEPH: Santana. And these two are best friends, so it would be obvious just to make them – but the thing is Santana has had sex with half the men in the cast, so it's really just kind of silly. I was watching, like, are you serious? This is kind of ridiculous, in a way, because you build this character up to be this kind of slutty person, and then you just completely twist and make her gay, but like I said, it's the world of *Glee*, so they can do that.

While in other parts of his interview Joseph talked about characters using the discourse of Character as Person, here he relies heavily on the discourse of Character as Creation in his meaning-making of Santana's character change. Joseph does not accept that a "slutty person" who has sex with multiple men could then become gay or a lesbian. Because he is not able to make sense of this transformation within his understanding of the world, he makes sense of it as a decision that the show's creators have made, and an unrealistic one at that.

In Joseph's description, he is using the discourses of Being Straight or Being Gay, and he goes a step beyond talking about these labels as something that you are. He also makes it clear that he does not view these labels as fluid, and if you enact one sexuality through your behavior, it is confusing to then enact a different sexuality.

Joseph's discourse highlights one of the limitations of the ability of a show with diverse characters to affect audience change. An audience member can label a storyline as unrealistic and dismiss it as representing something that doesn't happen in the "real world."

Discussion

Youth used the discourses of Being Different, Having Difference and Enacting Difference to talk about diverse characters. These discourses can be found in youth talk about ethnicity, sexuality, gender, and ability. They can also be found in youth talk about a variety of other characteristics that could either be used to label youth or simply to describe what they do (i.e., smart, cool, attractive, athletic). While the discourses of Being Different and Enacting Difference worked equally well for ability, sexuality, and ethnicity, the discourse of Having Difference was most aligned to youth talk about ability. When I expand the discourse of Having Difference to include Having the Characteristics of Difference, the discourse is more useful across all the constructs of difference, but still not as prevalent as the discourses of Being and Enacting.

These discourses of difference provide an important framework for analyzing youth speech, and each of these three discourses makes something different possible for youth in the world. For example, describing sexuality using the discourse of Being a Sexuality implies permanence and a static nature to the construct. Alternatively, describing sexuality as something that someone does instead of something that they are may imply more fluidity and allow for more exploration without labels. The ways in which we construct the concept of sexuality allows for more and less freedom. Similarly, constructing disability as something that you are and not as a group of behaviors has real consequences in the world, in terms of individual treatment, institutional rights, and medical benefits. Within the construct of ethnicity, labeling certain behaviors as White and others as Black can be used by peers to police behaviors that they deem to be outside of the enactment of their ethnicity. For example, Ogbu (2004) describes the ways in which the associations of success in school and “acting White” affect the self-concept

and performance in school of African American students. The ways that we talk about things have real consequences in the world, and the discourses introduced in this chapter provide another lens through which to look at youth talk.

Chapter 7: Identifying with Characters: Participants' Parasocial Relationships with Characters and why they are Important

In this chapter I look at the ways that youth talked about their relationships and identifications with the characters on *Glee* through the frame of discourses and positioning. In several instances, youth spoke about relating to or identifying with a character because they shared similar characteristics. This might be because both the youth and the character are “gay men” or “bossy ladies” or “bullies.” Youth reported seeing themselves in certain characters, and in seeing themselves reflected in these characters they said something about themselves, about the characters, and were able to make things possible for themselves in the world.

I utilizes the discourses of character (Character as Creation and Character as Person) developed in Chapter 5 along with the discourses of difference developed in Chapter 6 (Being Different, Having Difference, and Enacting Difference) in this chapter to examine when and how youth reported identifying with characters from the television show *Glee*. I build on the analysis of the previous chapters, and seek to answer the research question: What do these ways of talking about characters and difference make possible for youth?

Parasocial relationship theory hypothesizes that individuals will relate more to characters in their same circumstances and groups (Hoffner & Buchanan, 2005). This chapter explores examples where youth identified with characters that they felt were in similar circumstances and groups to themselves, and where they rejected identification with these characters. This chapter adds to the research around parasocial relationship

theory by exploring the language that youth use when identifying with or not identifying with particular characters.

In addition, this chapter explores what these relationships might make possible for youth, especially for youth who are able to identify with someone in the same out-group or minority group as themselves.

Identifying with others in your group: Gay Men Identifying with Kurt and Blaine

Three participants who identified as gay males described how they identified with a character on the show who shared this characteristic with them. This was not true for any other ethnic, ability, or religious group. It was also not true for any other branch of the LGBTQ community. All three of these participants were interviewed at Youth Pride.

When Deion, who identified as a 15-year-old, able, gay male, was asked to tell me about a character, he chose Kurt. Deion described Kurt by saying, “He’s awesome. He’s gay and I can actually relate to him in so many ways because he’s just one of the gay community, I guess you could say.” The first thing that Deion said about Kurt was that he is gay. This is the only description he gives of Kurt, thereby positioning Kurt in terms of his sexuality. He uses the discourse of Being Gay, labeling Kurt’s sexuality in a static way. Deion states that he can “actually” relate to Kurt, implying that this is not a common experience. In his speech, Deion is using the discourse of Character as Person, positioning the character as an equal member, or “just one [of many]” in the gay community, and as a part of the same in-group. Deion reports relating to this character because they are in the same group, determined by their sexuality.

Ely, who identified as a 19-year-old, Black, gay male responded similarly when asked to describe a character. He, too, chose Kurt:

Okay. Kurt. I liked his character most because we have a common ground, because we both are gay men. So I understand a lot of the things that have to do with his story, because it was more personal, because I had a deeper connection. Also, I like his character, in general. His style, the way he talks, who he hangs out with, the song selection he sings.

While Ely is using some language of Character as Creation (character, story), at the same time he uses the language of Character as Person, allowing that he and Kurt are both “gay men.”

Ely described several aspects of the character of Kurt. He talked about his singing voice and his sense of style, but first and foremost he talked about his sexuality. He positioned Kurt along with himself as a gay man using the discourse of Being Gay. He stated that he has a deeper understanding of what Kurt is going through because of his experiences, positioning non-LGBTQ individuals as not being able to fully relate.

In Ely’s talk, he and Kurt are in a group together, and everyone else is in an out-group. In this case, Ely is able to place himself in the same in-group as the star of a popular television show. While the character of Kurt struggles to find himself and is often bullied, he is also strong and self-assured. On another level, Kurt is one of the stars of *Glee*, a popular show, and being able to identify with a star of a television show because he is also a gay male in high school is not a common experience for many LGBTQ youth.

Warren also described relating to a gay male character, but he did not relate to Kurt. Instead, he saw Blaine as a character that he could connect with.

WARREN: It’s like okay, well, being a gay high schooler, Blaine was like I felt like I could connect to Kurt but not as much as I could connect to Blaine, because

Blaine was more of the gay male character that I could connect to in that sense, and I felt like he exemplified something that I would want to be like. He was confident in himself and he wasn't like, he was also really a good singer, and I really just like the way that Blaine just carries himself basically like he is not a super conflicted character. Like he is not mean. He is not the soft-centered he is very like, he is one of the more I feel like free of the people all the group right somebody that you can relate to, somebody that has real emotions and then you know just like the struggle that he goes through in his back story type of thing, where he gets bullied at that prom or homecoming, where he gets bullied at that, and I think that was really an impactful type of thing, like he is so optimistic and caring type of thing, and then the whole thing with Kurt and then they broke up, and he was so sad but I was very sad for them and I was like move on .

When watching *Glee*, Warren had a choice of gay male characters to identify with. While he did not see himself in Kurt, he did see himself in Blaine. Providing multiple LGBTQ characters allowed these LGBTQ youth to find someone who they saw as like them.

Participants across interviews describe Blaine as a masculine character. While Kurt is often criticized for being effeminate, or "too gay," Blaine is described as "being more straight" by participants. Blaine is stylish and attractive, and participants in this study warmly receive his enactment of gayness as being less stereotypically gay. It is not surprising then that a portion of LGBTQ youth would see themselves more in Blaine than in Kurt. Warren speaks about finding Blaine to be more relatable to his lived experience. Warren also finds Blaine to be aspirational, the kind of man that he would like to be.

At the same time, Ely and Deion described relating to the character of Kurt. With multiple gay, male characters, youth are able to choose one or more enactments to identify with.

In an interview during Season 1, when Kurt was the only gay male character on the show, Ryan Murphy, the show's creator, talked about his intention to have a variety of LGBTQ characters for youth to identify with²³. Murphy, who himself is openly gay, expressed his own identification with Kurt and his childhood, as well as a recognition that the gay experience is not monolithic. These decisions have led to multiple LGBTQ characters over the course of the show, and characters that youth can identify with.

Identifying with a Strong Female Lead: Girls Identifying with Rachel Berry's Bossiness

While not everyone is a fan of Rachel Berry's character, several female youth reported identifying with her. Rachel, played by Lea Michele, has two main goals in Season 1, to be a star and to date the quarterback, Finn Hudson. She has "two gay dads," one Black (LeRoy Berry, played by Brian Stokes Mitchell) and one Jewish (Hiram Berry, played by Jeff Goldblum).

While Rachel is Jewish, and has parents that are LGBT, her main difference from her peers is her behavior. Rachel is tremendously talented and quite intense. She stops at nothing to get what she wants, and in the pilot episode she orchestrates the firing of the former glee coach, ostensibly for being inappropriate with a student, but in reality, for not giving her the solo that she wanted. Rachel is bullied on the show, both with verbal and

²³ YouTube interview with Murphy retrieved, 2/13/14
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=35mBnR8yRIU&noredirect=1>

online abuse, and with slushies in the face, a favorite *Glee* device to demonstrate physical bullying. Several youth identified Rachel as a possible target of bullying in real life, not because of her religion/ethnicity or her LGBT parents, but because of her behaviors.

Multiple female youth in this study described relating to Rachel and her personality, which was often viewed negatively by other viewers and by other characters on the show. Carolina had this to say:

INTERVIEWER: And who do you really like?

CAROLINA: I really like Rachel.

INTERVIEWER: Mm-hm.

CAROLINA: Because I could identify with her the best and I just love her personality and I just love her because... I mean she is bossy and everything, but like she's herself, you know.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CAROLINA: And then even though people tell her "Oh you're so bossy," she's herself and she knows that she needs to work on some things, but...

INTERVIEWER: She knows she needs to work on some things.

CAROLINA: She knows.

INTERVIEWER: She knows.

CAROLINA: But she can't help it, which that's me too, so that's why I like her.

Carolina describes Rachel not as Enacting Bossiness, but as Being Bossy. She reports identifying with Rachel and seeing herself in the character because of something that Rachel is, not anything that she does. She sees Rachel's bossiness as something that is a part of Rachel that cannot be changed. In Carolina's description, Rachel "can't help it,"

and while she may know she “needs to change” her behaviors, she cannot change who she is, a bossy female individual. By identifying Rachel’s bossiness as a part of her makeup, Carolina is able to see her own bossiness the same way. And because Carolina is able to accept Rachel’s bossiness as something that Rachel is and not something that she does, Carolina is able to do that for herself as well.

Additionally, Carolina is able to identify with a character who is bossy and successful. Carolina talks about Rachel, using the discourse of Character as Person, and even projects feelings that she has about her own bossiness onto Rachel. Bossiness is a characteristic that is often considered to be a negative characteristic, especially for a female character or person. But in Rachel’s case, it is Rachel’s bossiness and intensity that leads directly to her success. Rachel is a confident, beautiful woman who ends up making her dreams come true.

Even if Rachel is not always successful within the show’s storylines, on another layer, Rachel is the romantic female lead for a popular television show. By identifying with this positive representation of a characteristic (bossiness) that is often considered to be negative in mainstream society, Carolina is able to see herself in a new light. By identifying with Rachel in this way, Carolina is able to value her bossiness and readily admit to it.

And Carolina was not the only participant to identify with Rachel’s character for her bossiness. When asked if she particularly identified with any of the characters, Sophia, too, identified with Rachel. She stated that she identified with her, “Not because I can sing really good, but because like I’m bossy and I like things my way, so I loved her. I was like you’re... basically me in the TV.” This statement makes the power of

identification clear. Sophia saw herself in Rachel, and loved her for it. Again, Sophia identifies with Rachel for Being Bossy, not for any particular actions. She sees herself as Being Bossy, and strongly identifies with this television character that shares the same characteristics.

Other youth, such as Audrey, acknowledged Rachel's shortcomings while at the same time discussing what they admired about her. When asked who her favorite character was, Audrey identified Rachel.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. What do you like about Rachel?

AUDREY: She is driven. She's not afraid of conflict. She is super talented and she has her... she knows what her goals are and nothing is going to get in the way of her getting there. She's a little bit... She can be sometimes backstabby, but I... I... I just like her and I think that she um... sometimes she annoys me and I'm like, "Why would you ever do that?" Or "Why would you ever think that?" But she's... like I said, she's... she's very goal-driven. She's very smart. Um... she's cunning.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

AUDREY: Yeah. She's ambitious.

INTERVIEWER: So you like her ambition?

AUDREY: Mm-hm.

INTERVIEWER: Do you feel like you identify with that?

AUDREY: I don't know if I identify it or if I want to identify with it. If that makes sense.

Here, Audrey sees Rachel as more aspirational. When she talks about Rachel's character, she described liking things that the character is while not always liking the things that the character does. For instance, she described Rachel as Being "Goal-Driven," "Smart," and "Ambitious." At the same time, she saw the character as "cunning" and "backstabby." She saw the negative characteristics in Rachel, and was not annoyed by these characteristics as much as by what the character does. Balancing the negative with the positive, Rachel is still Audrey's favorite character.

It is clear from Audrey's speech that she is using the discourse of Character as Person, as she speaks directly to Rachel, addressing what she sees as Rachel's poor decisions. When she talks about Rachel she does not say, "Why would *she* ever do that?" but, "Why would *you* ever do that?" She is speaking directly to the character, showing a high level of parasocial relationship as well as her self-described aspirational view of Rachel. Audrey may not see herself as all of the things that Rachel is, but she reports wanting to be more like this smart, ambitious, and cunning character. By positioning Rachel as a positive role model and positioning Rachel's behavior as desirable, Audrey is able to imagine herself as a more aggressive version of herself, more willing to strive for what she wants. With each of these examples, the participants who identified with Rachel identified with a characteristic of the character, not with the character's enactment of that characteristic. These female participants identify with Rachel for Being Bossy, or Being Ambitious, and see or would like to see themselves in this same way.

Identifying Across Sex: Identifying with Rachel and Finn

Occasionally, individuals will identify with characters across lines of difference. In this case, two genderqueer participants identified with characters who were of a different sex, but the same gender.

Caden is phenotypically female and identified as transgender male. Caden described identifying with Finn Hudson, the star quarterback at fictional McKinley High, glee club star performer, and romantic lead of the show *Glee*. When asked why, Caden responded:

INTERVIEWER: So Finn, you identify with him?

CADEN: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Ok.

CADEN: Macho football player goes and follows his dream of something not so macho.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

CADEN: I've been dancing since I was five. And like, now I choreograph my own team and everything so that's something that's definitely not as masculine as my typical day-to-day life. So I feel like it's kind of, like, relating.

INTERVIEWER: Ok. So then he can be masculine but do these things that aren't considered masculine. That's really cool.

CADEN: I feel like gender norms should probably fly out the window from like, a high-speed car, and just like crash and burn.

For Caden, who is enacting male gender, Finn was a reminder that male gender is not monolithic. If a football player can sing with the glee club and still be a man, then Caden can choreograph a dance team and still be a man. Positioning himself alongside Finn

made it possible for Caden to enact the male gender without throwing aside an activity that he enjoyed and excelled at just because it might be deemed feminine.

Similarly, Karl, a 15-year-old, Ashkenazi Jewish, pansexual youth who identified as female described wanting to be like Rachel.

KARL: See I always liked Rachel, because Rachel is exactly who I want to be.

INTERVIEWER: Really?

KARL: Yeah.

KARL: Yeah, just because she is pretty and she is smart. And at times she can be nice, but she is pretty and smart and awesome.

When Karl described Rachel, she used the discourses of Character as Person and Being Different. Karl described Rachel as though she were a person throughout her interview. By saying that she “is” pretty and smart, she is referencing ways that she is *being*. For Karl, who identifies as female, Rachel is an aspirational character.

Later in the interview, Karl again references identifying with Rachel. In this case, I was asking which characters Karl thought would be bullied if they attended area high schools. Rachel was one of the characters that Karl identified, and I asked why each character would be bullied. Karl responded that Rachel would be bullied "because she is proud of who she is and she's not afraid to tell you, like me. And I'm referring to being Jewish, because that's apparently still a thing."

Karl, who identified as Ashkenazi Jewish at the end of the interview, references Jewish characters (particularly Noah “Puck” Puckerman and Rachel) throughout the interview. In this instance, Karl is identifying with Rachel not as a male or a female, but

as a fellow member of the Jewish ethnicity.²⁴ Karl positioned Rachel as a proud and brave member of the Jewish community and identified with the pride that she displayed in herself and her ethnicity and her openness in expressing who she is.

According to a local Jewish community website, the city that Karl lived in has less than 20,000 of the million plus residents identifying as Jewish. The parasocial contact hypothesis argues that because of this, youth in the dominant culture are missing the opportunity to interact with Jewish youth. But just as importantly, Karl may be missing a similar opportunity. And while there are many Jewish actors on television, it is rare in prime-time television that the female lead on a teen drama is openly Jewish and wearing a Star of David in the pilot episode. On *Glee*, not only can Karl see two teenagers (Rachel and Puck) with her faith and ethnicity, she can also see in Rachel an enactment similar to her own. In this case, Karl not only identifies with Rachel for Being Different but also because of her Enactment of Difference.

Not Identifying with those in your Group: Youth with OCD not identifying with Emma Pillsbury

When asked if they had a disability, three youth in the study identified as having obsessive-compulsive disorder or an anxiety disorder. CJ, a 14-year-old freshman at Rennier High School who identified as a gay, American or Asian male with asthma, anxiety, ADHD, and depression. Tyler, a 14-year-old rising 10th grader that I interviewed at Youth Pride, identified as a Caucasian, pansexual female with social anxiety and mild

²⁴ I am identifying Karl as Jewish by ethnicity and not faith because during the interview he described himself as an atheist.

OCD. And Heidi, a 16-year-old 11th grader at Molly Ivins High School identified as a questioning, multiracial female with ADD and OCD.

While researchers studying parasocial relationship theory (Hoffner & Buchanan, 2005) argue that youth identify with characters that are most like them, these youth did not identify with the portrayal of Emma Pillsbury, the one character on *Glee* with OCD. In fact, two of the youth in this group felt that the existence of this character was detrimental to their lived experience. They either had been negatively compared to the character or feared that their peers would base their understanding of OCD on the character's representation of the disorder.

Tyler

When asked if she had a disability at the end of the interview, Tyler replied, "I have been diagnosed with mild OCD, but it does not disable me." Tyler also described having nervous tics, which she overcame. Tyler's response here is telling, in choosing the way that she described her "disability." Tyler purposefully used the discourse of Having Difference, stating that she has been diagnosed with OCD. She did not say that she is OCD or that she has OCD, but that she has a diagnosis of OCD. She went on to say that this does not disable her. She has been given a diagnosis, but her enactment of this diagnosis is not disabling.

Tyler chose Emma Pillsbury as one of the three characters that she described at the beginning of the interview. She says about her:

She is the school counselor. She has, um, very extreme obsessive-compulsive disorder. Always cleaning stuff. She's a very meek and mild person. Marries – almost marries – Will Schuester, the glee club teacher. She – what about her? She

has a sexual side that she reveals during the show, and so she has a few surprises up her sleeve.

In her description of Emma, Tyler also used the discourses of Having and Enacting Difference, but used these discourses to position Emma in a very different way than she positioned herself. While Tyler positions herself as having a diagnosis of a disorder, she positions Emma as having that disorder. With this distinction, she positions herself as being told that she has something, not as necessarily having that thing. She also makes it clear that she has a mild form of the disorder while Emma's case is "very extreme." While Tyler's enactment of the disorder is not to be disabled by it, Emma's enactment is to be "always cleaning stuff."

This is all that Tyler says about Emma. When asked who her favorite characters were, she identified Kurt and Puck, but never reported feeling similar to any character. While she does not specifically state that she does not identify with Emma's character, she clearly positions herself and her OCD as far different from what Emma is experiencing.

CJ

CJ, who identified as having an anxiety disorder, described how others used the actions of Emma Pillsbury to extrapolate from the show into real life. He talked about Emma's actions on the show, and the sense that fellow "Gleeks"²⁵ were making of those actions. CJ explained,

Yes. She's more harm than good. She brings our status down as people, 'cause I, the last time I talked to like a true Gleek, and I mentioned I had like anxiety, they

were like, so are you like Emma? Do you go absolutely crazy? And I'm like, no. And they were like, so what do you do then?

In this exchange, the Gleeks were focusing in on the actions of Emma. They didn't ask CJ what his condition was like, or how it affected him, they asked him what he *does*. In this case, they were defining the condition by the actions associated with it. This is an example of the way that the discourses that viewers use can serve to position the characters on the show, and also those people around them that they see as similar to characters on the show.

While CJ did not identify with Emma, his statement does show that he identified with others with OCD. He described how Emma's representation "brings down our status," not identifying only personally with the portrayal, but as part of a group. By using the group pronoun "our," CJ troubled the effect of Emma's representation of OCD and anxiety not just on himself, but also on anyone with these disorders.

Heidi

Heidi's first reference to OCD was at the very beginning of her interview, when I asked about her viewing practices for the show. She told me that she watched a few episodes out of order with a friend. I asked if she had ever gone back to watch the first season. She replied, "I did. I watched it in order, because I'm OCD." I could not be sure at this point if she was identifying as having OCD or using the phrase with less imbued meaning. Many people position themselves as "being OCD," using the phrase descriptively of themselves or of a behavior without actually having the psychological condition or believing that they have the condition. Heidi made other mentions of having

²⁵ A Gleek is a term used to refer to fans of the show *Glee*.

OCD during the interview, and throughout the interview she was sorting the character cards by size and shape and organizing them into straight lines. Whenever I moved a card, she would return it to its proper place.

For these reasons, when Heidi did not mention OCD when I asked about her disabilities, I brought up her earlier comments to verify how she was using the term. I also brought in my own experience with the condition to try to make her feel more comfortable sharing personal information (Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

INTERVIEWER: Okay. And do you consider yourself to have any disabilities?

HEIDI: ADD does count, but I don't take any medication for it. Yeah. I think I'm good.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. Do you consider yourself to have OCD? Because a lot of people say it.

HEIDI: Yeah. They say, oh, I'm so OCD.

INTERVIEWER: I have an anxiety disorder, and before I was diagnosed with OCD, I was like, oh, my god, I'm OCD. So I think it's something people say, but do you consider it to be an actual thing?

HEIDI: Yeah. I do, actually, because when I'm at home, I organize my pencils from length and color, so I think that's pretty OCD.

INTERVIEWER: I sorted a bag of skittles once.

HEIDI: I do that.

INTERVIEWER: A three-pound bag. It was the most satisfying thing.

HEIDI: It's a very great feeling. Just a feeling of satisfaction and it's organized. And then, I like eating it in rainbow order, specifically, and then backwards, too, so I feel complete. Yeah. I guess I could say I have OCD at some point.

INTERVIEWER: I'm like, I don't know what you're talking about. It's just wonderful. It's wonderful to sort things by color.

HEIDI: Yeah. But I do feel like I have better control over it than other people, because I really could just right now be organizing all of this, but I'm not, because I have control.

INTERVIEWER: It's funny, because some people organize it the whole time.

HEIDI: If you bring my attention to it, I will be organizing it, but not too much.

In this account, Heidi stresses her control over her OCD. In the Yale-Brown Obsessive Compulsive Scale (Goodman, Price, Rasmussen, Mazure, Fleischmann, Hill, & Charney, 1989), which is used to measure the severity of an individual's obsessions and compulsions, one of the factors measured is control. The character of Emma Pillsbury, especially in the first two seasons of *Glee*, is portrayed as having no control over her compulsions. She is constantly cleaning and organizing, and in her description of her own experience, Heidi makes it clear that while she derives great satisfaction from organization and sorting, she is in control of her behaviors.

When I asked Heidi if there were any characters that she did not like or that annoyed her, she identified Emma Pillsbury.

HEIDI: Oh yeah. I don't like –

INTERVIEWER: Emma?

HEIDI: Emma. Yeah. I don't like her at all. She's over-compulsive to the point that just makes me feel uncomfortable.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. You don't like watching her?

HEIDI: When she is organizing things, I just get really uptight.

While I did not realize this during the interview, I believe now that when Heidi said that Emma's compulsions made her "feel uncomfortable" and that she got "really uptight" when Emma was organizing, she was saying that she found Emma's behavior to be triggering. Later in the interview, I asked her what she thought about the way that they portrayed characters with disabilities.

HEIDI: Emma's OCD. That was a bit different, only because certain people have different levels of OCD. I could, right now, just be organizing these from fattest to skinniest. That's what she would probably do, but then there're people who are watered down a bit, so I think that one wasn't as –

INTERVIEWER: So do you think it's a problem that they're showing the highest level of OCD?

HEIDI: I think so, because it gives everyone the idea that everyone who has OCD has to have it perfect like her. Yeah.

Like CJ, Heidi is worried about the way that those without OCD will view Emma's portrayal. She is concerned with stereotyping, and would prefer people to understand that there are different levels of the condition. Again, she states that she could be enacting her OCD in a similar manner as Emma's. She could be organizing at that very moment. But even though she is compelled to organize, she chooses a different enactment. She does not speak about Emma's character with judgment, but she does worry that *Glee's*

audience will think that for those who have this difference there is only one way to enact it.

Heidi mentions Emma once more during the interview. I was moving the character cards around as we were talking about specific characters, and I apologized for “messing up” her order. Heidi replied, “That’s okay. I don’t care. I’m not Emma.” This response more than anything shows how clearly Heidi did not wish to identify with Emma’s character. This is not who she is. She literally stated that she is not the character, implying that she is not the same as the character, and possibly implying that she is better than the character, or at a minimum, that her OCD is not at the same level as that of the character.

For each of these three youth, Emma was not a character with whom they identified. Possibly, this could be because she was the only character on the show with OCD. With other types of difference, youth had more than one possible character to identify with. While some gay male youth identified with Kurt, others identified with Blaine. With Emma’s extreme portrayal of OCD, youth who have the same condition are not identifying with her, and at times see her portrayal as detrimental to the understanding of OCD in the larger community. While they were positioning themselves within the discourses of Having OCD or Being OCD, which also apply to Emma, they were careful to position their enactment as dissimilar to the way that Emma enacts her disability. Emma’s character is also an adult and not a student, which could lead to less identification.

Discussion

By stating that they have an affinity with a particular character, youth position themselves in two ways. First, they are able to position themselves as having special understanding of a character. As another “gay man,” Ely is able to understand the character of Kurt and his experiences in a way that I, as a straight woman, cannot.

Secondly, this affinity positioning allows the speaker to affirm the qualities that they share with the character. In many cases, youth spoke about characteristics or traits that they shared with a character others might consider negative, but which they related to and saw as positive. The youth who identified with Rachel saw her as bossy and wanting to get her way, but also as successful and beautiful and happy. This allowed for these youth see their own bossiness in a more positive light. Similarly, a youth who had thought of himself as a bully was able to see in Puck a multidimensional character, who is at times a bully, but who also has positive characteristics and the possibility of changing his behavior. By identifying with Puck, the youth was able to see himself in a different light.

Being able to see characters reflecting one’s own traits, particularly those that society may view in a negative light, is especially important for LGBTQ youth. Multiple LGBTQ youth describe identifying with gay characters. In the same ways, genderqueer youth describe identifying with characters who share their transitioning gender but who also adopt non-normative gender expression. For instance, a female-to-male transgender youth describes identifying with Finn, a tough football player who can still have an artistic side. For that youth, Finn’s actions and his identification with that character meant that he could see a role model that did not need to completely conform to gender stereotypes or expectations in order to be a man.

These characters, no matter their difference, are the stars of the show. They have friends and love interests and positive life experiences. By relating to these portrayals, youth are able to affirm characteristics within themselves that are not always seen as positive in the larger society. Positioning themselves and these characters in the same categories and being able to see their similar traits in a positive light allows youth the space to accept themselves. There was tremendous power for these youth to be able to see themselves on television, and to see not just one character that was like them, but many.

Chapter 8: Discussion and Implications Discussion of the Findings

Youth interpretation of media is a complex landscape, and this study helps to shed light on some of the ways that youth are talking about media and about difference and what those ways of speaking might make possible in the world. By using a Foucauldian discourse analysis framework to look at youth talk about characters, I have been able to better describe the ways that discourses and positionings around difference and characters connect with each other in a meaningful way for the youth speaker. The discourses that I have identified in youth talk about character and youth talk about difference have been integral in examining what these conceptions makes possible in the world.

- 1) What discourses and positionings do youth use when talking about fictional characters?
- 2) What discourses and positionings do youth use when talking about difference in the context of a television program that presents diverse characters, specifically in the areas of (a) ability, (b) sexuality, and (c) ethnicity?
- 3) What do these ways of talking about characters and difference make possible for youth?

My aim in this chapter is to integrate the results of prior chapters. I will demonstrate how the three analytic chapters work together cohesively to answer my research questions and to provide insight on the ways that youth interact with television characters and the ways that they construct difference. I will then discuss the implications of these findings both for research and for media makers and those working with youth.

In this study, I have built a foundation from which to interrogate youth's relationships with diverse characters. By analyzing the ways that youth talk about and position characters and difference, I was able to build a grounded argument for describing when and why youth identify with diverse characters and what this identification makes possible in the world.

I argue that youth describe identifying with characters when they are talking about a character as though they are using the discourse of *Character as Person*. While talking about a character as a person does not absolutely prove that youth are thinking about a character as a person, it does imply this train of thought. Additionally, I argue that youth identify with the difference of a character when they talk about a character's difference as something that they are (*Being Different*), not something that they have or do. I also argue that the discourses of difference and character that I have identified are useful for future research into the ways that youth relate to the media and to each other. My analysis is supported by research in the fields of parasocial relationship theory and audience studies, and provides additional insight into the best ways to investigate this phenomenon through a constructivist lens.

Research Question 1: What discourses and positionings do youth use when talking about fictional characters?

Youth position characters as either a person or a creation of a production team. These two positionings lead to the discourses of Character as Person or Character as Creation. As with all discourses and positionings, youth move between these discourses in moment-to-moment interactions. It is possible to see in their speech that many youth

are able to see a character as a creation and talk about them as though they are a person at the same time.

Depending on the kind of positionings and discourses that youth are using, they have different actions available to them. For instance, if youth talk about a character as a creation of producers, then the actions available to them are the actions of media critic. They can critique the decisions of actors, directors, and writers, and show their knowledge about the television production process. Conceptualizing a character as a person creates other avenues of opportunity. If youth consider a character to be a person then they can see themselves in that character. They can notice similarities to a character, much in the same way they would see themselves as similar to a friend or acquaintance. Youth can talk about that character as though they are their friend or love interest. In these ways, youth may use characters to fill an emotional need, treating characters as surrogate friends or partners.

Youth frequently used the discourse of Character as Person when describing a character's sexuality, ethnicity, gender and ability. In this way, their language describing character traits and actions strongly resembled the language that they would use when talking about a friend or acquaintance. Because of this, I was able to use their character talk not just to describe the ways that this talk might be important for their talk about television but also how it might matter for their lived experiences. By conducting a positioning analysis within the Framework of Foucauldian Discourse Analysis I was able to describe what youth were able to accomplish with their talk about characters.

The discourse of Character as Person allows my analysis to bridge the gap between looking at the ways that youth talk about characters and their sexuality or

ethnicity or ability and looking at the ways that youth talk about people in the world and their sexuality or ethnicity or ability. Studies have shown that people view and judge characters in much the same way that they view and judge people (Cohen, 2003; Giles, 2012; Hoffner & Buchanan, 2005; Kanazawa, 2002; Perse & Rubin, 1989).

At the same time, the Character as Creation discourse can also act as a roadmap for the times when youth do not identify characters and behaviors as true to life. When they talk about the producers who make the decisions or the writers who create the storylines or the actors who bring a character to life, they are not talking about characters as reality, but as a carefully constructed, and often flawed, *representation* of reality.

These distinctions add a new layer to Parasocial Relationship Theory,²⁶ which argues that youth develop relationships with television characters in much the same way that they do with people in their lives (Banks & Bowman, 2014; Cohen, 2003; Giles, 2012; Hoffner & Buchanan, 2005; Horton & Wohl, 1956; Kanazawa, 2002; Theran & Newberg, 2010). Youth may identify with a character, but that does not mean that they *always* relate to a character, or that they always consider a character to be their friend. Most youth move between these discourses, recognizing on some level that this is a character, even as they talk about that character as they would a friend or acquaintance. Youth don't *only* see a character as a creation or a person just as they don't *only* identify with or not identify with a character. Youth in this study moved smoothly between talking about characters as though they were creations and talking about characters as though they were people, often as if they were friends or acquaintances. And the ways that they talk about those characters change as they watch a program or talk about it later.

²⁶ There is further description of Parasocial Relationship Theory in Chapter 1.

Research Question 2: What discourses and positionings do youth use when talking about difference in the context of a television program that presents diverse characters, specifically in the areas of (1) ability, (2) sexuality, and (3) ethnicity?

Social constructivism argues that the way we talk about things is important. This is how we put the world together. At the same time, there is not enough research about the ways that youth talk about difference in the world. It is not just how we think about things that makes a difference, but how we talk about things with each other. Talk matters for a variety of reasons. It constructs the world, and it positions us within it. And not enough research exists on the ways that youth talk about difference.

When youth in this study talked about difference, they use the discourses of *Being Different*, *Having Difference*, and *Enacting Difference*. Each of these discourses and related positionings make certain things possible for the youth speaking in this way that would not be possible if they were speaking in another way. For instance, using the discourse of *Being Different* positions difference as static and definitional. He is gay. She is obsessive. This person will always be this way and this description is a part of them.

Using the discourse of *Having Difference* separates the difference from the person or the character. He has feelings for another man. She has OCD. These descriptions make the difference not a part of a person but something that they have. The “language first” movement works to change the ways that we talk about disability so that the person comes first, because they believe that the way that individuals describe a person with disabilities matters for the ways that they perceive and interact with that person.

And the discourse of Enacting Difference can identify a person's sexuality, ability or gender without ever labeling them. Stating, "He is dating a man" conveys the same information as "He is gay," but without the permanence. "She cleans too much" describes the enactment of a disability without ever describing the person as disabled. And within this discourse, youth found the most space to critique characters. For whatever reason youth more often critiqued what how a character was enacting their difference than they would critique that character for being different.

Each of these discourses of difference made something different possible in the world for these youth. Talking about sexuality as a static characteristic allowed youth to identify with that characteristic if they perceive themselves to *be* the same way. Taking on the label of gay or straight formally, and openly identifying with someone else who shares that same moniker has not always been possible (Blank, 2012; Foucault, 1978). This identification process is described in more depth in Chapter 7. Similarly, describing an enactment of a character's sexuality allows for more flexibility and choice. While you cannot choose what you are, you can choose what you do. Moving between the two discourses allows for a conception of sexuality as both stable and fluid.

Youth used the discourses of Being Different, Having Difference and Enacting Difference to talk about diverse characters. These discourses can be found in youth talk about ethnicity, sexuality, gender, and ability. They can also be found in youth talk about a variety of other characteristics that could either be used to label youth or simply to describe what they do (i.e., smart, cool, attractive, athletic). While the discourses of Being Different and Enacting Difference worked equally well for ability, sexuality, and ethnicity, the discourse of Having Difference was most aligned to youth talk about

ability. When I expand the discourse of Having Difference to include Having the Characteristics of Difference, the discourse is more useful across all the constructs of difference, but still not as prevalent as the discourses of Being and Enacting.

These discourses of difference provide an important framework for analyzing youth speech, and each of these three discourses makes something different possible for youth in the world. For example, describing sexuality using the discourse of Being a Sexuality implies permanence and a static nature to the construct. Alternatively, describing sexuality as something that someone does instead of something that they are may imply more fluidity and allow for more exploration without labels.

The ways in which we construct the concept of sexuality allows for more and less freedom. Similarly, constructing disability as something that you are and not as a group of behaviors has real consequences in the world, in terms of individual treatment, institutional rights, and medical benefits. Within the construct of ethnicity, labeling certain behaviors as White and others as Black can be used by peers to police behaviors that they deem to be outside of the enactment of their ethnicity. For example, Ogbu (2004) describes the ways in which the associations of success in school and “acting White” affect the self-concept and performance in school of African American students. The ways that we talk about things have real consequences in the world, and the discourses introduced in this chapter provide another lens through which to look at youth talk.

Research Question 3: What do these ways of talking about characters and difference make possible for youth?

When youth identify with a lead character on a popular television show and perceive similarity with that character, certain things are made possible for those youth. Marginalized youth are able to identify with a character who shares their difference and is successful, both in the world of the show and as a star of a popular television show. Identifying with a positive representation of difference may allow for youth to feel more accepted.

Similarly, youth are able to not identify with characters who share their difference based on those characters' enactment of difference. Describing how a character is enacting difference allows the speaker to put distance between that character and themselves. When there are multiple enactments to choose from, rejecting one enactment does not mean that the youth is rejecting all enactments of this shared difference. For example, gay male youth watching *Glee* were able to reject Kurt's enactment of gayness, but they still had the opportunity to identify with the characters of Blaine, Karofsky, and Unique. Youth with OCD who rejected Emma's enactment of OCD had to reject the portrayal entirely without the option to identify with another character who was portraying a different enactment. For this reason, multiple representations of diversity are important to diverse audiences.

By stating that they have an affinity with a particular character, youth position themselves in two ways. First, they are able to position themselves as having special understanding of a character. As another "gay man," Ely is able to understand the character of Kurt and his experiences in a way that I, as a straight woman, cannot.

Secondly, this affinity positioning allows the speaker to affirm the qualities that they share with the character. In many cases, youth spoke about characteristics or traits

that they shared with a character others might consider negative, but which they related to and saw as positive. The youth who identified with Rachel saw her as bossy and wanting to get her way, but also as successful and beautiful and happy. This allowed for these youth see their own bossiness in a more positive light. Similarly, a youth who had thought of himself as a bully was able to see in Puck a multidimensional character, who is at times a bully, but who also has positive characteristics and the possibility of changing his behavior. By identifying with Puck, the youth was able to see himself in a different light.

Being able to see characters reflecting one's own traits, particularly those that society may view in a negative light, is especially important for LGBTQ youth. Multiple LGBTQ youth describe identifying with gay characters. In the same ways, genderqueer youth describe identifying with characters who share their transitioning gender but who also adopt non-normative gender expression. For instance, a female-to-male transgender youth describes identifying with Finn, a tough football player who can still have an artistic side. For that youth, Finn's actions and his identification with that character meant that he could see a role model that did not need to completely conform to gender stereotypes or expectations in order to be a man.

These characters, no matter their difference, are the stars of the show. They have friends and love interests and positive life experiences. By relating to these portrayals, youth are able to affirm characteristics within themselves that are not always seen as positive in the larger society. Positioning themselves and these characters in the same categories and being able to see their similar traits in a positive light allows youth the

space to accept themselves. There was tremendous power for these youth to be able to see themselves on television, and to see not just one character that was like them, but many.

Implications for Media Studies

Implications for Parasocial Relationship Theory and the Parasocial Contact Hypothesis

Numerous researchers are looking at the ways that parasocial contact across lines of difference may reduce prejudice (Cohen, 2003; Giles, 2012; Hoffner & Cohen, 2012; Schiappa, Gregg, Hewes, 2005). While innovative research is being done in the field of Parasocial Relationship Theory, a majority of the research is still quantitative in nature, with many studies using psychometric tests and survey data (Cohen, 2003; Giles, 2012; Hoffner & Buchanan, 2005; Hoffner & Cohen, 2012; Theran & Newberg, 2010).

Multiple researchers have called for a qualitative investigation into this arena, but this is still an area that needs further investigation (Giles, 2012; Schiappa, Gregg, & Hewes, 2005).

This study adds to the literature around parasocial relationship theory and the parasocial contact hypothesis, specifically applying qualitative investigation and “meaning making” to this body of work. By combining the questions of the parasocial contact hypothesis with qualitative methodologies, I have been better able to describe what is happening when youth identify with a character, and what that might mean for youth interactions with diverse characters.

In addition, this study investigates the ways that youth are relating to characters who share the same difference, an area in need of further investigation. This research will give other researchers in this field as well as producers of media geared towards reducing prejudice important insights into how youth are receiving the texts that they create.

Pro-Social Media for Teenagers

My study is also unique in that it explores a television show that is produced for a teen and young adult audience and that contains strong prosocial content concerning diversity and acceptance. Few films and television shows for this age group contain explicit and long-term prosocial messaging (Mares & Woodard, 2001), and studying the ways that youth are interpreting the messages in *Glee* can provide important information to anyone creating media with prosocial themes for this age group. Better understanding how youth understand these texts will also be beneficial to anyone working in media literacy.

This study also adds to the qualitative research around youth meaning making and the media (Davies, Buckingham, & Kelley, 2004; Fisherkeller, 2011; Tobin, 2000) by focusing on a type of media that is seldom addressed in these studies; namely, how youth make meaning of representations of schools and students in the media. My methodology of pairing interviews with film analysis and discussion will also be interesting to those working in media literacy and anyone studying youth and the media.

Implications for Media Literacy

The discourses of character put forward in this study would be an excellent way to conceptualize characters when talking to youth about media and making them more media literate. Identifying moments when youth are talking about characters as people versus talking about characters as productions of a team, can act as a baseline to help those working in media literacy to know how youth are conceptualizing characters. Increased use of the discourse of Character as Creation might imply a more critical media stance and could act as a metric for media literacy practitioners.

In addition, the discourses of difference that I have created in order to analyze participant descriptions of characters can be used to analyze a multitude of conversations, documents and interviews in many contexts to learn more about when different discourses are being used and to what end.

Using a revised Foucauldian discourse framework with youth could be helpful in teaching them to analyze the way that the news media positions certain populations. For example, a revised FDA framework could be used with clips of the news coverage from Ferguson to help youth analyze the ways that the media coverage is positioning different individuals within the story and what that positioning might be achieving.

These discourses of difference could help youth to understand media debates around the legality of gay marriage, gendered product design (i.e. princess toothbrushes and army mouthwash), the ethnicity of Rachel Dolezal and the gender of Caitlin Jenner.

Importance for Youth and Those Who Work with Youth: Managing Difference in Schools

While this study is important for multiple fields of research, it also holds important insights for those working with youth. This is true for those who work in anti-bullying campaigns and for those who work in media literacy.

Finally, the way that youth think about, talk about, and manage difference is a key concern. Bullying is an important issue in our country, and research reflects that students who are different in some way are often the victims of bullying (Frisén, Holmqvist & Oscarsson, 2008; Milner, 2004). Whether that difference is in appearance (Frisén, Holmqvist & Oscarsson, 2008; Gilman, 2008; Taylor 2011), gender and gender-conformity (O'Brien, 2011; Ringrose & Renold, 2010), sexuality (D'Augelli et.al, 2010;

Swearer, Turner, Givens & Pollack, 2008), ethnicity (Milner, 2004) or ability (Milner, 2004; Reid, Monsen & Rivers 2004), youth may be led to see difference as dangerous.

I believe that a first step in moving towards tolerance and acceptance is communication. This study provides a framework of language around difference that should be investigated further to determine how it could be best used to help youth and adults discuss difference and bullying productively. For instance, this framework might provide an excellent way for school professionals to introduce a concept like “people first language” (Feldman, Gordon, White, & Weber, 2002; Lynch, Thuli, & Groombridge, 1994).

A Call for More Diverse Characters

While working with youth to understand difference in schools is critical, it is equally important for members of minority groups to see themselves represented in the popular culture. I argue that representations of diverse youth matter for diverse youth watching the programming when they are able to identify with those characters. Youth often identify with characters who share similar characteristics, and youth in this study also identify with characters across lines of gender and ethnicity.

Multiple representations of diversity are important because each youth will interpret a character’s enactment differently. Some youth in this study talked about the character of Kurt Hummel as a person and identified with him strongly, while others talked about Kurt as a creation, and criticized his performance as stereotypical. Some youth talked about the character of Santana Lopez as a person, describing understanding for her situation and her feelings, while other youth talked about not liking or identifying with her character. Some youth talked about Emma Pillsbury as a person and had

empathy for the struggle that she underwent in enacting her disability. Other youth talked about Emma as a troubling portrayal that could lead to stereotyping.

What seems to matter for youth being able to identify with a character within the same minority group is having more than one character representation of that minority group. Multiple youth in this study reported identifying with one gay character but not another. Youth also described that multiple representations was an important criteria for shows to represent diversity well. This was especially prevalent in youth talk about sexuality, where *Glee* includes five LGBT characters in the glee club alone. Youth who did not share difference, often felt comfortable with some portrayals more than others.

With *Glee* no longer on the air, American youth will not have a primetime show where they can interact with a multitude of high school aged characters who are diverse in terms of ability, sexuality, gender, and ethnicity. I would argue based on my analysis that these multiple, positive representations of difference were important for youth and will continue to be as the show lives on in streaming and DVD formats. It is promising that there are multiple shows on primetime television this season (2015-2016) that feature ethnic diversity (*Blackish*, *Jane the Virgin*, *Fresh off the Boat*) and diversity in terms of sexual orientation (*Modern Family*, *Scream Queens*). At the same time, no American television show currently has the same breadth of diversity across multiple spectrums that *Glee* was able to portray.

My analysis of qualitative interviews with youth viewers of *Glee* supports the development of the Parasocial Relationship Hypothesis, and adds to the literature around youth's relationships with fictional characters. My work investigates the why and how of

youth relationships with characters. It also looks at another way in which youth relate to characters, not as people but as creations of a production team.

There are three main areas in which this analysis adds to parasocial relationship theory. First, most research on parasocial relationships and the parasocial contact hypothesis are quantitative in nature (Cohen, 2003; Giles, 2012; Hoffner & Buchanan, 2005; Kanazawa, 2002; Theran & Newberg, 2010). By investigating these phenomena through a qualitative lens I am able to not only describe if youth are identifying with characters, but what specifically they are saying about these characters and how they are describing the characters and their relationships with them.

My finding that youth most often describe identifying with a character for Being Different is supported by the work of Hoffman & Buchanan (2005) who note that youth most often perceive similarity with characters through “relatively stable factors” like personality traits, life experiences, and demographic characteristics (p. 346). This mirrors the youth in this study, whose talk about identifying with characters most often referenced the Discourse of Being Different, a way of talking about difference as though it was static and stable. Carolina doesn’t identify with Rachel’s character because Rachel does bossy things. She identifies with Rachel because Rachel is bossy, and this is something that she feels that she is herself. When multiple youth identify with Kurt or Blaine because they are gay men, this is again identification with Being Different. Less frequently, youth described identifying with characters’ Enactment of Difference, which may be perceived as more fleeting.

A final way in which I am adding to the field of parasocial relationship theory, is in the deep description of the ways that youth talk about characters. The research behind

parasocial relationship theory makes a clear case that youth think of television characters as friends. At the same time, my analysis indicates that while youth talk about characters as though they were people, they also talk about characters as though they were the creations of television producers. This seems an interesting topic to explore further as researchers look at the kinds of relationships that youth have with television characters.

Another way in which this work is adding to the study of youth relationships with characters is in the realm of the parasocial contact hypothesis. Within this field, the research has largely focused on showing the ways in which diverse character portrayals lead to changes in the attitudes of majority audiences (Binder, Zagefka et al., 2009; Wright, Aron, McLaughlin-Volpe & Ropp; 1997). Through my research, I have been able to build on this foundation to investigate the ways that youth with disabilities react to characters portraying the same disabilities. I have been able to speak to LGBTQ youth about the ways that they are understanding and relating to LGBTQ characters. In addition, I have been able to talk with girls about their perception of strong, female characters. By talking to these groups about their experience seeing characters in the same marginalized categories as themselves, I can see not just who youth are identifying with in their same groups, but who they reject in those groups, and who they identify with outside of those group boundaries.

Implications for Methodology

In addition to the findings of my study, the data gathering and data analysis methodologies that I utilized have implications for the fields of qualitative interviewing and media studies. In this section, I describe the ways that I used pair interviews, photo elicitation strategies, and positioning analysis in new ways.

Pair Interviews

Pair interviews, also called dyadic interviews, are most commonly used in the field of qualitative health research (Eisikovitz & Koren, 2010). These interviews take place with romantic partners, usually where each can speak to different things (one can speak to their experience of illness while the other can speak to their experience of having an ill partner). One purpose of conducting a dyad interview is to ease tension among participants as well as to watch the interactions of the participants.

My purposes in conducting pair interviews were similar. I wanted youth to feel comfortable talking to me, and so I gave them the choice to participate with a partner. I allowed all youth who participated as a pair to choose their own partners. Most pairs were friends, while some were schoolmates, and one pair was siblings. I also believe that participating with a friend mitigated the desire to please an adult interviewer. It was my hope that I would be able to take a secondary role in some interviews and simply watch youth interact, and this was the case with particularly close and vociferous partners.

The pair interview was superior to a focus group for my needs because I was interested in individual perspectives. With a focus group, some voices would be lost, and the group might provide too much pressure leading to less honesty of responses. Overall, I believe that partner interviews served my purpose well and would be an excellent tool for qualitative researchers working with teens and tweens.

One possible consideration for using the pair interview is that youth in this study did not often disagree with each other, possibly because they agreed with each other, or possibly because of the importance of relationship maintenance. In future studies, I will

consider including more pairs of acquaintances as well as close friends to see if that changes the dynamic.

Character Cards and Positioning

Another methodological innovation that I used was in having youth interact with character cards. For this methodology I drew on the field of photo elicitation which often has youth use photos that they have taken to prompt conversation and memory. I used “character cards” or photos of key characters from Glee (see Appendix A) for both of these purposes. And then, I asked youth to sort the cards into groups. Because youth were able to choose any groups to sort characters into, I was able to gather clear evidence of the ways that youth were positioning characters (as romantic partners, as cheerleaders, as people who struggle, etc.). While this data was only partially included in my dissertation analysis, it is very rich and should provide for years of analysis and future publications.

This character sorting activity was especially helpful in learning about the ways that youth were positioning characters. The character sorting also involved youth in an activity that would at times distract them from the stress of participating in an interview. Pairs conducting the sorting provided especially rich data when they needed to negotiate both the groups that they were using and which characters belonged in each group.

Data Analysis: Discourses and Positioning

By using Foucauldian discourse analysis as a framework, I was able to move beyond identifying positionings and discourses in youth talk to being able to consider what this talk might be accomplishing for youth. This framework also demonstrates the relationship between discourses and positioning in a clear way, showing again what the use of different discourses make possible for youth.

I believe that the abbreviated FDA chart that I created for use in this study is a useful tool for conducting analysis. It gets at the key constructs of Foucauldian discourse analysis, and keeps the analysis close to the text by including youth's speech alongside the positionings and other analytical constructs identified in that speech.

Chapter 9: Validity, Limitations and Next Steps

In this chapter, I will describe both my conception of validity and the ways in which I worked to ensure the validity of my results throughout the life of my study. I will then describe the limitations of my work, both in terms of the structural aspects of my design (i.e., the limitations of qualitative work) and in terms of the choices that I made. I will end by describing the future work that I will be conducting, both with the data that I have gathered for this study and in future studies. I will also describe the ways that other researchers and practitioners could make use of my findings in their work with youth.

Validity

Kvale and Brinkman (2006) describe validity as something that must be considered throughout the life of a study. As they describe it, “validity rests on the quality of the researcher’s craftsmanship throughout an investigation, on continually checking, questioning, and theoretically interpreting the findings” (p. 249). They use the analogy of a production line and call for “quality control through the stages of knowledge production” (p. 249). These stages include choosing the goals of the study, designing the study, data collection, transcribing, analyzing, and reporting. I have acted strategically throughout the life of my study to increase the validity of my analysis.

As I described in Chapter 2, my first step to ensure validity for the study was to confirm that the methods I used matched my goals, my research questions, and my theoretical paradigm (Maxwell, 2012). In this way, I determined that qualitative interviewing was the best method for both answering my research questions and for providing quality data for my analytic methods of positioning and Foucauldian Discourse

Analysis. I also included activities within the interviews (character card descriptions, character card sorting, and video elicitation) to make youth more comfortable and to provide a unique data source for positioning analysis.

I developed the protocol for my interviews according to the recommendations of experts in the field of qualitative interviewing (Edel & Fingerson, 2002; Krueger & Casey, 2009; Kvale & Brinkman, 2009; Maykut & Morehouse, 1994; Patton, 2014; Rubin & Rubin, 2012), as well as from my own experience in creating a qualitative protocol for my qualifying paper research. I was purposeful in the creation of the protocol and chose not to reference any kind of difference in my interview questions until close to the halfway mark in the interviews. I did this so that I could see when and how youth would bring up difference in their own speech, and to ensure that I would not reference the frame of difference (Lakoff, 2014) and influence youth speech with my own discourse of difference.

I conducted a pilot for the interview protocol before beginning the study to determine what revisions were needed in the protocols, and to be certain that the age group that I proposed working with was comfortable reflecting about difference in the ways that the study required. Next, when I conducted individual and pair interviews, I video and audio recorded the interactions to enhance reliability.

I completed my sample when I reached the point of saturation (Beiten, 2012; Krueger & Casey, 2009; Kvale & Brinkman, 2009; Light, Singer, & Willett, 2009; Patton, 2014) and the information I was getting was repetitive of what had come before. My number of 29 interview events with 39 participants is within the realm for a rigorous qualitative sample.

In order to ensure accuracy (Rubin & Rubin, 2012), I audio recorded all interviews and video recorded a majority of participants as well. I gave these 29 audio files to five professional transcriptionists who created transcripts from the files. I read through each transcript as it came in, checking it for accuracy, and correcting small mistakes as I found them, using the audio files as a guide. Early in the process, I replaced a transcriptionist because the files were highly inaccurate and had those files transcribed again by a different individual. Having these interview transcripts allowed me to stay close to the text and use youth's exact wording as much as possible throughout my analysis.

In order to protect the anonymity of my participants (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Rubin & Rubin, 2012; Seidman, 2006; Weiss, 1994), all files were passed along a secure server, and all transcriptionists completed a confidentiality agreement (see Appendix R). In addition, during each interview, I addressed participants using the pseudonyms that they had selected, and named each audio and video file using the pseudonym as well. I chose to work with transcriptionists who lived outside of the city where I conducted my interviews so that the high schools mentioned in the audio and video files would be unfamiliar to them.

I gained additional perspective on my research process by consulting with my ad hoc research committee on everything from the creation of my research tools to my data gathering practices and my analytic process. I fully described my plans for data gathering, sampling, and data analysis, along with my theoretical framework, in a dissertation proposal approved by my advisor, Helen Haste, and the other members of my committee, Joe Blatt and Jal Mehta. In addition, I have completed yearly applications to Harvard's Committee on the Use of Human Subjects (CUHS) that detail my study design,

my consent procedures, and my work with youth. Throughout the process, I have sought consultation from peers in my doctoral program, including my writing group members Ling Hsiao and Meredith Mira and my writing consultant Julia Hayden.

Throughout the process, I have remained aware of my own interpretations of *Glee* and my expectations for youth understandings so that I can document how my knowledge of media and youth behavior influences my interpretations and my findings. Similarly, I have tried to be aware of the language that I use when talking about difference. In the quotations that I have included for analysis, I have often quoted or paraphrased the questions that I asked leading up to a youth's answer to better demonstrate how my words may have influenced youth responses.

I included a copy of my protocol (Appendix B) so that those reading this document can judge my success in this endeavor for themselves. I understand that I cannot be completely objective, so the best remedy was to be aware of my subjectivities and the ways that they may color my research process (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Maxwell, 2008), and to note them where they are most likely to have influenced my interviewing or my findings.

Limitations

Bias and Reactivity

In addition to working generally throughout the life of my study to enhance validity, I worked to specifically limit my bias (the impact of my lens on my analysis) and reactivity (my impact on the responses of the youth in the study) (Maxwell, 2008). Seidman (2006) states that "every aspect of the structure, process, and practice of interviewing can be directed toward the goal of minimizing the effect the interviewer and

the interviewing situations have on how the participants reconstruct their experience.”

Qualitative research recognizes that bias cannot be completely eliminated, but it can be limited, and should be recognized within the study design and the ultimate report of the researcher.

I have done my best to recognize the lens that I bring to this study, and the ways in which my understanding of difference and my interpretation of the show *Glee* have led to the analysis that I have created. While I know that this bias is always evident, I have done my best to forefront the language of youth, so that others will have the opportunity to come to their own conclusions. I have supported my suppositions and analysis with direct quotes from my participants in this paper, which were given in their immediate context whenever possible.

I have also attempted to limit reactivity in participants during the data gathering process (Maxwell, 2005, 2012). I have described my data gathering process in detail in Chapter 3, noting the purposeful decisions I made in order for the youth in my study to be more comfortable, which were based on the work of other researchers who conduct qualitative interviews with youth (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Edel & Fingerson, 2002; Tobin, 2000). I have included my interview protocol (Appendix B) to demonstrate the ways in which I asked open-ended questions that began first with youth's own definitions and understandings before using my language and understandings. In the same way that researcher bias is impossible to eliminate, it is impossible to eliminate the ways that my presence impacted the responses received from youth. Another researcher at another time talking to the same youth might get different answers. At the same time, I argue that

youth responses in this study are credible, and that my data gathering and analysis have limited and addressed both bias and reactivity.

While I worked diligently to ensure validity, limitations to the work that I was able to do still exist. I conducted all 29 interviews (individual and pair) myself, so all of the data that I have gathered reflects youth's conversations with a cisgender, straight, middle-class, White woman in her mid-30s. While I believe that the discourses of differences I identified could be found in any conversation about difference or diversity, the language that youth chose to use may well have been different in conversation with peers or with a different adult interviewer. Youth shared with me the conversation that they deemed appropriate for an adult that they do not know very well. I attempted to ameliorate this concern through the use of pair or partner interviews; however, further research is needed to determine how youth would talk about these characters and about difference in general with their peers.

Lack of Generalizability

Another limitation of this work is its lack of generalizability. This work is descriptive of this group and their speech at this time on this topic. I am able to speak only to the positioning that these youth used in their interviews with me. My data and my analysis are not generalizable. Instead my work is specific, and a deep dive into the speech acts of these youth and the positions and discourses that their speech makes available for themselves and for others. Rubin and Rubin (2012) argue that:

Qualitative work is judged more on its freshness— its ability to discover new themes and new explanations— than on its generalizability. It is also evaluated for its richness, vividness, and accuracy in describing complex situations or cultures.

The quality of evidence that supports the conclusions is important, as are the soundness of the design and the thoroughness of the data collection and analysis.

(p. 16)

I believe that I have created a sound design with thorough data collection and analysis. I also believe that what I have discovered is fresh and provides new insights on a range of topics. At the same time, there are still those who will consider the lack of generalizability as a limitation.

I have not attempted to prove that parasocial contact with diverse characters has a quantifiable effect on the youth in this study. Instead, I have used qualitative inquiry to delve more deeply into the ways that youth understand these representations. My purpose has been to better understand the ways that youth make meaning of the representations of various characters, and what discourses of character and difference they use to describe these characters.

Other Limitations

Some limitations of this study stem from using methods in a new way. For instance, there are character cards that I did not create which would have most likely led to interesting conversations. Specifically, I regret not having character cards for Dave Karofsky, a closeted gay student who bullies Kurt, and Lauren Zizes, an overweight female student character.

Another limitation of this study is that I did not always ask an appropriate follow-up question. There are many obvious missed opportunities in my transcript data, where a youth was beginning to talk about something interesting, and I did not follow through appropriately, was not flexible enough in the moment, moved on prematurely, or let

something confusing go that I should have asked to have clarified. This skill will, I'm sure, improve with further experience, but for this study, this represents a missed opportunity.

The sample size of this study (n=39) should not be considered a limitation because it is well within the range of acceptable sample sizes for qualitative studies (Beiten, 2012; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Maykut & Morehouse, 1994; Patton, 2014) and the interviews provided robust data for analysis.

Further Work

I have used only a fraction of the interview data gathered in 2013 in my analysis for this dissertation. The depth with which I needed to go into one segment of the data, namely how youth talked about characters and about certain kinds of diversity, meant that there was a great deal of data that went untapped. This includes data gathered that related to difference and bullying – data that I have not yet analyzed. I plan to continue working with this data over the next few years.

One piece of the data that I found particularly intriguing was discovered when asking youth to sort characters into groups first using their own criteria, and then the criteria that Sue Sylvester, a character on the show, would use if she were asked to complete this same task. There are multiple levels of positioning available with both of these tasks, and they allow youth to put language in the mouth of someone else, letting me know not just positionings that they themselves adhere to, but what they know others are doing.

Beyond this particular pool of data, there is still work to be done in investigating parasocial relationships through a qualitative lens. In order to better understand the

relationship between the discourses of difference that youth use in talking about characters and those they use in talking about friends and acquaintances, additional work is needed. I propose a study addressing this question with an interview protocol which asks youth to describe both fictional characters and friends.

Another area of future work will be in exploration of the methodology I used in conducting this study. I utilized pair interviews in a way that is uncommon. I believe that this methodology is quite useful, and I plan on analyzing my pair interview transcripts in depth to identify the benefits of conducting interviews in this way.

Similarly, I plan to spend more time with the data gathered from the activity of youth sorting character cards into groups based on their own criteria. I believe that this is a good method for looking at media texts with youth, and it proved to be quite helpful in looking at the ways that youth position characters. Similarly, the character card sorting activity would be useful in future media research with youth, as well as in research that focuses on the ways that youth position others and themselves.

While it was outside the scope of this research, several youth in this study argued that the more diverse representations a show has, the better. Youth talk also made clear that they have ideas about right and wrong ways to talk about difference, and right and wrong ways to represent difference. Future study is needed to see if these attitudes are held by a representative sample of diverse youth, or if this is the outlook of the particular diverse youth in this study.

Another possible extension of this study would be to look at these same topics using youth in the role of interviewer. With peer-run interviews, youth would most likely talk differently about difference than they would with an adult interviewer. It would be

interesting to see what changes and what remains the same when the interviewer has less category entitlement over the participants. I wonder if a college student would be young enough, or if it would be important to get other high school students to conduct the interviews. Similarly, it might be useful to work with a diverse group of youth interviewers in terms of ethnicity, ability, and sexuality. Someone should do this in the future.

I also plan to, and hope that others will as well, use the frameworks that I have created for the ways that youth position characters (creation and person) and the discourses of difference that youth use to see if these constructs hold up in different contexts. I believe that the discourses of Being, Having, and Enacting will hold up in any talk about difference, whether it be oral or written communication, and with adults as well as youth.

The field of Media Literacy could use my frameworks of Character as Creation and Character as Person to help youth analyze the ways that they think about media. Similarly, it might be a useful tool for looking at the ways that fan communities speak about characters, where a higher proportion of speakers might position characters as people in a variety of ways.

This study offers up multiple avenues for future investigation. It could take the form of further use of and inquiry into the methods used, further work with parasocial relationship theory through a constructivist framework, and further investigation into the discourses and positionings that youth use when talking about difference.

Bibliography

- Allport, G. W. (1979). *The nature of prejudice*. Basic books.
- Anderson, E. (2011). Updating the outcome: Gay athletes, straight teams, and coming out in educationally based sport teams. *Gender & Society*, 25(2), 250-268.
- Arribas-Ayllon, M., & Walkerdine, V. (2008). Foucauldian discourse analysis. In C. Willig & W. Stainton-Rogers (Eds.). *The Sage handbook of qualitative research in psychology* (91-108). London: Sage.
- Banks, J., & Bowman, N. D. (2014). Avatars are (sometimes) people too: Linguistic indicators of parasocial and social ties in player–avatar relationships. *New Media & Society*, 1-20.
- Bartlett, T. (2008) Wheels within wheels, or triangles within triangles: Time and context in positioning theory. In F. M. Moghaddan, R. Harré & N. Lee (eds.) *Global conflict resolution through positioning analysis* (169-187). New York: Springer.
- Beiten, B. K. (2012). Interview and sampling: How many and whom. In J. F. Gubrium, J. A. Holstein, J. Holstein, A. B. Marvasti, & K. D. McKinney (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of interview research: The complexity of the craft* (243-255). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Berger, P. L., & Luckmann, T. (1966). *The social construction of reality: a treatise in the sociology of knowledge* (1st ed.). Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday.
- Berry, G. L. & Asamen, J. K., (2003). Television, children, and multicultural awareness. In D. G. Singer, & J. L. Singer (Eds.), *Handbook of children and the media* (pp.359-373). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

- Binder, J., Zagefka, H., Brown, R., Funke, F., Kessler, T., Mummendey, A., et al. (2009). Does contact reduce prejudice or does prejudice reduce contact? A longitudinal test of the contact hypothesis among majority and minority groups in three European countries. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 96(4), 843-856.
- Blank, H. (2012). *Straight: The surprisingly short history of heterosexuality*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
- Boxer, L. (2003) Assessment of quality systems with positioning theory. In R. Harré & F. M. Moghaddan, (Eds.), *The self and others: Positioning individuals and groups in personal, political, and cultural contexts* (p. 251-277). Westport, CT: Praeger.
- Boyatzis, R. E. (1998). *Transforming qualitative information: Thematic analysis and code development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Brock, C. H., & Gavelek, J. (2013) Mean Girls go to college: Conflicting storylines of friendship and enmity among young adults. In R. Harré & F. M. Moghaddan (Eds.) *The psychology of friendship and enmity: Relationships in love, work, politics and war Vol. 1* (p. 179-194). Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger.
- Buckingham, D. (2002). Media Education: A Global Strategy for Development. Policy Paper for UNESCO. *Youth Media Education. Paris: UNESCO Communication Development Division. CD-ROM*.
- Buckingham, D. (2008). Children and media: A cultural studies approach. In K. Drotner & S. Livingstone (Eds.), *The international handbook of children, media and culture* (219-236). London: Sage.

- Caldwell, K. (2013). Dyadic interviewing: A technique valuing interdependence in interviews with individuals with intellectual disabilities. *Qualitative Research*, 14(4), 488-507.
- Cameron, L., & Rutland, A. (2006). Extended contact through story reading in school: Reducing children's prejudice toward the disabled. *Journal of Social Issues*, 62(3), 469-488.
- Cohen, J. (2003). Parasocial breakups: Measuring individual differences in responses to the dissolution of parasocial relationships. *Mass Communication & Society*, 6(2), 191-202.
- Cook-Sather, A. (2002). Authorizing Students' Perspectives: Toward Trust, Dialogue, and Change in Education. *Educational Researcher*, 31(4), 3-14.
- D'Augelli, A. R., Hershberger, S. L., & Pilkington, N. W. (2010). Lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth and their families: Disclosure of sexual orientation and its consequences. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 68(3), 361-371.
- Davies, B., & Harré, R. (1990). Positioning: The discursive production of selves. *Theory of Social Behavior*, 21(4), 393-407.
- Davies, H., Buckingham, D. and Kelley, P. (2004). In the worst possible taste: Children, television, and cultural value. In R. C. Allen, & A. Hill (Eds.), *The television studies reader* (pp. 629). London and New York: Routledge.
- Diaz-Bone, R., Bührmann, A. D., Rodríguez, E. G., Schneider, W., Kendall, G., & Tirado, F. (2008). The field of Foucaultian discourse analysis: Structures, developments and perspectives. *Historical Social Research/Historische Sozialforschung*, 7-28.

- Eder, D., & Fingerson, L. (2002). Interviewing children and adolescents. In J. F. Gubrium & J. A. Holstein, *Handbook of interview research: Context and method* (181-203). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Edley, N. (2001). Analysing masculinity: Interpretative repertoires, ideological dilemmas and subject positions. In M. Wetherell, S. Taylor, & S. Yates (Eds.), *Discourse as data: A guide for analysis* (189-228). London: Sage.
- Eisikovits, Z., & Koren, C. (2010). Approaches to and outcomes of dyadic interview analysis. *Qualitative Health Research*, XX(X), 1-14.
- Emerson, R., Fretz, R. I., Shaw, L.L. (1995) *Writing ethnographic fieldnotes*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Feldman, D., Gordon, P. A., White, M. J., & Weber, C. (2002). The effects of people-first language and demographic variables on beliefs, attitudes and behavioral intentions toward people with disabilities. *Journal of Applied Rehabilitation Counseling*, 33(3), 18.
- FisherKeller, J. (2002). *Growing up with television: Everyday learning among young adolescents*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- FisherKeller, J. (2011). *Growing up with television: Everyday learning among young adolescents*. Philadelphia, PA. Temple University Press.
- Fiske, J. (2011). *Reading the popular*. New York: Routledge.
- Fiske, J. (1987). *Television culture*. London and New York: Methuen.
- Fordham, S., & Ogbu, J. U. (1986). Black students' school success: Coping with the "burden of 'acting White'". *The urban review*, 18(3), 176-206.
- Foucault, M. (1977). *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison*. Translated by Alan

- Sheridan. New York: Vintage.
- Foucault, M. (1978). *The history of sexuality. Volume 1: An introduction*. Translated by Robert Hurley. Vintage. New York: Vintage.
- Foucault, M. (1988). *Madness and civilization: A history of insanity in the age of reason*. Translated by Richard Howard. New York: Vintage.
- Frazer, E. (1989). Feminist talk and talking about feminism: teenage girls' discourses of gender. *Oxford Review of Education*, 15(3), 281-290.
- Frisén, A., Holmqvist, K., & Oscarsson, D. (2008). 13-year-olds' perception of bullying: definitions, reasons for victimisation and experience of adults' response. *Educational Studies*, 34(2), 105-117.
- Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) (2011). *Where we are on TV*. Los Angeles. <http://www.glaad.org/publications/whereweareontv11>
- Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) (2012). *Where we are on TV*. Los Angeles. <http://www.glaad.org/publications/whereweareontv12>
- Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) (2013). *Where we are on TV*. Los Angeles. <http://www.glaad.org/whereweareontv13>
- Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) (2014). *Where we are on TV*. Los Angeles. <http://www.glaad.org/whereweareontv14>
- Gee, J. P. (2005). *An introduction to discourse analysis: Theory and method*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Gee, J. P. (2014). *How to do discourse analysis: A toolkit*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Giles, D. (2012). Parasocial Relationships: Current directions in theory and method. In

Bilandzic, Helena; Patriarche, Geoffroy; Traudt, Paul J. (Eds.). *The social use of media : Cultural and social scientific perspectives on audience research* (pp.161-176).

Retrieved from <http://www.ebib.com>

Giles, D. C., & Maltby, J. (2004). The role of media figures in adolescent development: Relations between autonomy, attachment, and interest in celebrities.

Personality and individual differences, 36(4), 813-822.

Gilman, S. L. (2008). *Fat: a cultural history of obesity*. Cambridge, UK: Polity.

Goodman, W. K., Price, L. H., Rasmussen, S. A., Mazure, C., Fleischmann, R. L., Hill, C. L., & Charney, D. S. (1989). The Yale-Brown obsessive compulsive scale: I. Development, use, and reliability. *Archives of general psychiatry*, 46(11), 1006-1011.

Grace, D. J., & Henward, A. S. (2013). Investigating Young Children's Talk about the Media. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, 14(2), 138-154.

Hall, S. (1973/1980). Encoding/decoding. In S. Hall, D. Hobson, A. Lowe & P. Willis (eds.) *Culture, media, language: Working papers in cultural studies* (128-138). Hutchinson: London.

Hall, S. (1997). The spectacle of the other in *Representation: Cultural representations and signifying practices* (pp. 223). London; Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage in association with the Open University.

Harper, D. (2002). Talking about pictures: a case for photo elicitation. *Visual Studies*, 17(1), 13-26.

Harré, R. & Moghaddan, F. M. (2003) Introduction: The self and others in traditional psychology and positioning theory. In R. Harré & F. M. Moghaddan, (eds.) *The*

self and others: Positioning individuals and groups in personal, political, and cultural contexts (p. 1-11). Westport, CT: Praeger.

Harré, R., & Moghaddam, F. M. (2008). In R. Harré, F. M. Moghaddam & N. Lee (Eds.) Intrapersonal conflict. In *Global conflict resolution through positioning analysis* (pp. 65-78). New York: Springer.

Harré, R., Moghaddam, F. M., Cairnie, T. P., Rothbart, D., & Sabat, S. R. (2009). Recent advances in positioning theory. *Theory & Psychology, 19*(1), 5-31.

Harré, R., & Van Langenhove, L. (1991). Varieties of positioning. *Journal for the theory of social behavior, 21*(4), 393- 407.

Haste, H. (2004). Constructing the Citizen. *Political Psychology, 25*(3), 413-439.

Haste, H., & Abrahams, S. (2008). Morality, culture and the dialogic self: taking cultural pluralism seriously. *Journal of Moral Education, 37*(3), 377-394.

Hochschild, J. L., & Scovronick, N. (2004). *The American dream and the public schools*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Hoffner, C., & Buchanan, M. (2005). Young adults' wishful identification with television characters: The role of perceived similarity and character attributes. *Media psychology, 7*(4), 325-351.

Hoffner, C. A., & Cohen, E. L. (2012). Responses to obsessive compulsive disorder on Monk among series fans: Parasocial relations, presumed media influence, and behavioral outcomes. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media, 56*(4), 650-668.

Horton, D., & Wohl, R. (1956). Mass communication and para-social interaction: Observations on intimacy at a distance. *Psychiatry, 19*(3), 215-229.

- Jhally, S. (Producer & Director). (2014). *Stuart Hall in lecture: Representation & the media* [Video]. Media Education Foundation. (Available from Kanoply Streaming, San Francisco, CA)
- Kendall, G., & Wickham, G. (1998). *Using Foucault's methods*. London: Sage.
- Krueger, R. A., & Casey, M. A. (2009). *Focus groups: a practical guide for applied research* (4th ed.). Los Angeles: SAGE.
- Kvale, S., & Brinkmann, S. (2009). *Interviews: Learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing*. Los Angeles: Sage.
- Lakoff, G. (2014). *The all new don't think of an elephant!: Know your values and frame the debate*. White River Junction, VT. Chelsea Green Publishing.
- Legate, N., Ryan, R. M., & Weinstein, N. (2012). Is coming out always a “good thing”? Exploring the relations of autonomy support, outness, and wellness for lesbian, gay, and bisexual individuals. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 3(2), 145-152.
- Light, R. J., Singer, J. D., & Willet, J. B. (2009). *By design: Planning research on higher education*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Livingstone, S. (2010). Giving people a voice: On the critical role of the interview in the history of audience research. *Communication, culture & critique*, 3(4), 566-571.
- Livingstone, S. (2012) Exciting moments in audience research – past, present and future. In: H. Bilandzic, G. Patriarche, and P. Traudt, (Eds.) *The social use of media: Cultural and social scientific perspectives on audience research* (257-274). Brighton, UK: ECREA Book Series. Intellect Ltd.

- Luttrell, W. (2003). *Pregnant bodies, fertile minds: gender, race, and the schooling of pregnant teens*. New York: Routledge.
- Luttrell, W. (2010). 'A camera is a big responsibility': A lens for analysing children's visual voices. *Visual Studies*, 25(3), 224-237.
- Luttrell, W., Dorsey, J., Hayden, J., & Shalaby, C. (2011). Transnational childhoods and youth media: Seeing with and learning from one immigrant child's visual narrative. In J. Fisherkeller (Ed.) *International Perspectives on Youth Media: Cultures of Production and Education* (192-208). New York: Peter Lang.
- Lynch, R. T., Thuli, K., & Groombridge, L. (1994). Person-first disability language: A pilot analysis of public perceptions. *The Journal of Rehabilitation*, 60 (2), 18.
- Mares, M. & Woodard, E.H. (2001). Prosocial effects on children's social interactions. In D. G. Singer, & J. L. Singer (Eds.), *Handbook of children and the media* (pp. 183-203). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Marshall, J. (1981). Making sense as a personal process. In P. Reason, & J. Rowan (Eds.), *Human inquiry: A sourcebook of new paradigm research* (pp. 530). Chichester, England and New York: J. Wiley.
- Maxwell, J. A. (2005). *Qualitative research design: an interactive approach* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Maxwell, J. A. (2012). *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach* (3rd ed.) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Maykut, P. S., & Morehouse, R. E. (1994). *Beginning qualitative research: a philosophic and practical guide*. London and Washington, D.C.: Falmer Press

- Milner, M. (2004). *Freaks, geeks, and cool kids: American teenagers, schools, and the culture of consumption; American teenagers, schools, and the culture of consumption*. New York: Routledge.
- Mishna, F., Newman, P. A., Daley, A., & Solomon, S. (2009). Bullying of lesbian and gay youth: A qualitative investigation. *British Journal of Social Work, 39*(8), 1598-1614.
- Moghaddam, F. M., Harré, R., & Lee, N. (2008) Positioning and conflict: An introduction. In F. M. Moghaddam, R. Harré & N. Lee (eds.) *Global conflict resolution through positioning analysis* (p. 3-20). New York: Springer.
- Morgan, D. L. (1997). *Focus groups as qualitative research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.
- Morley, D. (2003). *Television, audiences and cultural studies*. New York: Routledge.
- Morris, S. M. (2001). Joint and individual interviewing in the context of cancer. *Qualitative Health Research, 11*(4), 553-567.
- O'Brien, C. (2011). Young people's comparisons of cross-gender and same-gender bullying in British secondary schools. *Educational Research, 53*(3), 257-301.
- Ogbu, J. U. (2004). Collective identity and the burden of "acting White" in Black history, community, and education. *The Urban Review, 36*(1), 1-35.
- Orfield, G., & Lee, C. (2005). *Why segregation matters: Poverty and educational inequality* Civil Rights Project, Harvard University Cambridge, MA.
- Paluck, E. L. (2009). Reducing intergroup prejudice and conflict using the media: A field experiment in Rwanda. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 96*(3), 574-587.

- Parker, I. (2014). *Discourse Dynamics (Psychology Revivals): Critical Analysis for Social and Individual Psychology*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Parker, I. (1994). Reflexive social psychology: Discourse analysis and psychoanalysis. *Free Associations*.
- Patton, M. Q. (2014). *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage*.
- Pettigrew, T. F., & Tropp, L. R. (2008). How does intergroup contact reduce prejudice? Meta-analytic tests of three mediators. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 38*(6), 922-934.
- Pollock, M. (2009). *Colormute: Race talk dilemmas in an American school*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Potter, J., Wetherell, M., Gill, R., & Edwards, D. (1990). Discourse: noun, verb or social practice? *Philosophical Psychology, 3*(2-3), 205-217.
- Radway, J. A. (1991). *Reading the romance: Women, patriarchy, and popular literature*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
- Reid, P., Mosen, J., & Rivers, I. (2004). Psychology's contribution to understanding and managing bullying within schools. *Educational Psychology in Practice, 20*(3), 241-258.
- Rideout, V., Lauricella, A., & Wartella, E. (2011). Children, media, and race: Media use among White, Black, Hispanic, and Asian American children. *Evanston, IL: Center on Media and Human Development, School of Communication, Northwestern University*.



- Rideout, V. (2013). Zero to eight: Children's media use in America 2013: A Common Sense Media research study.
- Rideout, V., U. G. Foehr, and D. F. Roberts. (2010). *Generation M²: Media in the lives of 8-18 year-olds*. Menlo Park, CA: Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation.
- Rideout, V., Lauricella, A., & Wartella, E. (2011). Children, media, and race: Media use among White, Black, Hispanic, and Asian American children. *Evanston, IL: Center on Media and Human Development, School of Communication, Northwestern University*.
- Ringrose, J., & Renold, E. (2010). Normative cruelties and gender deviants: The performative effects of bully discourses for girls and boys in school. *British Educational Research Journal*, 36(4), 573-596.
- Rothstein, R. (2004). *Class and schools: Using social, economic, and educational reform to close the Black-white achievement gap*. New York, NY: Washington, D.C.: Teachers College, Columbia University; Economic Policy Institute.
- Rubin B. (2008). Grouping in detracked classrooms. In M. Pollock (Ed.), *Everyday antiracism: Getting real about race in school* (90-96). New York: New Press: Distributed by W.W. Norton & Co.
- Rubin, A. M., Perse, E. M., & Powell, R. A. (1985). Loneliness, parasocial interaction, and local television news viewing. *Human Communication Research*, 12(2), 155-180.
- Rubin, H. J., & Rubin, I. S. (2012). *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data*. Los Angeles: Sage.

- Sakellariou, D., Boniface, G., & Brown, P. (2013). Using joint interviews in a narrative-based study on illness experiences. *Qualitative Health Research*, 23(11), 1563-1570.
- Sauerhoff, E. (2013). Irish national identity and Irish drama: A social psychological analysis. In R. Harré & F. M. Moghaddan (Eds.) *The psychology of friendship and enmity: Relationships in love, work, politics and war Vol. 2* (167-182). Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger.
- Schiappa, E., Gregg, P. B., & Hewes, D. E. (2005). The parasocial contact hypothesis. *Communication Monographs*, 72(1), 92-115.
- Schiappa, E., Gregg, P. B., & Hewes, D. E. (2006). Can one TV show make a difference?: Will & Grace and the parasocial contact hypothesis. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 51(4), 15-37.
- Seals, D., & Young, J. (2003). Bullying and Victimization: Prevalence and Relationship to Gender, Grade Level, Ethnicity, Self-Esteem, and Depression. *Adolescence*, 38, 735-747.
- Seidman, I. (2006). *Interviewing as qualitative research: a guide for researchers in education and the social sciences* (3rd ed.). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Shary, T. (2002). *Generation multiplex: The image of youth in contemporary American cinema* (1st ed.). Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.
- Shary, T. (2014). *Generation Multiplex: The Image of Youth in American Cinema After 1980*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.
- Slocum-Bradley, N. (2010). The positioning diamond: A trans-disciplinary framework for discourse analysis. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, 40(1), 79-107.

- Staiger, J. (2005). *Media reception studies*. New York: NYU Press.
- Staub, E., & Pearlman, L. A. (2009). Reducing intergroup prejudice and conflict: A commentary. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 96(3), 588-593.
- Swearer S.M., Turner, R.K., Givens, J. E., & Pollack, W. S. (2008). " You're so gay!": Do different forms of bullying matter for adolescent males? *School Psychology Review*, 37(2), 160-173.
- Stever, G. S. (1991). The celebrity appeal questionnaire. *Psychological Reports*, 68(3), 859-866.
- Stever, G. (2009). Parasocial and social interaction with celebrities: Classification of media fans. *Journal of Media psychology*, 14(3), 1-39.
- Stever, G. S. (2011). Fan behavior and lifespan development theory: Explaining parasocial and social attachment to celebrities. *Journal of Adult Development*, 18(1), 1-7.
- Tatum, B. D. (2003). *"Why are all the Black kids sitting together in the cafeteria?" and other conversations about race*. New York: Basic Books.
- Taylor, N. L. (2011). "Guys, She's Humongous!": Gender and Weight-Based Teasing in Adolescence. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 26(2), 178-199.
- Taylor, B., & de Vocht, H. (2011). Interviewing separately or as couples? Considerations of authenticity of method. *Qualitative Health Research*, 21(11), 1576-1587.
- Theran, S. A., Newberg, E. M., & Gleason, T. R. (2010). Adolescent girls' parasocial interactions with media figures. *The Journal of genetic psychology*, 171(3), 270-277.

- Thorne, B. (2002). Editorial From silence to voice: Bringing children more fully into knowledge. *Childhood*, 9(3), 251-254.
- Tobin, J. J. (2000). *"Good guys don't wear hats": Children's talk about the media*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Tyson, K. (2008). Providing equal access to 'gifted' education. In M. Pollock (Ed.), *Everyday antiracism: Getting real about race in school* (126-131). New York: New Press: Distributed by W.W. Norton & Co.
- Weinman, J. J. (2011). Not much Glee over these slushies. *Maclean's*, 124(5), 65.
- Weiss, R. S. (1994). *Learning from strangers: The art and method of qualitative interview studies*. New York: Free Press.
- Willig, C. (1995). 'I wouldn't have married the guy if I'd have to do that': Heterosexual adults' constructions of condom use and their implications for sexual practice. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, 5(2), 75-87.
- Willig, C. (2001). Foucauldian discourse analysis. *Introducing qualitative research in psychology: Adventures in theory and method* (106-124). Maidenhead, UK: Open University Press.
- Willig, C. (2008). *Introducing qualitative research methods in psychology*. Maidenhead, UK: McGraw Hill.
- Willig, C. (2013). *Introducing qualitative research in psychology*. McGraw-Hill Education (UK).
- Wright, S. C., Aron, A., McLaughlin-Volpe, T., & Ropp, S. A. (1997). The extended contact effect: Knowledge of cross-group friendships and prejudice. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 73(1), 73-90.

Appendix A. Character Cards with Character Information

	<p>Rachel Berry</p> <p>Season 1, Episode 1 121 Episodes</p> <p>Original Glee Club Member</p> <p>Jewish, able, white, female, heterosexual</p> <p>Rachel is adopted, and has 2 gay fathers, one Jewish (Jeff Goldblum) and one Black.</p> <p>Actress: Lea Michele</p>
	<p>Finn Hudson</p> <p>Season 1, Episode 1 94 Episodes</p> <p>Original Glee Club Member</p> <p>Captain of the Football Team</p> <p>White, able, heterosexual, male</p> <p>Actor: Cory Monteith, recently deceased</p>

**Kurt Hummel**

Season 1, Episode 1
121 Episodes

Original Glee Club Member

White, able, male, homosexual

Comes out to a classmate in Episode 3 and his father in Episode 4.

The actor, Chris Colfer, is also openly gay.

Actor: Chris Colfer

**Mercedes Jones**

Season 1, Episode 1
113 Episodes

Original Glee Club Member

African American, female,
heterosexual, able

Actress: Amber Riley



Artie Abrams

Season 1, Episode 1
121 Episodes

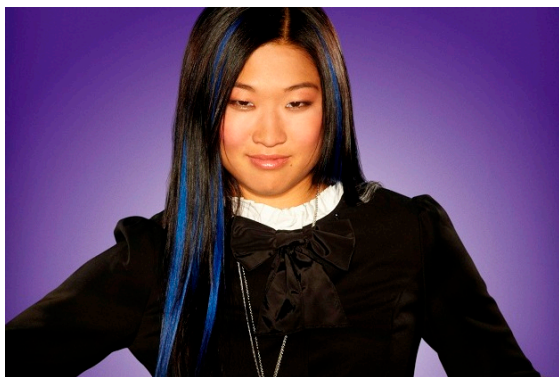
Original Glee Club Member

White, male, heterosexual

Disability: Artie is paralyzed and appears in a wheel chair.

The actor, Kevin McHale, is not disabled.

Actor: Kevin McHale



Tina Cohen-Chang

Season 1, Episode 1
115 Episodes

Original Glee Club Member

Asian (mixed race), female,
heterosexual, able

For the first several episodes, Tina has a stutter, which she admits to faking.

Actress: Jenna Ushkowitz



Noah “Puck” Puckerman

Season 1, Episode 1
99 Episodes

Jewish, able, white, male,
heterosexual

Lothario, football team, bully

Actor: Mark Salling



Quinn Fabray

Season 1, Episode 1
73 Episodes

Head Cheerleader, President of the
Chastity Club

White, female, heterosexual,
Christian

Disabled in Season 3 in a car crash,
recovered use of her legs

Has a one-night sexual relationship
with Santana (another female
character)

Pregnant in Season 1, gives baby
up for adoption

Actress: Dianna Agron

**Santana Lopez**

Season 1, Episode 1
116 Episodes

Latina, female, able

Head cheerleader

Engaged in multiple heterosexual relationships and a closeted relationship with fellow cheerleader Brittany, until being outed as a lesbian in Season 3.

Actress: Naya Rivera

**Brittany S. Pierce**

Season 1, Episode 2
98 Episodes

White, able, female

In sexual relationships with both male and female characters

Actress: Heather Morris

**Mike Chang**

Season 1, Episode 4
93 Episodes

Asian, male, heterosexual, able



Actor: Harry Shum Jr.




**Blaine Anderson**


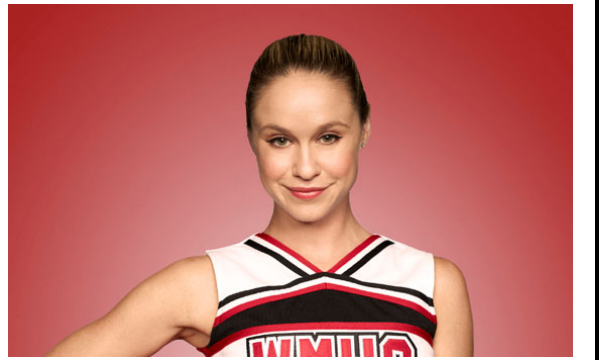

Season 2, Episode 6
90 Episodes

White, male, able, openly gay

Actor: Darren Criss

 A close-up portrait of a young man with short, light brown hair, looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression. He is wearing a dark blue hoodie.	<p>Sam Evans</p> <p>Season 2, Episode 1 91 Episodes</p> <p>White, able, male, heterosexual</p> <p>Character was homeless at the beginning of Season 3</p> <p>Actor: Chord Overstreet</p>
 A portrait of a young woman with blonde hair and glasses, looking slightly to the side with a serious expression. She is wearing a red and white sailor-style jacket over a black and white striped shirt.	<p>Becky Jackson</p> <p>Season 1, Episode 9 53 Episodes</p> <p>White, female, heterosexual with Down Syndrome</p> <p>Actress: Lauren Potter</p>

	<p>Marley Rose</p> <p>Season 4, Episode 1 42 Episodes</p> <p>White, female, heterosexual, able</p> <p>Low SES, mother is morbidly obese</p> <p>Actress: Melissa Benoist</p>
	<p>Jake Puckerman</p> <p>Season 4, Episode 1 43 Episodes</p> <p>Mixed race (Black and White/Jewish), able, heterosexual male</p> <p>Actor: Jacob Artist</p>
	<p>Wade "Unique" Adams</p> <p>Season 3, Episode 16 43 Episodes</p> <p>Black, able, transgender (male to female)</p> <p>Glee Project Winner</p> <p>Actor: Alex Newell</p>

	<p>Joe Hart “Teen Jesus”</p> <p>Season 3, Episode 13 23 Episodes</p> <p>Straight, white, able, Christian male</p> <p>Glee Project Winner</p> <p>Actor: Samuel Larsen</p>
	<p>Kitty Wilde</p> <p>Season 4, Episode 1 49 Episodes</p> <p>White, heterosexual, able, female</p> <p>Actress: Becca Tobin</p>
	<p>Ryder Lynn</p> <p>Season 4, Episode 5 39 Episodes</p> <p>White, male, heterosexual with dyslexia</p> <p>Glee Project Winner</p> <p>Actor: Blake Jenner</p>

**Emma Pillsbury**

Season 1, Episode 1
84 Episodes

White, female, heterosexual

Extreme OCD (cleaning,
germaphobia, neatness)

Romantic relationship with Will
Schuester

Actress: Jayma Mays

**Will Schuester “Mr. Schue”**

Season 1, Episode 1
121 Episodes

White, heterosexual, able, male

Director of the Glee Club

Actor: Matthew Morrison

 A portrait of Sue Sylvester, a blonde woman with short hair, wearing a red and white cheerleader jacket, holding a black walkie-talkie. The background is a solid light blue.	<p>Sue Sylvester</p> <p>Season 1, Episode 1 121 Episodes</p> <p>Cheerleading coach</p> <p>White, able, heterosexual/asexual</p> <p>Has a sister with Down Syndrome</p> <p>Actress: Jane Lynch</p>
 A portrait of Coach Shannon Beiste, a woman with short, dark, curly hair, wearing a purple polo shirt with a light blue collar. She has a serious expression. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.	<p>Coach Shannon Beiste</p> <p>Season 2, Episode 1 47 Episodes</p> <p>Female, straight, able, white</p> <p>Football coach</p> <p>Actress: Dot-Marie Jones</p>

	<p>Coach Roz Washington</p> <p>Season 3, Episode 10 13 Episodes</p> <p>Black, able, female</p> <p>Swimming Coach</p> <p>Actress: Nene Leakes</p>
	<p>Principal Figgins</p> <p>Season 1, Episode 1 58 Episodes</p> <p>Principal of McKinley High</p> <p>East Asian, male, heterosexual, able</p> <p>Actor: Iqbal Theba</p>
<p>No Character Card</p>	<p>Dave Karofsky</p> <p>Season 1, Episode 8 29 Episodes</p> <p>Bullies Kurt in Season 2</p> <p>White, male, homosexual, able</p> <p>Actor: Max Adler</p>

Appendix B. Interview Protocol

PART I. Background Information

1. What kinds of shows do you like to watch?
2. Do you have a favorite character on show A? Show B?
3. What do you like about that character?
4. Are there any characters that you dislike on show A or B?
5. What do you dislike about that character?
6. Tell me about the show *Glee*. What is the show about?
7. How often have you seen it?
8. When did you start watching the show?
9. Do you still watch it?
10. Was there a time when you watched the show more than you did now?
11. What appealed to you then?
12. Why did you stop watching as much?

PART II. Character Cards

[[For this section, students will work with pictures of several of the main characters from *Glee*]]

Mercedes, Santana, Mike Chang, Tina, Artie, Emma, Becky, Coach Beiste, Kurt, Blaine, Britney, Rachel, Finn, Quinn, Puck, Marley, Jake, Ryder, and Karofsky

1. These are pictures of characters from *Glee*. Can you describe a few of these characters to me?
2. What else do you know about these characters?
3. Who is your favorite character? Why?
4. Are there any characters that you don't like? Why?
5. Now, please take a minute or two and group these characters in any way that you want. You can make as many or as few groups as you would like to.
6. Can you tell me how you grouped these characters?
7. Why did you put these characters together? What do these characters have in common?
8. Now, please take another few minutes, and group these characters again. You can group them in any way that you want, and you can make as many or as few groups as you would like. [[FOR FOCUS GROUPS, OMIT QUESTIONS 8, 9 AND 10]]
9. Can you tell me how you grouped these characters?
10. Why did you put these characters together? What do these characters have in common?
11. Can you think of any other ways to group these characters?
12. If Sue Sylvester was making the groups, what might they look like?

PART III. Difference

1. Do you think that *Glee* deals with issues that real teenagers face?
2. What do you think of the way that *Glee* portrays different kinds of people?
3. Can you think of any characters on *Glee* that have a disability? Any other characters?
4. What do you think of the way that *Glee* portrays characters who have a disability?
5. Do you think *Glee* does a good job of portraying what it's like to have a disability?
6. Can you think of any characters on *Glee* who are LGBT? Any other characters?
7. What do you think of the way that *Glee* portrays characters who are gay?
8. Do you think *Glee* does a good job of portraying what it's like to be gay?
9. Do any characters on *Glee* have differences in their economic situations?
10. What do you think of the way that *Glee* portrays economic differences within its characters?
11. What do you think of the way that *Glee* portrays characters of different ethnicities?
12. Are any of the characters on *Glee* popular?
13. What do you think of the way that *Glee* portrays popularity?
14. Do you think *Glee* does a good job of portraying popularity?
15. What do you think of the way that *Glee* portrays the appearances of high school students?
16. Does *Glee* have any characters who look different from the other characters?

17. Do you think *Glee* does a good job of portraying what high school students look like?
18. Can you think of any characters that are religious?
19. What do you think about the way that *Glee* portrays religion in high schools?
20. Do you think *Glee* does a good job of portraying what it's like to be religious in high school?

Probe: What would make *Glee*'s portrayal better? What would you rather see?

PART IV. Comparison to Schools

1. Have you ever felt different in school? What made you feel different?
2. Do you notice people in your school who are different from you?
3. Do you spend time with people who are different from you? How are they different?
4. Do you have friends who are different from you? How are they different?
5. Do you think you would recommend watching *Glee* to someone who wanted to know more about different kinds of people?
6. Do you think you would recommend watching *Glee* to someone who wanted to know more about how to act around people who are different from them?
7. Do you think *Glee* can have an impact on the way that people think about those who are different from them?

8. Has *Glee* had an impact on the way that you think about people who are different from you? Can you tell me more about that? (probe questions: different kinds of difference).
9. Do you think *Glee* had an impact on the way that you interact with people at your school?
10. Do you think there are any consequences to being labeled as different in high school? (see if they bring up bullying)
11. What does the word bullying mean to you?
12. How can you tell if someone is being bullied in a TV show?
13. Is that what it looks like in real life?
14. Have you ever been bullied?
15. Would anyone consider things you've done to be bullying?
16. Of these characters, which is the most likely to be bullied? Why?
17. Which is the most likely to bully someone? Why?
18. What does it mean to get slushied?
19. Why do people get slushied on *Glee*?
20. Can you tell me about a character's first slushy? Why were they slushied?
21. Is there anything else that you would like to tell me about *Glee*?

PART V. Video Clip

CUE UP CLIP: Season 1, Episode 3: Kurt comes out to Mercedes (39:37-40:56)

1. What can you tell me about this clip?
2. What does this clip make you think about?
3. What do you think about the way that Mercedes responded?

4. Is this a clip that you would recommend that people watch? Why or why not?
5. In another episode, Santana is outed by Finn. Have you seen that episode? [[If they answer yes, continue. If no, give them a description of the scene and then continue.]] What do you think about that scene?
6. Would you recommend that people watch that scene?

PART VI. Demographic Information

[[The answers to these questions are said out loud in interviews and written down in focus groups.]]

1. What high school do you go to?
2. What grade are you in?
3. What is your age?
4. What gender do you identify with?
5. What race or ethnicity do you identify with?
6. Who do you live with?
7. What do they do for a living?
8. What is your sexual orientation?
9. Do you consider yourself religious? What religion do you practice?
10. Do you identify as having a disability?

Appendix C. Interview Protocol Organized by Research Question

<p>Demographic/ Background Information</p> <p>General Questions about <i>Glee</i> Viewing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What kinds of shows do you like? • What kinds of characters do you like? • What kinds of characters do dislike? • Tell me about the show <i>Glee</i>. What is the show about? • How often have you seen it? (maybe a Likert scale)
<p>1. How do youth talk about the representations of individual difference on <i>Glee</i>, specifically difference in the areas of (a) human sexuality, (b) appearance (especially in relation to weight), and (c) ethnicity?</p> <p>[[This research question became the main focus for this study.]]</p>	<p>[[For this section, students will work with pictures of several of the main characters from <i>Glee</i>]]</p> <p>1) These are pictures of characters from <i>Glee</i>. Can you tell me who these characters are?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mercedes, Santana, Mike Chang, Tina (race/ethnicity) • Artie, Emma, and Becky (ability/special needs) • Mercedes, and Coach Beiste (body type) • Kurt, Blaine, Santana, Brittany (sexuality) • Rachel, Finn, Quinn, Puck (straight, attractive, white characters) <p><i>Ask students to pick out a few characters and ask them to describe them in their own words.</i></p> <p>-1- Who is your favorite character? Why?</p> <p><i>Have students group them in any way that they choose and then discuss the groupings that they have made.</i></p> <p>-1- Can you tell me how you grouped these characters?</p> <p>-1- How else could you group them?</p> <p>-1- If Sue (a character on <i>Glee</i>) was</p>

	making the groups, what might they look like?
<p>2. How do youth relate these representations to their own experiences?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you think of the way that <i>Glee</i> portrays different kinds of people? • What do you think of the way that <i>Glee</i> portrays characters who have a disability? • Do you think <i>Glee</i> does a good job of portraying what it's like to have a disability? • What do you think of the way that <i>Glee</i> portrays characters who are gay? • Do you think <i>Glee</i> does a good job of portraying what it's like to be gay? • What do you think about Kurt's storyline? Do you think it's like what would happen in real life? • What do you think about the way that <i>Glee</i> portrays characters who are overweight? • What do you think about Mercedes' storyline?
<p>3. Do youth report a change in their attitudes, understandings, or actions based on their viewing of <i>Glee</i> or other shows?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you ever felt different in school? What made you feel different? • Do you notice people in your school who are different from you? • Do you spend time with people who are different from you? How are they different? • Do you have friends who are different from you? How are they different? • Do you think <i>Glee</i> had any impact on the way that you interact with people at your school? • Do you think <i>Glee</i> had any impact on the way that you think about people who are different from you?

	<p>Can you tell me more about that? (probe questions: different kinds of difference).</p>
<p>4. How do youth talk about the portrayals of bullying on <i>Glee</i>? What causes do they name for this bullying?</p> <p>5. How do they relate these representations to their own experiences?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ -4- What does the word bullying mean to you? ○ How can you tell if someone is being bullied in a TV show? ○ -5- Is that what it looks like in real life? ○ -4-How can you tell if someone is a bully on a TV show? ○ -5-Is that what bullying looks like in real life? ○ -5- Have you ever been bullied? (maybe don't say bullying) ○ -5- Have you ever bullied someone? (maybe don't use the word) ○ -4-Of these characters, which is the most likely to be bullied? Why? ○ -4- Which is the most likely to bully someone? Why? ○ -4- What does it mean to get slushied? ○ Why do people get slushied on <i>Glee</i>? ○ What kinds of people get slushied? ○ How is Kurt treated at McKinley? ○ Why is Kurt treated this way? ○ Would you say that anyone on <i>Glee</i> is bullied? ○ Would you say that anyone on <i>Glee</i> is a bully?

Appendix D: Parent Informed Consent Form

Dear Parent/Guardian,

My name is Jennifer Dorsey and I am a doctoral student at the Harvard University Graduate School of Education. I have been granted permission by _____ to recruit students from the school (this after-school program) to take part in my research project. The research will include interviews and focus group discussions.

Purpose of the Research:

I will be looking at the ways that youth interpret movies and television shows about high school and high school students. During the focus groups and interviews, I hope to learn about the ways that youth talk about movies about high school and high school students. As ----- graders, these students are uniquely positioned to shed light on how their expectations of high school may or may not be influenced by the representations that they see in film. My primary goal is to learn about how youth are understanding these movies centered around the experience of attending American schools. I plan to write about what I learn in my dissertation for my doctoral program. I may also present my findings in professional presentations and publications. You are welcome to contact me with any questions or concerns about my research (contact information appears below).

What the research will include:

All high school students who have previously seen the television show *Glee* at _____ have been invited to participate in this study. Participation in this study will entail participating in one of the following:

- Participation in a focus group of three to five high school students. Focus groups will last between one hour and 90 minutes and will take place (a) at this school before or after school, (b) at this organization during regular hours, or (c) at an agreed upon time at a public library. I will conduct the focus group. Focus groups will be video- and audio-recorded with student and parent permission.
- Participation in a one-on-one interview. Interviews will last between an hour and 75 minutes and will take place (a) at this school before or after school, (b) at this organization during regular hours, or (c) at an agreed upon time at a public library. I will conduct the interview. Interviews will be video- and audio-recorded with student and parent permission.

Your child will only be recorded with your permission. Below, you may check whether you prefer for your child to be video- and audio-recorded, video-recorded, audio-recorded or not recorded at all. Students who wish not to be video-recorded will most likely be interviewed individually, since a group cannot be recorded if even one member does not wish to be recorded. If your child prefers to be in a group but does not want to be recorded, please contact me so that we can discuss this further.

A select number of students will also participate in a final 1-hour focus group in the spring. During this focus group, I would like for the youth to give me feedback on the analysis I have conducted. This focus group will also be video- and audio-recorded.

Benefits: Students will participate in research about films and television shows that allows for their voice to be heard. Also, the process of participating in research and learning more about the research process will be beneficial to the subjects. The process of discussing films in depth with peers will also be enjoyable and beneficial intellectually.

Risks: I do not anticipate risks of harm to the students. The only potential for risk is similar to the risk associated with discussions the students would have in an English classroom about any story. We will be discussing representation of schools and perceptions of bullying and difference, so students who have strong personal feelings about how they are perceived may feel uncomfortable. Any information that students may be in imminent danger will be shared with a school official or parent.

Participation and withdrawal: Your son/daughter's participation is completely voluntary, and they may refuse to participate without penalty or loss of benefit to which you may otherwise be entitled. Also, you may choose to withdraw at any time without penalty or loss of benefit to which you may otherwise be entitled. Either you or your child may end your participation simply by informing me.

Compensation: As a token of my appreciation, students will receive a ten-dollar gift certificate to either iTunes or Regal Cinema at the end of the focus group or individual interview. Anyone who is scheduled for an interview or focus group and comes at the scheduled time will receive this gift, even if they change their mind about participation.

Confidentiality: All information your child provides will be kept confidential. To protect her/his privacy, I will never use your child's name or other identifying personal information in any papers or presentations. Students' responses will not be shared with any staff members, teachers, or administrators at school unless your child says something to indicate that they or someone else may be in danger.

The information collected during this project will be stored securely in my workspace. All raw data, written material, and audiotapes will be destroyed after a twenty-year period. I would like you to know that I may share interview transcripts with my three-person doctoral committee in order to discuss how best to analyze the data. However, I will not reveal real names and will use pseudonyms for this process. Finally, I may use this study for future publications, conference presentations, and in my doctoral dissertation.

Video tapes and audio tapes may be used to create a visual narrative composite (like a documentary) to accompany this writing. These compilations will not be destroyed. **Your child will not be included in a visual narrative composite without your permission.**

I look forward to this study and working with your daughter/son. Thank you so much for taking the time to read this.

If you have questions about the project, please **FIRST** call Jennifer Dorsey at (857) 233-3202 or email jmd045@mail.harvard.edu.

If you choose to give permission for your son/daughter to participate in this project, please sign the permission slip and have your son/daughter return it to _____.

Jennifer Dorsey
Doctoral Student
Culture, Communities and Education
Harvard Graduate School of Education
(857)233-3202 jmd045@mail.harvard.edu
dorseyjen@gmail.com

This project is being supervised by:

Helen Haste
Visiting Professor of Education
Harvard Graduate School of Education
Larsen 613
helen_haste@gse.harvard.edu
Faculty Assistant: Whitney W. Su
whitney_su@gse.harvard.edu
Phone: (617) 496-9087

Whom to contact about your rights in this research, for questions, concerns, suggestions, or complaints **that are not being addressed by the researcher**, or research-related harm:

Committee on the Use of Human Subjects in Research at Harvard University
1414 Massachusetts Avenue, Second Floor, Cambridge, MA 02138.
Phone: 617-496-CUHS (2847). Email: cuhs@fas.harvard.edu.

PLEASE RETURN THIS PAGE TO _____.

The purpose and nature of this research project has been sufficiently explained and I agree to allow my child to participate in this study. I understand that my child is free to withdraw at any time without incurring any penalty. I agree to allow my daughter/son to:

Please check **one box** under each heading.

I agree to allow my child to:

- Take part in a focus groups of 3 to 5 students
- Take part in a one-on-one interview
- Take part in either a one-on-one interview or a focus group

I agree to allow my child to be:

- Videotaped and audio taped
- Audio taped only
- Videotaped only
- Not recorded in any way

Recordings of my child may be used:

- only as data for the researcher to analyze
- as short clips at presentations and professional conferences and in video compilations used in academic settings

I agree to allow my child to:

- view clips of the television show *Glee*.

_____ Date: _____

Parent or Guardian Name (print):

Daughter/Son's Name (print):

Daughter/Son's Date of Birth:

Appendix E: Student Informed Assent

Dear Participant,

My name is Jennifer Dorsey and I am a doctoral student at the Harvard University Graduate School of Education. I would like to invite you to participate in a research study that I am conducting. The research will include interviews and focus group discussions. I would be excited to work with you.

Purpose of the Research: Specifically, I am interested in seeing how students talk about the ways that movies and television shows portray high schools and high school students so that I can better understand the ways that young people understand movies and television shows for and about adolescents, especially those that are set in school environments. I plan to write about what I learn in my dissertation. I may also present my findings in professional presentations and publications. You are welcome to contact me with any questions or concerns about my research (my phone number and email address appear below) and I am happy to share the details of the study with you.

What you will do in the research: If you decide to volunteer, you will be asked to participate in one interview OR one focus group. You will be asked the same kind of questions whether you choose to participate in the interview or the focus group, so you should choose the format that makes you more comfortable. If you are happy participating in either an interview or a focus group, please indicate this.

The interview will consist of a 60 to 75 minute long discussion one-on-one between you and the researcher. The focus group will consist of between two or three students who you may or may not know who are close to you in age and attending the the same after school program or the same school. In both the interview and the focus group, you will be asked to watch two or three clips from the television show *Glee*.

You will be asked to respond to what you have seen. You will be asked several questions. Some of them will be about the film clips that we watch and what you think of them. Others will be about what movies and television shows you watch in general. With your permission, I will tape record and video record the interview and the focus groups so I don't have to make so many notes. You will not be asked to state your name on the recording.

You will only be recorded with your permission. Below, you may check whether you prefer to be video- and audio-recorded, video-recorded only, audio-recorded only, or not recorded at all. If you do not wish to be video recorded, you will most likely be interviewed individually, since a group cannot be recorded if even one member does not wish to be recorded. If you would like to be in a focus group but you do not want to be recorded, please contact me so that we can discuss this further.

I will also ask a few students to participate in a final 1-hour focus group later this spring. The purpose of this focus group is for you to give me feedback on how I am understanding what you and other students have said. This focus group will also be video and audio-recorded. You can participate in the original interviews and focus groups without participating in this final focus group.

Time required: Interviews will take approximately 60 to 75 minutes. Small group interviews will take approximately 60 to 90 minutes.

Risks: While it is unlikely that you will encounter any risks associated with this research, some of the questions may cause discomfort or embarrassment. You may choose not to answer any questions that make you uncomfortable.

Benefits: This is a chance for you to tell your story about your understanding of the movies and television shows that Hollywood makes about and for people your age.

Compensation: As a thank you gift, you will receive a ten-dollar gift certificate to iTunes or Regal Cinemas at the end of the focus group or individual interview. Anyone who is scheduled for an interview or focus group and comes at the scheduled time will receive this gift, even if they change their mind about participation.

Participation and Withdrawal: Your participation is completely voluntary, and you may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. You may withdraw by informing me that you no longer wish to participate (no questions will be asked). You may refuse to participate without penalty or loss of benefit to which you may otherwise be entitled. Also, you may choose to withdraw at any time without penalty or loss of benefit to which you may otherwise be entitled (nothing will be taken away from you). You may end your participation simply by informing me.

Your grades will not be affected. If you choose to withdraw from the study after the focus group has been conducted, nothing that you say will be used, but the responses of other people in the group will remain in the study. You may also choose not to answer certain questions asked of you, but continue to participate in the rest of the study.

Confidentiality: Your responses in the focus group will be kept confidential. At no time will your actual identity be revealed. You will be assigned a name other than your own (pseudonym) in any writing about the interviews. Anyone who helps me transcribe responses will only know you by this pseudonym.

The data you give me will be used for work I am doing to qualify for graduation and may be used as the basis for articles or presentations in the future. I won't use your name or information that would identify you in any publications or presentations. Video tapes and audio tapes may be used to create a visual narrative composite (like a documentary) to accompany this writing.

The video tapes of the focus group may be used in both research presentations and as data for my research. Your name will never be used in conjunction with the video tape. If you do not want your video tape used in public but would like to remain in the study, you can choose that option in the consent forms. The raw audio and video recordings as well as transcripts of the focus groups will be kept in a safe place for seven years after my dissertation has been accepted and then erased. Visual narrative composites made from the video tapes will not be destroyed.

I look forward to talking with you and learning about your ideas. Thank you so much for taking the time to read this!

If you have **questions** about the project, please **FIRST** call me, Jennifer Dorsey at (857) 233-3202 or email jmd045@mail.harvard.edu.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Dorsey

Jennifer Dorsey
Doctoral Student
Culture, Communities and Education
Harvard Graduate School of Education
(857)233-3202 jmd045@mail.harvard.edu
dorseyjen@gmail.com

This project is being supervised by:

Helen Haste
Visiting Professor of Education
Harvard Graduate School of Education
Larsen 613
helen_haste@gse.harvard.edu
Faculty Assistant: Whitney W. Su
whitney_su@gse.harvard.edu
Phone: (617) 496-9087

Whom to contact about your rights in this research, for questions, concerns, suggestions, or **complaints that are not being addressed by the researcher** or her advisor, or research-related harm:

Committee on the Use of Human Subjects in Research at Harvard University, 1414
Massachusetts Avenue, Second Floor, Cambridge, MA 02138.
Phone: 617-496-CUHS (2847). Email: cuhs@fas.harvard.edu.

PLEASE RETURN THIS PAGE TO - _____.

The purpose and nature of this research project has been clearly explained and I agree to participate in this study. I understand that I am free to stop participating at any time without any penalty.

Please check one box per category.

I agree to:

- Take part in a focus groups of 3 to 5 students
- Take part in a one-on-one interview
- I don't have a preference. I will take part in either a one-on-one interview or a focus group

I agree to be:

- Videotaped and audio taped
- Audio taped only
- Vide taped only
- Not recorded in any way

Recordings of me:

- should only be used for analysis. Only Ms. Dorsey should hear/see these recordings.
- can be used to make a short film to be shown by Ms. Dorsey at conferences

My age:

- I am currently at least 14 years old
- I will be 14 years old on _____

I would be interested in participating in a second focus group in the spring to tell you what I think about your understanding of what I (and other students) said:

- Yes
- No

Agreement:

The purpose and nature of this research have been explained clearly and I agree to participate in this study. I understand that I am free to withdraw at any time.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name (print): _____

In the transcribed interviews, I wish to be identified by the name: _____

Appendix F: Oral Script for Youth Recruitment into the Research Study

My name is Jennifer Dorsey and I am a student at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. I'm here today to ask you to participate in a research project that I'm doing as part of my graduation requirements. All students in this class (or in this group) are being invited to be part of this project. You do not have to participate. It is your choice. If you decide to participate, you'll help me by contributing your ideas and thoughts about what young people like you think about the ways that movies and television shows about schools and adolescents portray people your age.

You will have a choice of either participating in a one-on-one tape-recorded and video-recorded individual interview with me or you can choose to answer the same questions and do the same activities in groups of 2 to 5 students in a one-hour to one and a half hour tape-recorded and video recorded focus groups. In both the interviews and focus groups, I will show you two or three short clips from the television show *Glee*. I will then ask you questions about the characters in the clips as well as the story being told.

In addition, at a later date, after I have looked over all of the information that I have, I might ask you individually or as a part of a group to comment on whether or not I understood what you were saying. I may ask you to help me interpret and analyze the information I have collected from you and from other people your age. Specifically, I'd like to make sure that I have interpreted your comments correctly and to see if there are any important pieces of information that I have missed.

You can choose to participate or not participate in this process. You may also choose not to be audio-recorded or video-recorded. The responses you give during the focus groups and interviews will be kept confidential; no staff or teachers at your school will see anything you write down or say, unless you say something to me that indicates that you are in physical or emotional danger. It's fine to decide not to participate. No one will be upset with you and your experiences at school and in class will not be any different. If you agree to participate but then change your mind, it's okay to stop being in the study, too.

Participation in the focus groups and interviews will be determined by who returns permission slips. If more students return permission slips than can participate in the study, I will choose students randomly after making sure that I have a good mix of students (a diverse group of students).

I have permission slips with me today that you will need to sign if you want to participate. Also, there are permission slips that your parents will need to sign. The permission slips include information about the project and what participating in the study will be like. I'll pass these around and if you want to participate, please hand in the letter with your signature to _____. Both you and your parent or guardian need to sign the letter saying that you can participate in this study.

Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to speak with all of you! I look forward to getting to know you!

Appendix G: Sample Letter of Inquiry for Schools and After School Programs

Boys and Girls Club of ----- After School Program

Address

Phone number

Name

Email

Hello Ms. ----- ,

My name is Jennifer Dorsey and I am an advanced doctoral student at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. I am studying the ways that adolescents understand messages about bullying and difference in the movies and TV shows that are marketed to them.

I am in the process of recruiting students who are currently in high school to participate in focus groups and one-on-one interviews. The focus groups and interviews would consist of watching a short clip from the TV show *Glee* followed by a brief discussion of the clip. I am hoping to recruit students and conduct focus groups in September and October. I have attached additional information about the project for your consideration.²⁷

I would be happy to tell you more about my project and its logistics either through email or in person. I am currently living in the area, and I would be excited to work with the students who come to your club. I would also be excited to talk to you about ways that I could contribute to the children's experience at the club as a way to give back.

Thank you so much for your time.

Jennifer Dorsey

Jennifer Dorsey
 Doctoral Student
 Culture, Communities and Education
 Harvard Graduate School of Education
 (857) 233-3202 jmd045@mail.harvard.edu
dorseyjen@gmail.com

This project is being supervised by:
 Helen Haste
 Visiting Professor of Education
 Harvard Graduate School of
 Education
 Larsen 613
helen_haste@gse.harvard.edu
 Faculty Assistant: Whitney W. Su
whitney_su@gse.harvard.edu

²⁷ I will attach to the email the "Interview/Focus Group Information Sheet" found later in this document.

Phone: (617) 496-908

Appendix H: Letter of Agreement with the ----- School

Dear Ms. -----,

I am writing this letter to confirm your permission to conduct a research study at the ----- School during the Fall of 2012 as part of my doctoral work at the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

My research is about adolescents' understanding of messages in mainstream American films and television shows that take place in high schools. I am particularly interested in the ways that adolescents understand portrayals of bullying and difference and how those understandings may relate to school culture. I will be asking a sample of 15 to 20 high school students from your campus to participate in this study. I will be recruiting for 30 focus groups and interviews in total. Participation will entail their involvement in a one-hour interview or focus group.

Parents/guardians will give permission for their child to be part of the study if that student is under 18 years of age. In order to accurately capture the young people's words, I would like to audio record and video record the focus groups and the interviews. However, if parents/ guardians or the youth do not want to give their permission for audio recording and/or video recording, I will not use this form of data collection. All students will be assured that their participation is completely voluntary and that there is no penalty for deciding not to participate or for withdrawing from the project at any time.

All information will be kept confidential, except in the unlikely event that there is good reason to think that a student or someone else is in danger. Individual responses, interview transcripts, and observation notes from the study will be kept strictly confidential and information collected during this project will be stored securely in my workspace or on my personal computer. All raw data, written material, and audiotapes will be destroyed after a twenty-year period. I would like you to know that I may share interview transcripts with my three-person doctoral committee in order to discuss how best to analyze the data. I will not reveal real names, and I will use pseudonyms for this process. Finally, I may use this study for future publications, conferences presentations, and my doctoral dissertation.

I thank you for your support and look forward to this study. If you agree to the nature and purpose of this research study, please print your name and sign where indicated below.

Name (print): _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____

Thank you,

Jennifer Dorsey, Ed.D candidate, Harvard Graduate School of Education
jmd045@mail.harvard.edu 857-233-3202

This project is being supervised by Helen Haste, Visiting Professor of Education,
Harvard Graduate School of Education, Office: Larsen 613, Email:
helen_haste@gse.harvard.edu 617-354-1544

Appendix I: Email Communication with Principal of ----- School:

Possibility of recruiting students at ----- School

Hello Ms. -----,

My name is Jennifer Dorsey and I am an advanced doctoral student at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. I am studying the ways that adolescents understand messages about bullying and difference in the television show *Glee*.

I am currently in the process of trying to recruit high school-aged students to participate in 30 focus groups and interviews. The focus group and interviews would consist of watching short clips from the television show *Glee* followed by a brief discussion of the clips. I am hoping to recruit students and conduct interviews and focus groups in September and October of 2012.

----- recommended that I get in touch with you to see if it would be possible for me to recruit at the ----- School. "Recruiting" would look like me briefly describing the study to students in Mr. (Ms.) -----'s class (and the classes of any other teachers willing to let me recruit) and asking students if they would be interested in participating. Ideally, the focus groups would occur on school grounds either after school or during lunch (but this is flexible).

I would be happy to tell you more about my project either through email or in person.

Thank you so much for your time.

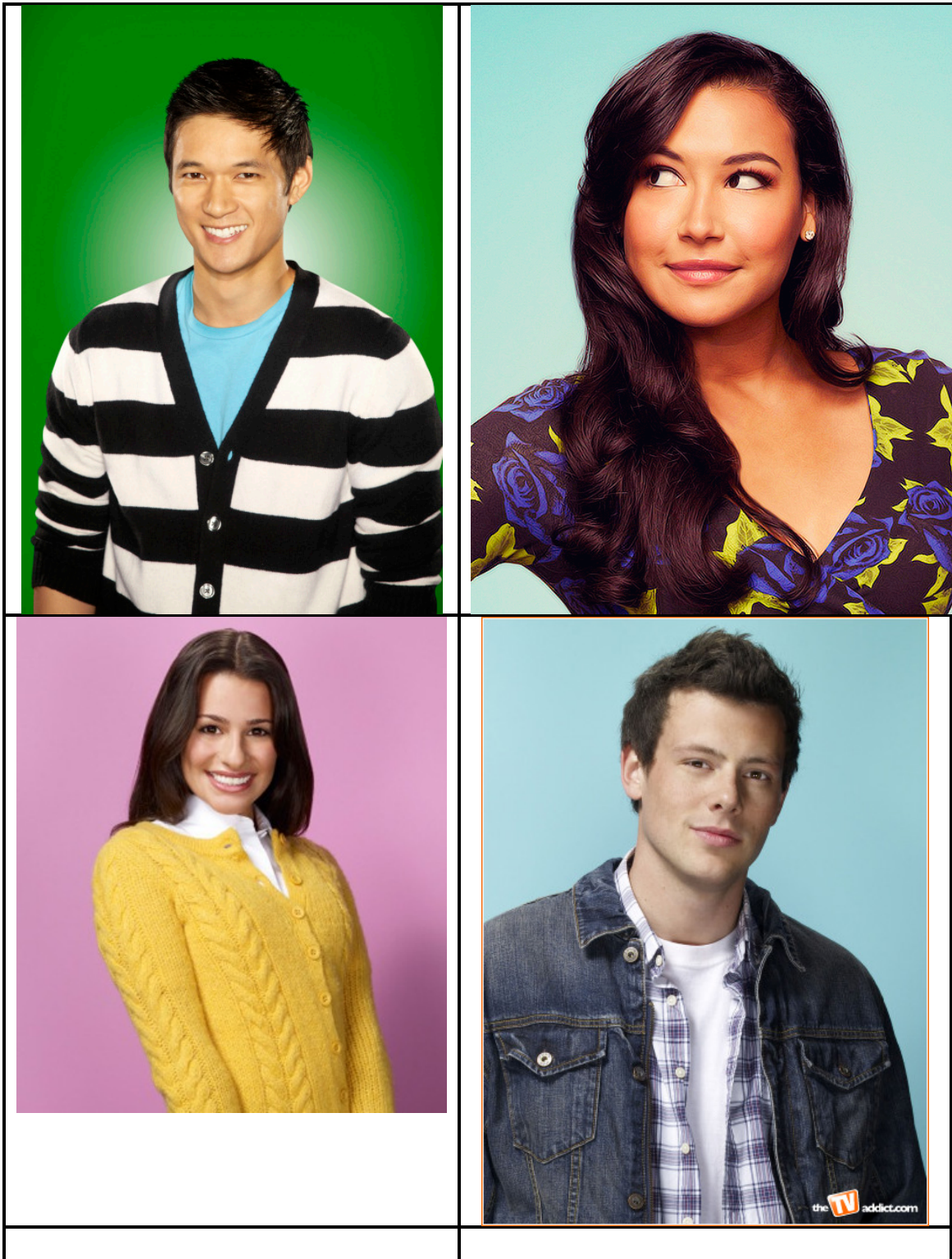
Jennifer Dorsey

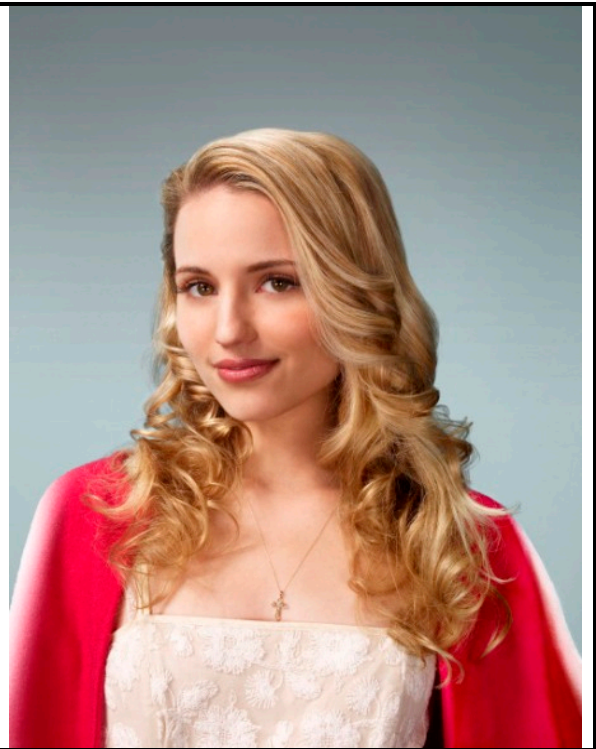
Jennifer M. Dorsey, MA
 Doctoral Student
 Culture, Communities and Education
 Harvard Graduate School of Education
jmd045@mail.harvard.edu (857) 233-3202

This project is being supervised by:

Helen Haste
 Visiting Professor of Education
 Harvard Graduate School of Education
 Larsen 613
helen_haste@gse.harvard.edu
 Faculty Assistant: Whitney W. Su
whitney_su@gse.harvard.edu
 Phone: (617) 496-9087

Appendix J: Glee Character Cards

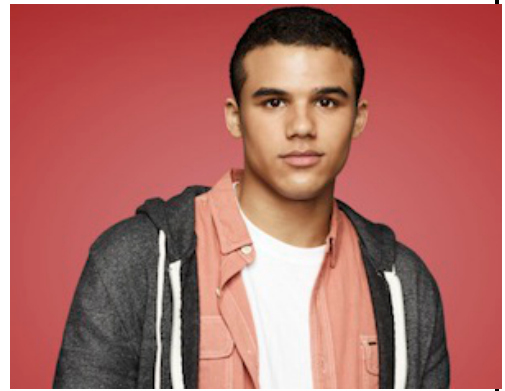


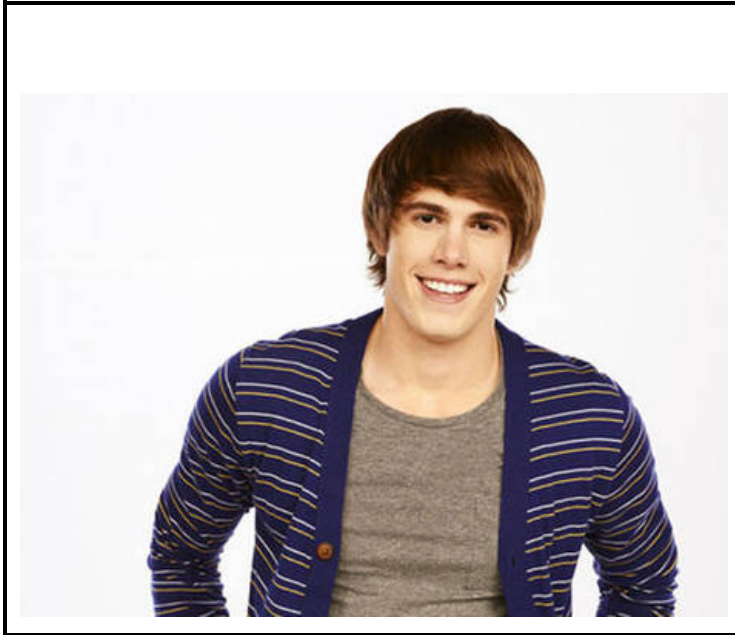
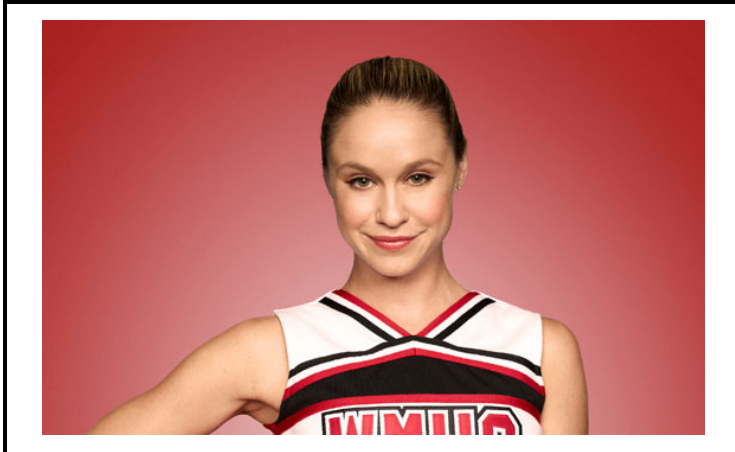












Appendix K: Glee Recruitment Card

Tell me what you think about High School and Glee.

I am a Harvard doctoral student conducting **One Hour Interviews** talking to youth about Glee and the portrayals of high school on television.

You are eligible to participate if:

- *You are a high school student or recent graduate**
- *You have seen 5 or more episodes of Glee**

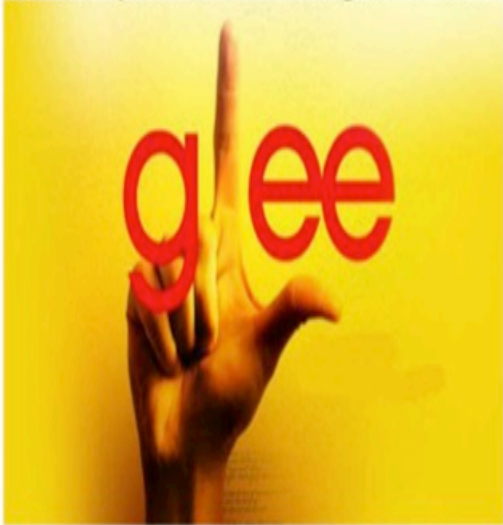
All Participants receive a **\$10 giftcard** (iTunes, Cinema)

Interviews can be held at a library, coffee shop, in your home, or anywhere you feel comfortable. **(857)233-3202**

Contact Jennifer at **dorseyjen@gmail.com**

Appendix L: Glee Color Flyer

Tell me what you think about High School and



My name is Jen Dorsey, and I am a doctoral student at Harvard. As part of my graduation research, I am interviewing High School Students.

You are **eligible** to participate if you:

- *Are currently attending High School (or recently graduated)
- *Have seen at least 5 episodes of Glee (from any season)

In the interview we will be discussing what you think about the portrayal of high school students on the TV show Glee and how those portrayals match up with your own experience in schools. You can interview individually or with a friend.

Interviews can be held at [REDACTED] or anywhere that you feel comfortable. If you are interested, you can ask Natalia for more information or contact me directly at dorseyjen@gmail.com.

All participants receive a \$10 iTunes or Regal Cinemas gift card.

Appendix M: IRB Approval

HARVARD UNIVERSITY
COMMITTEE ON THE USE OF HUMAN SUBJECTS IN RESEARCH

Federal Wide Assurance (FWA) 00004837
IRB Identification # 00000109

JESSE SVENDEKER
Chair

BETSY DRAPER
Research Officer

ROOM 257
1414 Massachusetts Avenue
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02138
617-496-3137

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ACTION

Application Number: F22588-101

Investigator: Jennifer Dorsey

Project Title: High school students' understanding of difference and bullying as represented in the show Glee

Funding Source: None

ACTION TAKEN: Approved as amended

TYPE OF REVIEW: Expedited

Review Date: 9/28/2012

Conditions, comments, etc.:

None.

Period of approval begins 9/28/2012 and expires 9/27/2013

IMPORTANT:

1. The investigator **must** submit a **Study Closing Form** when the project is complete.
2. If the project will extend beyond approval period (including the continuing use of identifiable data or identifiable human materials), a **Renewal Application must be submitted by: 7/29/2013**
3. Study Closing and Renewal Application Forms are available at <http://cuhs.harvard.edu>.
4. Please see additional conditions for which you are responsible on next page ...

[Page 1 of 2]

Appendix N: Glee Recruitment

(email to students sent by Charly Reyes, program director of Youth Pride)

Glee Blurb:

My name is Jennifer Dorsey, and I am a doctoral student at Harvard. As part of my graduation research, I am interviewing high school Students. I am hoping that you will be interested in participating.

In the interview we will be discussing what you think about the portrayal of high school students on the TV show *Glee* and how those portrayals match up with your own experience in schools. You can interview individually or with a friend.

You are Eligible to participate if you:

- *Are currently attending high school (or have recently graduated)
- *Have seen at least 5 episodes of *Glee* (from any season)

Interviews can be held at YouthPride or anywhere that you feel comfortable. Please ask Natalia for a permission form for your guardian if you are under 18. If you are 18 or older, just let me know that you are interested, and we can set up a time together.

All participants receive a \$10 iTunes or Regal Cinemas gift card.

If you have any questions or would like to talk about this further, please email dorseyjen@gmail.com or call me at 857-233-3202.

Appendix O: De-identified Student Data

Pseudonym	School and/or Program	Grade	Age	ethnicity	sex	gender	sexuality	disability	who do you live with	what do they do?
Joseph	(neighboring city)	11th	17	White	male	male	straight	none		[[professional]]
Beth	Henryville High (neighboring city)	11th	17	White	female	female	heterosexual	none	family	father-entrepreneur, mother-director of
Tyler	Molly Ivins HS Afterschool Program	rising 10th	14	Caucasian	female	female	pansexual	social anxiety, mild OCD (it	parents	mother: applying for job at food/grocery co-
Kayla	Molly Ivins HS Afterschool Program	11th	17	Black/African American	female	female	no answer	none	mom	mom: accountant
Audrey	Molly Ivins HS Afterschool Program	12th	17	Caucasian	female	female	straight	none	both parents	goodwill industries, mom: secretary at St.
Heide	Molly Ivins HS Afterschool Program	11th	16	multi-racial	female	female/ between	straight/ questioning	ADD, OCD	mother	massage therapist
Jasmine	Molly Ivins HS Afterschool Program	9th	14	Hispanic	female	female	straight	none	aunt & her boyfriend	uncle: owns rental house, veteran,
Enrique	Mount Freedom High School (neighboring)	11th	16	Hispanic	male	male	straight	none	mom, dad & sister	mom: works for university; dad: federal
Alex	Mount Freedom High School (neighboring town, rural)	10th	15	Hispanic	female	female	straight	none	parents	coordinator for university; dad: federal game warden
Alice	Oak Park High, small private	rising 10th	16	White	female	female	demisexual, panromantic	depression, social anxiety	mom & stepdad	dad works for AOL, mom is a -- contractor
CJ	Rennier HS Boys & Girls Club	9th	14	American [[South East Asian]]	male	male	gay	asthma, anxiety, ADHD, Asperger's	mom	teaches
Kylie	University Park HS	10th	16	White	female	female	straight	none	mother & father	college professor, professional
Warren	Youth Pride: Forrest Bend High	rising 11th	16	Caucasian/ White	male	male	homosexual	none	mother and father	one is therapist one is a psychologist
Ely	Germantown HS, Castle Tech High	graduated	19	African American	male	male	homosexual	none	mother	hairstylist
Karl Marx	Youth Pride: home schooled	rising 10th	15	Ashkenazi Jewish	male	female	pansexual	clinical depression,	mom & stepfather	customer service manager, unemployed
Deion	Youth Pride: Larson HS	9th	15	Caucasian	male	male	gay	none	mom	cosmetologist

DD	Youth Pride: Middle School	7th	12	White	male	male/female	gay	none	parents	medical field; dad exterminator
Lilly-Mae	Youth Pride: Realto High (neighboring city)	rising 12th	17	Mexican w/ some Native American	female	female	straight	emotional/communication (PTSD)	mom	teaches tennis
Caden	Youth Pride: Rio Valley HS (neighboring town)	graduated	18	Italian [[white]]	female	male	trans	none	dad	[[blue collar]]
Jennifer	B&G Club, South Austin	8th	13	Hispanic	female	female	straight	none	parents	computer fixing
Janzmin	B&G Club, South Austin	9th	14	Hispanic	female	female	straight	none	parents	cooking & nursing
Brittney	B&G Club, South Austin	8th	13	American	female	female	straight	none	mother	manager at Uhaul
Shaunte	East City Prep	8th	13	American	female	female	straight	none	Mom	unemployed right now
Ke\$ha	East City Prep	8th	13	Latina	female	female	straight	none	Mom & dad	work at an office
Jeb	East City Prep	8th	13	Hispanic	male	male	straight	none		
Gracie	Molly Ivins HS Afterschool Program	10th	15	Hispanic	female	female	straight	none	parents, 1 sister, 2 brothers	roofer & nothing (mom)
Sarah	Molly Ivins HS Afterschool Program	10th	15	Hispanic	female	female	straight	none	mom, stepdad, sisters	clean houses, construction
Sofia	Molly Ivins HS Afterschool Program	10th	16	Hispanic	female	female	straight	none	parents, brothers, sister	construction, cafeteria worker
Carolina	Molly Ivins HS Afterschool Program	11th	16	Hispanic	female	female	straight	none	brothers, 1 sister, 2 dogs	Dad works for city transportation
Captain America	Molly Ivins HS Afterschool Program	12th	17	Hispanic	female	female	stright	none	both parents & sister	Dad: project manager, Mom: Kindergarten
Thor	Molly Ivins HS Afterschool Program	12th	17	half Hispanic, half White	female	female	straight	none	Dad	Senior Assignments Editor, local television channel
Nicole	Molly Ivins HS Afterschool Program		15	African American	female	female	straight	asthma	parents & my sisters	Dad: Graphic Designer Mom: Real Estate
Charlie Ann	Molly Ivins HS Afterschool Program		16	African American	female	female	straight	none	Mom, Brother, Sister	Mom: IRS, Bro: High School Sis: Grad School
Che (classmate)	Nueces Bay HS GSA (neighboring city)	9th	15	Hispanic	female	either	pansexual	none	mom, brother, sister, dad (but	HR specialist: mom; Manager at grocery
Puckasaurus	Nueces Bay HS GSA (neighboring city)	11th	17	Caucasian	female	female	straight	none	mom	waitress

Sean Anderson	Rennier HS Boys & Girls Club	11th	16	African American	male	male	heterosexual	none		
Brittany Johnson	Rennier HS Boys & Girls Club	10th	15	African American	female	female	straight	none	mother	works for phone company
Allie (sister)	South River High School (neighboring town)	12th	18	White	female	female	straight	none	mother & father	lawyers
Kara (sister)	South River High School(neighboring town)	12th	18	White	female	female	straight	none	mother & father	lawyers

Appendix P. Content Analysis of Youth Talk about Difference within Character Descriptions

By most frequent	Total # of	Disability	Labels Sexuality	Romantic Relationship	Total sexuality	Ethnicity	Physical Appearance	Religion	SES	Gender	Intelligence	other
Totals	181	17	22	68	75	4	41	6	4	11	12	
Rachel Berry	16			4 (M-F)	4	2	1 (-)	2 Jewish				2 "gay dads"
Sue Sylvester	16											4 Down syndrome
Santana Lopez	15		6 ¹	6 F-F	8		4 (+)			1 (F)		1 Lima Heights
Kurt Hummel	14		10	6 M-M	11		4 (+)					"precious" "adorable" "fabulous"
Blaine Anderson	12		4	8 M-M	9		3 (2+, 1N)					Relating, IRL
Will Schuster	10			5 M-F	5		3 (+)					2/5 M-F mention "germaphobe"
Emma Pillsbury	10	8		5 (M-F)	5		2 (1+, 1-)					
Brittany Pierce	10			1(F-F/M-F)	1		4 (+)		1 H		8 (-)	
Finn Hudson	9			5 (M-F)	5		2 (+)				3 (-)	1 Normal

¹ Blue boxes indicate characters who are either a) a minority in a particular category or b) where the show makes explicit and repeated reference to a characteristic.

Appendix Q. Example of Initial Coding of Character Descriptions

	A	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
	Excerpt	character described	internal character personality	label race or ethnicity	label sexuality	label ability	label gender	label money	label status or group	label relationship (boyfriend, friend, sister)	
1	Kylie_4 And then I will talk about her because everyone says that I look like her. Yeah I don't see it. I think she is kind of weird looking. But she is Miss Pillsbury and she is the counselor and she is really like OCD and kind of like crazy but she really liked him. (Will) for a while, while he was married to his crazy wife. But then they got a divorce and they started liking each other and they dated and then they were going to get married and then she kissed Finn. Well, Finn kissed her and then she was like I can't marry you and then she like ran away and he (Will) was really mad at Finn and then, I don't know, she has a lot of trouble with OCD over the seasons.	Emma Pillsbury									
16	Jazmine And this is the counselor, Ms. Pillsbury, and she has a phobia. I don't know what it's called. I think OCD. INTERVIEWER: Yep. That's it. JAZMINE: And um, she's married. She's, I think she's getting married with um, the Glee teacher.	Emma Pillsbury				yes (OCD)			yes (counselor)	yes (romantic)	
17	Deion_5 DEION: Um, Emma. She's a clean freak, but she got over her, her uh... clean, her OCD. INTERVIEWER: Oh, her clean freak? Yeah. DEION: OCD and she's been really good. Um... the last, the episode that really caught, that made me a little upset is because she ran out, on Will on the wedding day. So then, by the end of that, the next episode I think it was like when they had a wedding in the Glee room and then Becky. She's awesome, but she can be mean to [inaudible name 0:07:10 "Brett"] sometimes when uh... she was really mean to Glee kids.	Emma Pillsbury				yes (OCD)				yes (romantic)	
18	Kesha, INTERVIEWER: The counselor color actually annoys you? KESHA: Yeah. Not that I don't like she annoys me because she is like such a clean freak. I mean not that I don't like that, kind of a clean freak. But she is like extremely like a clean freak. Like she cleans everything, even her grapes before she eats them. I mean like washing them is okay but like. INTERVIEWER: Rubbing each one? KESHA: Yes.	Emma Pillsbury, annoy				yes (OCD)				yes (romantic)	
19	Heidi_10 INTERVIEWER: That's cool. Are there any characters that annoy you besides Tina? HEIDI: Oh yeah. I don't like -- INTERVIEWER: Emma? HEIDI: Emma. Yeah, I don't like her at all. She's over-compulsive to the point that just makes me feel uncomfortable.	Emma Pillsbury, don't like				yes (OCD)			yes (counselor)		

Appendix R. Example of Confidentiality Agreement for Transcribers

Confidentiality Agreement for Transcription Services

I, _____, transcriber, agree to maintain full confidentiality in regards to any and all audiotapes and documentation received from Jennifer Dorsey related to her doctoral study on understanding of difference on the television show *Glee*. Furthermore, I agree:

1. To hold in strictest confidence the identification of any individual that may be inadvertently revealed during the transcription of audio-taped interviews, or in any associated documents;
2. To not make copies of any audiotapes or computerized files of the transcribed interview texts, unless specifically requested to do so by Jennifer Dorsey;
3. To store all study-related audiotapes and materials in a safe, secure location as long as they are in my possession;
4. To return all audiotapes and study-related documents to Jennifer Dorsey in a complete and timely manner.
5. To delete all electronic files containing study-related documents from my computer hard drive and any backup devices.

I am aware that I can be held legally liable for any breach of this confidentiality agreement, and for any harm incurred by individuals if I disclose identifiable information contained in the audiotapes and/or files to which I will have access.

Transcriber's name:

Transcriber's signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix S: Initial Thematic Codes and Categories

MAXQDA

9/21/2015

Code System [1150]

- I ask CJ what ethnicity people are [1]
- I pay attention to what relates to me. [2]
- struggle [2]
- might be something. [5]
- hilarious quotes [10]
- fangirl/fanboy [4]
 - shipping [2]
- i love these kids [1]
- red star [2]
- relationships [2]
- appearance [1]
 - attractive [1]
 - older [2]
 - size/fat [1]
- Having Sex [1]
 - cheating [1]
- adoption [1]
- Economic Differences [7]
 - guessing from the cards [0]
 - having own room, other possessions [1]
 - within a couple (high and low) [1]
 - clothing as indicator [1]
 - financial aid [1]
 - economic trouble [1]
 - cafeteria worker [2]
 - didn't notice [0]
 - poor [1]
 - rich [3]
- Gender Norms [4]
 - butch/femme [0]
 - feminine [1]
 - manly/masculine/macho [7]
 - the show is for girls [1]
- LGBTQ (ETIC) [24]
 - diseases/AIDS/HIV [2]
 - questioning [1]
 - lesbian [1]
 - dyke [1]
 - flamboyant [1]
 - stereotype [2]
 - gay [4]
 - rachel's dads [1]
 - multiple representations (importance of) [2]
 - straight/seems straight [2]
 - trans [4]
 - transvestite/crossdresser [2]
 - manly/butch/masculine [6]
 - femme/effeminate/like a woman [5]
 - coming out [14]
 - closeted [1]
 - not accepted by family [1]
 - struggle [1]
 - doesn't show at home [1]
 - show both [1]
 - it's okay [1]

MAXQDA

9/21/2015

it's not okay [0]
 ethnicity (ETIC) [11]
 needs more diversity [2]
 mixed [1]
 latina [1]
 white [1]
 multiple portrayals [2]
 only one [1]
 asian [2]
 they do a good job with it [1]
 black [4]
 sassy [3]
 Asian F [3]
 racist [1]
 Very Black [1]
 DISABILITY [9]
 "retarded" [1]
 unsure [0]
 learning disability [0]
 Down's syndrome [0]
 psychological issues [2]
 depression [0]
 anxiety [2]
 wheelchair [4]
 OCD [7]
 Popularity [4]

i think there will be levels of this. not sure how it's gonna go.

self worth [1]
 rumors [1]
 mean [1]
 cheerleaders [3]
 losers [1]
 unpopular [1]
 religion [8]
 abstinence club [1]
 nonreligious [1]
 assume [1]
 mormon [1]
 judge/condemn [2]
 christian [2]
 catholic [1]
 different kinds of christian [1]
 jewish [5]
 didn't notice [1]
 Different [8]
 same [1]
 OR DIVERSE? [2]
 on the outside [1]
 on the inside [1]
 affect (bubbly vs surly for example) [1]
 eccentric [1]
 normal [27]
 conformity [1]
 stereotype [10]
 works against [1]

MAXQDA

9/21/2015

gender [1]
religion [1]
predictable [1]
stereotype, then not a stereotype [0]
typecasting [1]
not a stereotype [3]
school structure/culture [1]
lgbt [2]
race/ethnicity [0]

DEGREES OF ADHERANCE (EMIC) [1]

I don't know what to call this code, but I'm thinking about the "too black" not mexican, is she latino, latino pride, too gay, butch,

like all these degrees of being, like you can be very gay. very femme, very black

stereotypical [2]
very gay [0]
kind of / sort of / a little [0]

as in kind of gay

too far [3]
extreme [6]
fear/afraid/scared [26]
not afraid [6]
Group Codes [1]
majority minority [1]
miscellaneous [1]
fan opinion [1]
popularity [1]
family [1]
teachers/students [3]
cheerleaders, related to [1]
annoy me/don't annoy me [1]
hair color [1]
I hate them/don't like [1]
I love/like them [1]
cool [1]
position of authority [2]
ethnic group [1]
asian [2]
enemies, bad people [1]
favorites [1]
started mean & started nice [1]
relationships [5]
new characters/old characters [1]
comortable with themselves [1]
overcoming physical obstacles [3]
finding yourself [1]
Sue Group Codes [3]
cool [1]
like vs. don't like [1]
glee [1]
everybody else [3]
non-cheerleaders [1]
teachers [1]

MAXQDA

9/21/2015

cheerleaders [2]
white people [1]
winners and losers [3]
cherrios [1]
gay [2]

Beth "these characters like men"

Judgement words [0]

stupid [4]
uncertainty [1]
different [2]
not normal [5]
weird [33]

kylie uses weird a lot. i wonder if other kids use it to. like finding characters weird.

a) students see it as weird or

b) students recognize that people on Glee think what is going on is weird or that the character is weird.

kylie is a little obsessed with what is weird and what is normal. she definitely has these words show up in her talk more than any other student. she says normal 15 times in her talk. that's very interesting. she is also quick to label things as weird. she might be interesting to look at in more detail.

characteristics [0]

blonde [1]
worried about other people think [1]
jerk [1]
responsible [1]
makes bad decisions [1]
true to self [1]
good singer [1]
funny [2]
mean [2]
tough [1]
respected/respectable [2]

home life [1]
strong [3]
weak [2]
honest [1]
smart [2]
bad [1]
awkward [1]
bitch [2]
rebel [3]
mainstream [1]
not mainstream [1]
enemy/adversary [2]
cool [3]
conceited [1]
makes people feel good [1]
beautiful [0]
pretty [1]
outside [0]

MAXQDA

9/21/2015

inside [1]
nice [3]
accepting [1]
emotion related to characters/feelings [1]
 something about relating to characters. i like them. i love them. i'm okay with them. i can't stand her. something about the language in here.

they grew on me [1]
don't like [4]
miss (I miss her or him) [2]
want to see more of [1]
strong emotion [2]
hate [6]
cry [3]
laugh [1]
annoyed/don't like [4]
like [7]
love [5]
discomfort [1]
DISCOMFORT [3]
not ready [1]
character development [2]
character relationships [1]
change in attitude [1]
care less about social conventions [0]
know who you are [0]
characters change [5]
growing up [2]
Identify with character [3]
i'm gay [1]
other people identify [2]
role model [2]
I identify [0]
character is like me [1]
I relate [1]
favorite character [10]
character don't like/ annoying [5]
CHARACTER CODES (ETIC) [1]
actors (real life) [2]
Artie [10]
Becky [16]
Coach Bieste [2]
Coach Nene [1]
blaine [18]
actor [1]
Brittany [14]
Emma [14]
Finn [12]
Cory and Finn's death [4]
Jake [4]
Karovsky [4]
Kitty [7]
Kurt [28]
Marley [4]
Mercedes [12]
Mike Chang [4]

MAXQDA

9/21/2015

Mr. Schuester [6]
Principal Figgins [4]
Puck [16]
Quinn [13]
Rachel [15]
Ryder [1]
Sam [2]
Santana [63]
Sue [13]
Teen Jesus [4]
Tina [9]
Unique/Wade/Alex [26]
METHODS [0]

these are like over hanging codes. like this came up when they were watching the video, or they were sorting the pictures, or they were doing x y or z. is that even a worthwhile code? it's hard to say but it might be useful.

video clip [5]
 bad advice [0]
 good advice [1]
 does this poorly [0]
 does this well [1]
 make it better [1]
picture sorting [4]
 tell me about a character [2]
any impact of watching for you? [1]
 no [1]
 already better than the show [1]
 yes [2]
would you recommend? [3]
 yes [3]
 gives hope [1]
 but not only this [1]
 if you don't know anything [1]
 harmfull portrayals [0]
 give people wrong ideas [1]
 helpful portrayals [0]
co-viewing [5]
What is Glee about? [23]

no answer for CJ or Kylie. No answer for Enrique. Should unmark his answer. Watch Kylie tape it might be on there. CJ, I think i got distracted.

Don't forget to do this for Jazmine, and Allie and Cara

In Real Life [12]
 darker [1]
 don't know [2]
 not my school, but... [3]
 middle school [1]
 high school [2]
 don't know [1]
 consequences of being different [1]
 stereotyping [0]
 sexuality [1]
 ethnicity [1]
 gender [1]

MAXQDA

9/21/2015

friends [1]
I AM... [0]
 trans [2]
 not in high school [1]
 not like her/him [1]
 religion [2]
 disability [4]
 gay [0]
Glee Project [3]
TV Lessons [1]
 what TV can do [2]
 inspiration/role model [2]
 put you in their shoes [1]
 TV is less subtle [1]
 assume everyone is like that [1]
Themes [1]
 don't get pregnant [1]
 help people [2]
 bullying [1]
 Is Glee Trying to Teach? [2]
 be yourself [2]
 Overcoming adversity [1]
COMPARING WITH REAL LIFE [3]
 needs to be darker [1]
 coming out/being honest [1]
 Can't be more accurate on TV [1]
 very accurate [1]
 need more [2]
 too dramatic [2]
 Degrassi [1]
 other show more accurate [1]
 half and half [1]
 accurate for some [2]
 inaccurate [2]
 accurate [1]
Issues that teenagers face [3]
 trans/gender [1]
 money [1]
 STD [1]
 kicked out of house [1]
 sex [2]
 peer pressure [2]
 lgbt [2]
 religion (1) [1]
 stress [1]
 friendship problems/issues [1]
 stage fright [1]
 teen pregnancy [5]
 anxiety [1]
 depression [1]
 drug abuse [1]
BULLYING [11]
 who gets bullied [1]
 lgbt [1]
 gaybashing [1]
 different people [1]

MAXQDA

9/21/2015

everyone [1]
 bullying in real life [1]
 it gets better/it gets worse [1]
 bullying on TV [2]
 glee club [1]
 define bullying [0]
 haven't seen it [1]
 emotional [1]
 cyber [0]
 verbal [2]
 physical [3]
 mocking [1]
 exclusion [2]
 slushy [6]
 do something dumb [1]
 protecting yourself/ defense mechanisms [1]
 bully the bully [1]
 tolerated [1]
 do you bully? [1]
 probably [1]
 unintentionally [0]
 i hope not [2]
 yeah [1]
 be a bully/bullying/bully [12]
 gender (girls bully) [1]
 mean [1]
 looks scary [1]
 hurt [1]
 insecurity [0]
 be bullied/getting bullied/bullied [13]
 bullies get bullied [3]
 perceived weakness [1]
 "need to be put in their place" [1]
 weak [2]
 clothing & hair [1]
 sexuality [2]
 goth [1]
 disability [1]
 annoying [1]
 change/not being consistent [0]
 victim [0]

Sets [0]