

**Re-defining workplace bullying: An interactionist approach to exploring how participants frame and define their experiences**

Melanie Bryant\*

*School of Business and Economics, Monash University, Churchill, Australia*

Email: [Melanie.Bryant@buseco.monash.edu.au](mailto:Melanie.Bryant@buseco.monash.edu.au)

Donna Buttigieg

*School of Business and Economics, Monash University, Churchill, Australia*

Email: [Donna.Buttigieg@buseco.monash.edu.au](mailto:Donna.Buttigieg@buseco.monash.edu.au)

Glennis Hanley

*Department of Management, Monash University, Clayton, Australia*

Email: [Glennis.Hanley@buseco.monash.edu.au](mailto:Glennis.Hanley@buseco.monash.edu.au)

**Re-defining workplace bullying: An interactionist approach to exploring how participants frame and define their experiences**

Melanie Bryant\*

*School of Business and Economics, Monash University, Churchill, Australia*

Email: [Melanie.Bryant@buseco.monash.edu.au](mailto:Melanie.Bryant@buseco.monash.edu.au)

Donna Buttigieg

*School of Business and Economics, Monash University, Churchill, Australia*

Email: [Donna.Buttigieg@buseco.monash.edu.au](mailto:Donna.Buttigieg@buseco.monash.edu.au)

Glennis Hanley

*Department of Management, Monash University, Clayton, Australia*

Email: [Glennis.Hanley@buseco.monash.edu.au](mailto:Glennis.Hanley@buseco.monash.edu.au)

## **Re-defining workplace bullying: An interactionist approach to exploring how participants frame and define their experiences**

*This paper explores experiences of bullying victims with a view to developing an understanding of how individuals develop meaning from their experiences and thus, define bullying. In using an interactionist perspective, this paper has the potential to reveal further information about individuals' experiences that may have been overlooked in using other theoretical approaches. For example, the emphasis on interaction with others and on the structures individuals use to make sense of and define bullying may provide new ways of defining bullying and new information about what individuals consider bullying to "look like". Such findings contribute to workplace practices of preventing and managing bullying by providing a further insight into individuals experiences of bullying that is currently not readily accessible within the literature.*

Keywords: Workplace bullying; interpersonal behaviour; interactionism

It is generally accepted that bullying consists of negative behaviours that have a potentially destructive impact upon individuals in the workplace (Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf, & Cooper, 2003; Harvey, Heames, Richey, & Leonard, 2006). It is also agreed that bullying behaviour involves repeated actions that occur regularly over a period of time (Kelly, 2005; Salin, 2003). Walton (2005) argues that bullying studies are often 'limited by an over-emphasis on individualization and behaviouralism' (Walton, 2005, p. 55) and that we need to explore bullying from broader theoretical frameworks. This paper contributes to current workplace bullying literature by conceptualising bullying within a symbolic interactionist framework. The symbolic interactionist approach (referred to as interactionist in this paper) posits that individuals develop meaning through their interactions with others in social situations, which is contingent upon their unique interpretational processes (Blumer, 1969). In other words, individuals derive their own meanings from situations such as workplace bullying, which are likely to differ substantially from meanings developed by others. In exploring bullying from this perspective, we are also interested in how individuals frame or make sense of their experiences of bullying (Goffman, 1974). In doing so we address Walton's (2005) concerns by attempting to further conceptualise and theoretically develop bullying research within organisational studies.

Specifically, this paper explores the in-depth narratives of three of fourteen participants, all of whom reported experiencing bullying as a victim, with the view to investigating how participants frame and define their experiences. We are particularly interested in developing an understanding of the

significant events that individuals refer to within their narratives and argue that due to the subjective nature of bullying, each individual contextualises and defines bullying in a unique way that may not be accessible within current bullying literature. In exploring participants' experiences we aim to shift our focus from *what happened* to what the bullying experience meant (Czarniawska, 2007). By grounding bullying within interactionist theory this paper has the potential to reveal further information about individuals' experiences that may have been overlooked in using other theoretical approaches. For example, the emphasis on interaction with others and on the structures individuals use to make sense of and define bullying may provide new information about what individuals consider bullying to "look like" and what its causes are. Such findings contribute to workplace practices of preventing and managing bullying by providing further insight into individuals' experiences of bullying that is currently not readily accessible within the literature.

### **THE CURRENT FRAMING OF WORKPLACE BULLYING**

It is not the intention of the paper to revisit bullying literature in great detail, for that has occurred elsewhere. However, it is important to briefly highlight how bullying is defined as well as some of the behaviours and characteristics associated with bullying acts in order to develop a context for our broader arguments. To date, studies of workplace bullying have taken place primarily within the disciplines of management and organisation studies. However, bullying is also receiving increasing attention in areas such as communications (Tracy, Lutgen-Sandvik, & Alberts, 2006) and law, (Meglich-Sespico, Faley, & Knapp, 2007; von Bergen, Zavaletta, & Soper, 2006). Studies of workplace bullying are many and varied with authors highlighting a number of definitions. For example, bullying has been defined as 'the systematic mistreatment of an employee by other organizational members over a period of time' (Skogstad, Mattiesen, & Einarsen, 2007, p. 58); 'the behaviour of a single perpetrator against one or more entities' (Heames & Harvey, 2006, p. 1217); or an activity that 'occurs when someone is systematically subjected to aggressive behaviour...over a long period of time...[and] finds it difficult to defend him or herself' (Einarsen, 1999, p. 16). Further, Salin (2003: 1214-1215) defines it as 'repeated and persistent negative acts towards one or more individual(s), which involve a perceived power imbalance and create a hostile work environment'.

Bullying has been explored from a number of different perspectives including top-down bullying (Hoel & Beale, 2006); bottom-up bullying (Branch, Ramsay, & Barker, 2007); and horizontal bullying (Lewis & Sheehan, 2003). It has also been investigated in terms of the various elements that are thought to contribute to it including personality (Seigne, Coyne, Randall, & Parker, 2007); low morale standards (Liefoghe & Davey, 2001); poor leadership (Zapf, 1999); prior experiences of bullies (Haynie et al., 2001); organisational change (Bryant & Wolfram Cox, 2003); or the general workplace environment in which bullying occurs (Hickling, 2006; Liefoghe & Davey, 2001; Randle, Stevenson, Grayling, & Walker, 2007). Broader cultural and social factors have also been attributed to bullying incidences at work such as the acceptance or lack of chastisement of inappropriate behaviours, that have been carried over into workplaces (Randall, 1997; Sheehan, 1998; Weinhold, 2000). Further, bullying has been documented as taking place in a number of forms including, but not limited to, attacking an individual's personal life; verbal abuse; blocking of promotion opportunities; spreading rumours or gossip; micro-management or constant monitoring of work; social isolation; or withholding information (Einarsen et al., 2003; Einarsen & Skogstad, 1996; Harvey et al., 2006; Salin, 2003).

We argue that such studies have and will continue to be imperative in developing workplace bullying as a field of study. However, we acknowledge concerns that have been raised suggesting that 'the empirical basis of workplace bullying research is still weak' (Hoel, Zapf, & Cooper, 2002) and agree with Walton (2005) that workplace bullying literature should engage both theoretically and ideologically at a more in-depth level. It is arguable that this is important for workplace bullying to firmly establish itself as a discipline of study in its own right. We also believe that this is especially important in moving workplace bullying studies beyond what Hoel et al (2002, p. 325) argue is a more descriptive view of 'the frequency of bullying, the various classes of bullying behavior, and the devastating health outcomes'. A number of authors have begun to contribute to a more theoretical grounding of workplace bullying, allowing for exploration of in-depth and multiple perspectives. For example, recent bullying studies have engaged with critical (Liefoghe & Davey, 2001) and

Foucauldian approaches to exploring bullying (Hutchinson, Vickers, Jackson, & Wilkes, 2006; Vandekerckhove & Commers, 2003). Others have focused on the use of metaphoric analysis (Tracy et al., 2006) to explore participants' in-depth accounts of bullying. Salin (2003: 1227) argues, however, that 'more qualitative and interpretivist studies' of bullying are needed to develop further understanding of the factors that lead to bullying as well as the bullying processes. We agree with this, and add that such studies are also necessary for exploring how individuals develop meaning from their experiences of bullying as these experiences guide how each individual defines it which, may or may not be compatible with definitions within the literature.

## **METHODS**

To explore participants' experiences of bullying, we draw upon an interpretivist framework (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005) with particular emphasis on interactionism (Atkinson & Housley, 2003; Blumer, 1969). We were provided access to participants who had reported bullying to a legal rights centre in Australia. Amongst the reports there were high incidences of bullying reporting that occurred across the manufacturing, hospitality and retail industries. Staff within the legal rights centres was particularly interested in us exploring the experiences of individuals within these industries to see if any industry-specific themes were evident within the data. Due to confidentiality and potential legal implications, potential participants were recruited by letter on behalf of the researchers by the legal rights centre. In total, fourteen participants agreed to take part in the study, which did not provide us with adequate participants to develop an industry-specific analysis. Therefore, we focused our research solely on the individual experience of bullying in which each participant formed the unit of analysis. The participants all took part in a semi-structured interview that lasted approximately one hour. All of the interviews were audio-taped and transcribed.

To develop an understanding as to how participants constructed meaning from their bullying experience, we firstly analysed the data in the form of individual case studies, of which we feature three in this paper. We were concerned with exploring the broader context in which bullying experiences took place using an analytic technique that was consistent with the interactionist

approach. A socio-cultural narrative analysis (Grbich, 2007) allowed us to do this as well as explore how individuals developed meaning through interaction with others (Atkinson & Housley, 2003) in the workplace. In adopting socio-cultural narrative analysis, we focused specifically on narrative high points (Labov & Waletzky, 1967; Smith, 2000), or points of significance that each of the participants' structured their narratives around. High points are the "major events" that a participant gravitates around and returns to at various times within the construction of the narrative (Labov & Waletzky, 1967). We considered the high points to be the dominant aspects of participants' experiences, which we used as the basis for framing the narratives. For example, Jane's experiences of bullying were framed around high points in which issues of justice and equity within the workplace were frequently discussed. In comparison, Melissa highlighted issues concerning poor organisational development that contributed to bullying within her workplace, while Peter's experiences were structured around lack of trust. Analysis of these high points as well as other inductive themes (Riessman, 2008) that arose from each of the narratives enabled us to focus on the way in which participants framed their experiences throughout their narrative construction.

Derived primarily from the work of Bateson (1972) and Goffman (1974), frames have been defined as 'socially-defined realities, 'principles of organization' which govern social events and our subjective involvement in them' (Cortazzi, 1993, p. 39). In other words, individuals develop interpretational frameworks for understanding social reality based on their specific and unique experiences within it. To explore how individuals frame their experiences of bullying, we pay particular attention to narrative high points as they provide insight into causal links and thus the 'schemata of interpretation' (Cortazzi, 1993, p. 39) that individuals use to structure their narratives (Boje, 2001; Czarniawska, 2007). We argue that the narrative structure that participants develop within the interview highlights the most important and significant features of each individuals' bullying events, which in turn reveals the ways in which each individual develop meaning and defines workplace bullying.

## **BULLYING NARRATIVES AND THE FRAMING OF EXPERIENCE**

It was common within the interview process for participants to comment about the importance of telling their stories of workplace bullying in the hope that it might lead to the development of new or more effective management strategies. Regardless of the nature of the bullying experience, it is arguable that the opportunity to narrate the experience provides individuals with an opportunity to 'give a voice to an experience' (Frank, 1995, p. 18), particularly in situations where participants felt that they either could not or were unsuccessful at communicating their concerns about bullying to others in the workplace. From a researcher's perspective, exploration of narratives 'provides access to subjective experiences, providing insight into conceptions of self and identity' (Smith, 2000, p. 328). In other words, narrative analysis of bullying experiences enables researchers to explore specific bullying issues that are of relevance to each individual, which may or may not be compatible with definitions and explanations provided within the literature. In this section of the paper we briefly highlight the narratives of three participants with the aim of demonstrating the diversity of meaning that is derived from each of their bullying experiences.

### *Jane*

Jane had been employed in the retail cosmetics industry for more than twelve years when she experienced bullying. In telling of her experiences she often questioned whether she had been bullied or not as she felt that her experiences were different from what she perceived bullying to be and also that her experiences were secondary to some of the behaviours that her junior colleagues had been subjected to. Further, Jane believed that at 48 years old, her maturity, reputation and positive workplace experiences prevented her from being affected by bullying as she was not easily intimidated by others in the workplace. Jane experienced bullying by her direct manager. In reconstructing her experiences, she highlighted that she was approached by her manager while employed in another position based on her reputation within the industry. Within the first week of her new position Jane felt as though she has made the wrong choice in accepting the job as she felt that "something was not quite right" in terms of her manager's behaviour. In particular, Jane was concerned with how the manager communicated with junior members of staff:



The way she spoke to the younger staff there...I just thought to myself “my gosh, I’ve never heard anyone speak to the young people like that”. I’ve got two children of my own...I actually approached her one day and said... “I don’t like the way that you’re speaking to these young people” and she sort of turned and swore at me and said, “Well if you don’t effing [*sic*] well like it, you know where the door is”...and she made my life hell from there.

Jane experienced a number of bullying acts after confronting her manager. For example, she reported being reprimanded for taking too long for bathroom breaks, even though other staff routinely took long bathroom breaks and were not reprimanded. She experienced aggressive behaviour such as being sworn at and shouted at in front of customers and had her weekly sales target of \$1000 per week raised to \$2500 per week in tandem with decreased work hours from 38 to 15 per week. This type of behaviour was explained as being unfair and inequitable compared with the expectations of other staff. In analysing her narrative, it is evident that Jane structured her experiences around specific high points which were discussed and re-discussed numerous times throughout the interview. For example, Jane referred to her positive personality and outlook towards work, stating often how much she has always loved working in industry in which she experienced bullying. She also highlighted a need to protect other staff junior to her in age – such as school and university aged staff – from bullying. In summarising her experiences of bullying towards the end of the interview, Jane wanted to make two points clear: first, she had always been regarded as both a competent manager and employee with sound interpersonal skills and concern for other staff in other positions; and second, she believed that her bully suffered from psychological problems that caused her to victimise staff regardless of who they were.

### ***Melissa***

Melissa’s experiences of bullying occurred while employed in the retail industry. Similar to Jane, Melissa suggested that she was not sure at first whether she had experienced bullying as it occurred as a gradual progression of events over a five month period with a manager she had previously had a positive relationship with. Melissa discussed bullying as something that occurred “outside” of her rather than behaviour that was specifically directed towards her. She experienced behaviours that are consistent with bullying definitions within the literature. For example, she discussed being verbally

abused by her manager on a regular basis and experiencing micro-management in which every activity she did at work was closely monitored and commented on negatively by her manager. As she reported:

The nastiness just grew...he started to get nasty other things [that were interpreted as bullying] were said and I ended up going to the owner, the boss, the big boss, and said 'Look, I don't know what to do', and I didn't, I didn't know what to do! I said I'd never had this before, and I don't know what to do! And once he spoke to the person in question, oh, things just got worse and worse and worse.

Melissa also suggested that she was bullied for having positive relationships with other staff in the workplace and told that her working relationships with her colleagues were inappropriate. She believes that her manager was concerned about her relationships with others as she was popular and got along well with others at work whom did not have positive working relationships with her manager.

Although factors such as popularity amongst others have been highlighted as possible motives for bullying (Einarsen et al., 2003; Salin, 2003), similar to Jane, Melissa's actual experiences of direct bullying appeared to be less of a priority in her narrative than other behaviours and activities that were occurring in the workplace. One of the high points of Melissa's narrative was that she did not perceive herself as being singled out for bullying. Further, Melissa's narratives tended to gravitate around discussion of characteristics within the organisation's environment. For example, she spoke frequently about the history of the organisation being established as a small, male dominated business by individuals without any management expertise. She also highlighted frequently that the organisation had clear sexual harassment policies but not bullying policies. For example:

When we all started, and I thought this was unusual because I'd never worked anywhere where they'd done this before...we were all given a manila folder with the most extensive information on sexual harassment in the workplace I've ever seen in my entire life! And at the time I thought – God, that's unusual... [but] when this bullying occurred, there was no information, no help, no nothing. I didn't know who to contact.

Melissa argued that the organisation did not know how to manage bullying problems when they arose. However, she suggested that this was in all likelihood a consequence of the male-dominated history in that what may be interpreted as aggressive or bullying behaviours by female staff might have been an acceptable way of communicating amongst males. Hence, the organisation simply did not know how

to recognise and manage bullying problems. On a number of occasions Melissa suggested that although she did experience what she perceived to be bullying, as it was what she considered to be a problem associated with the bully himself and the historical culture of the organisation, she was not the cause of the problem.

### ***Peter***

Peter's experiences of bullying occurred while he was employed in the manufacturing industry. His first encounters with bullying were as an observer in which he saw people with language difficulties or low skill levels being "pushed around" by managers. Those responsible for the bullying were mainly in low level management positions and reported to more senior managers within the organisation. Peter defended those who were bullied and encouraged them to report bullying to human resource staff within the organisation as well as to relevant external bodies. As a consequence, Peter believes he was himself identified as a trouble maker and thus, a bullying target by supervisory staff. Peter's reports of his bullying experiences were centred around poor promotion opportunities within the organisation (Lewis, 2001). The organisation provided employees with a number of skill levels that, once achieved, would lead to the employee being promoted. Peter explained that he believed that the organisation wanted to "put the brakes on" several people being promoted and found that when he was almost at the point of completing the necessary skill level he was rotated into a different task where he was required to start the skill levels again, while others in the organisation were successfully promoted.

They've got levels... and you do the modules [and] you can move up [in the organisation) and it's up to the individual. But...they've put the brakes on people to stop moving up and that's one of the things that I started off with. I thought that it wasn't fair because I have the right to do the books and then move up and they didn't allow me to do it.

Peter described his treatment within the organisation as frustrating. However, his narrative suggests that his inability to air his grievances successfully were a greater cause of frustration than the bullying itself. He initially followed the organisation's bullying policies and reported his experiences to his immediate team leader, and later to a senior team leader and to human resource management when his initial reporting was not taken seriously.

The steps were to see the team leader and if I don't get any solution then go to the senior team leader and if that doesn't work go to the Human Resources, but all of them are the same things. People know...it doesn't go anywhere. It just comes back on you... it's just a joke.

He believed that the organisation did not care about bullying and that rather than being taken seriously, he was subjected to gossip and ridicule by those he reported to. Peter then attempted to report his experiences to his union but argued that relationships between the union and the employers caused further bullying rather than a resolution. As a final strategy to have his complaint taken seriously, he lodged his grievance with an external workplace protection body. However, he alleged that the body revealed his name to his workplace when investigating his complaint, which led to further bullying. Peter reiterated his poor treatment by the various individuals he encountered in attempting to resolve bullying a number of times within his narrative. He believes that this was instrumental in the development of depressive symptoms and his eventual resignation from the organisation. He also stated a number of times that if he had not complained about bullying he would have been okay.

## **DISCUSSION**

In analysing the narratives of the three participants it is unquestionable that their descriptions of bullying are compatible with current definitions of bullying within the literature. Bullying in the forms of verbal abuse, unfair overloading of tasks, and the blocking of promotion opportunities have been clearly documented (Hickling, 2006; Liefoghe & Davey, 2001; Salin, 2003), as has bullying on the basis of being popular amongst other staff (Einarsen et al., 2003). However, in moving towards an interactionist exploration of how individuals define and make sense of their experience, it is evident from the narratives that bullying is highly subjective and individualised. In analysing the various high points and inductive themes found within each of the narratives it is arguable that three very different experiences of bullying exist. For example, Jane's narrative tends to gravitate around high points concerning the treatment of junior staff and her treatment in comparison to others. She reiterates at various points that she is highly regarded for her treatment of others and that, although conflict was certainly experienced at various times within her previous employment, unjust treatment of others

conflicts with her personal values. In some ways Jane tended to highlight less concern for herself as a victim of bullying compared to junior staff. Although her experience of bullying was reported as being traumatic, she also reported that it was more of an inconvenience as she was able to seek employment elsewhere. What did appear to be of primary concern to Jane was the welfare of staff who were more vulnerable in that they were inexperienced in the workplace, or were not brave enough to stand up to the bully. In analysing and interpreting her narrative, we argue that to Jane, bullying is defined as a lack of equity and justice. Not only is inequity and injustice found in her reports of her treatment by the bully, it is also prevalent within her narrative high points that focus on concern for others.

In comparison, we argue that Melissa defines workplace bullying as a lack of progression in organisational development. Similar to Jane, Melissa clearly outlines experiences that are comparable to current definitions of bullying such as persistent verbal attacks and ongoing micro-management. In analysing her narrative we found that, like Jane, Melissa seemed almost removed from her bullying experiences in that she spoke of them infrequently. Her narrative focused on discussion of management's lack of understanding as to how to recognise and deal with bullying. She reported that the organisation's clear sexual harassment policies were evidence of a traditional male culture attempting to "do the right thing" in ensuring that staff were treated fairly. However, she also suggested that the culture had caused more senior staff to think that aggressive types of behaviour, that may have a different threshold in male dominated cultures (Einarsen & Skogstad, 1996), were simply not perceived as a problem or as a cause of bullying. In summarising her experiences, Melissa suggested that the organisation needed substantial progression in order to recognise and prevent bullying from occurring.

Similarly, Peter's narrative highlighted experiences that are documented within bullying literature such as being targeted for defending others (Salmivalli, Kaukiainen, Kaistaniemi, & Lagerspetz, 1999) and having promotion opportunities blocked (Gadit, 2008). In contrast to Jane and Melissa's experience, Peter spoke of being directly involved in and directly affected by bullying. He also

structured his narrative around a high point of betrayal reporting that he did not have any faith in the grievance reporting systems available to employees or in the general treatment of staff by the organisation. Although Peter's narrative clearly outlines ongoing negative treatment, we argue that his narrative is about lack of trust. Several times within the interview Peter stated that he felt brave enough to report bullying as a consequence of seeing and experiencing ongoing mistreatment. However, he also reported throughout the narrative that the bullying procedures developed by both the organisation and by external employee protection bodies were "a joke". In analysing his narrative it was evident that Peter felt somewhat empowered by standing up for his rights and the rights of others but he defined bullying as not being able to trust those who are supposed to help others and not being able to trust grievance handling procedures which we linked to further mistreatment by his organisation.

## CONCLUSION

This paper only briefly discusses the bullying experiences of three individuals. However, it highlights several benefits of using an interactionist approach. This approach has enabled us to shift emphasis from *what happened* within bullying encounters – which tends to be the emphasis of bullying literature to date - to what such an encounter means to individuals. The three narratives discussed clearly suggest that the content of participants' experiences of bullying can be reflected in current definitions. However, we argue that current bullying definitions are limited in providing insight into the subjective nature of interactions that occur during bullying encounters and the meaning that different people draw from them. The participant experiences explored in this paper indicate that although the actual bullying encounter is significant, it may not be the determining factor in an individual perceiving that they have been bullied. For example, the participants in this paper highlighted bullying as being broadly concerned with issues such as poor justice and equity in the treatment of employees, poor organisational development, and a lack of trust between management and employees and only briefly focused on the acts of bullying within the interview setting. These three diverse accounts of bullying suggest that the broader bullying experience is complex and must

be contextualised within each unique situation to be understood. We argue that for bullying theory to be advanced these circumstances need to be taken into account and further explored.

From a theoretical perspective, the interactionist approach has merit in advancing bullying research in this manner, while simultaneously addressing Walton's (2005) concerns by further theoretically grounding bullying as a research discipline. We also argue that interactionism has the potential to contribute to bullying on a practical level. Firstly, the nature of the interactionist approach and the emphasis on subjectivity and individual sense-making highlights that "one size fits all" bullying policies may not be appropriate in organisations attempting to prevent or manage bullying. Further, interactionist approaches to exploring bullying provide an opportunity to understand the specific issues that are of concern to an individual experiencing bullying. Acknowledgement of the array of issues of significant concern to individuals provides a new or additional layer of information to managers or policy makers in terms of what bullying "looks like". We suggest that by developing a more thorough understanding of what individuals consider to be the most significant events that occur throughout their bullying experiences, management and organisations can benefit by recognising what bullying is to those within the workplace, which has the capacity to contribute to policies and practices better tailored to the needs of those who are affected by it.

## References

- Atkinson, P., & Housley, W. (2003). *Interactionism: An essay in sociological amnesia*. London: Sage.
- Blumer, H. (1969). *Symbolic Interactionism: Perspective and Method*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Boje, D. (2001). *Narrative methods for organizational and communication research*. London: Sage
- Branch, S., Ramsay, S., & Barker, M. (2007). Managers in the firing line: Contributing factors to workplace bullying by staff - an interview study. *Journal of Management and Organization*, 13, 264-281.

- Bryant, M., & Wolfram Cox, J. (2003). The telling of violence: Organizational change and atrocity tales. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 16(5), 567-583.
- Cortazzi, M. (1993). *Narrative analysis*. London: The Farmer Press.
- Czarniawska, B. (2007). Narrative inquiry in and about organizations. In D. Clandinin (Ed.), *Handbook of Narrative Inquiry: Mapping a Methodology* (pp. 383-404). Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Denzin, N., & Lincoln, Y. (2005). Introduction: The discipline and practice of qualitative research. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Handbook of Qualitative Research* (3rd ed., pp. 1-32). Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Einarsen, S. (1999). The nature and causes of bullying. *International Journal of Manpower*, 20(1), 16-27.
- Einarsen, S., Hoel, H., Zapf, D., & Cooper, C. (2003). The concept of bullying at work: The European tradition. In S. Einarsen, H. Hoel, D. Zapf & C. Cooper (Eds.), *Bullying and emotional abuse in the workplace: International perspectives in research and practice* (pp. 1-30). London: Taylor & Francis.
- Einarsen, S., & Skogstad, A. (1996). Bullying at work: Epidemiological findings in public and private organizations. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 5, 185-202.
- Frank, A. (1995). *The wounded storyteller: Body, illness and ethics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Gadit, A. (2008). A pilot study of bullying and harassment among medical professionals in Pakistan, focussing on psychiatry: need for a medical ombudsman. *Journal of Medical Ethics*, 34, 463-466.
- Goffman, E. (1974). *Frame Analysis*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.
- Grbich, C. (2007). *Qualitative data analysis: An introduction*. London: Sage.
- Harvey, M., Heames, J., Richey, R., & Leonard, N. (2006). Bullying: From the playground to the boardroom. *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies*, 12, 1-11.
- Haynie, D., Nansel, T., Eitel, P., Crump, A., Saylor, K., Yu, K., et al. (2001). Bullies, victims and bully/victims: Distinct groups of at-risk youth. *Journal of Early Adolescence*, 21, 29-50.
- Heames, J., & Harvey, M. (2006). Workplace bullying: A cross-level assessment. *Management Decision*, 44(9), 1214-1230.
- Hickling, K. (2006). Workplace bullying. In J. Randle (Ed.), *Workplace bullying in the NHS* (pp. 7-24). Oxford: Radcliffe Press.
- Hoel, H., & Beale, D. (2006). Workplace bullying, psychological perspectives and industrial relations: Towards a contextualized and interdisciplinary approach. *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, 44(2), 239-262.
- Hoel, H., Zapf, D., & Cooper, C. (2002). Workplace bullying and stress. *Historical and Current Perspectives on Stress and Health*, 2, 293-333.
- Hutchinson, M., Vickers, M., Jackson, D., & Wilkes, L. (2006). Workplace bullying in nursing: Towards a more critical organisational perspective. *Nursing Inquiry*, 13(2), 118-126.
- Kelly, D. (2005). Review of workplace bullying: Strengthening approaches to a complex phenomenon. *Journal of Occupational Health and Safety*, 21, 556-564.
- Labov, W., & Waletzky, J. (1967). Narrative analysis: Oral versions of personal experience. In J. Helm (Ed.), *Essays on the verbal and visual arts* (pp. 12-44). Seattle: University of Washington.
- Lewis, D. (2001). Perceptions of bullying in organisations. *International Journal of Management and Decision-Making*, 2(1), 48-64.
- Lewis, D., & Sheehan, M. (2003). Introduction: Workplace bullying: Theoretical and practical approaches to a management challenge. *International Journal of Management and Decision-Making*, 4(1), 1-10.
- Liefooghe, A., & Davey, M. (2001). Accounts of workplace bullying: The role of organization. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 10(375-392).
- Meglich-Sespico, P., Faley, R., & Knapp, D. (2007). Relief and redress for targets of workplace bullying. *Employment Responsibilities and Rights Journal*, 19, 31-43.
- Randall, P. (1997). *Adult bullying: Perpetrators and victims*. London: Routledge.



- Randle, J., Stevenson, K., Grayling, I., & Walker, C. (2007). Reducing workplace bullying in healthcare organisations. *Nursing Standard*, 21, 49-56.
- Riessman, C. (2008). *Narrative methods for the human sciences*. Los Angeles: Sage.
- Salin, D. (2003). Ways of explaining workplace bullying: A review of enabling, motivating and precipitating structures and processes in the work environment. *Human Relations*, 56, 1213-1232.
- Salmivalli, C., Kaukiainen, A., Kaistaniemi, L., & Lagerspetz, K. (1999). Self-Evaluated Self-Esteem, Peer-Evaluated Self-Esteem, and Defensive Egotism as Predictors of Adolescents' Participation in Bullying Situations. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 25, 1268 - 1278.
- Seigne, E., Coyne, I., Randall, P., & Parker, J. (2007). Personality traits of bullies as a contributory factor in workplace bullying: An exploratory study. *International Journal of Organization Theory and Behavior*, 10(1), 118-132.
- Sheehan, M. (1998). Restructuring: Rhetoric versus reality. In P. McCarthy, M. Sheehan, S. Wilkie & W. Wilkie (Eds.), *Bullying: Causes, costs and cures* (pp. 153-166). Brisbane: Beyond Bullying Association.
- Skogstad, A., Mattiesen, S., & Einarsen, S. (2007). Organizational changes: A precursor of bullying at work? *International Journal of Organization Theory and Behavior*, 10(1), 58-94.
- Smith, C. (2000). Content analysis and narrative analysis. In H. Reis & C. Judd (Eds.), *Handbook of research methods in social and personality psychology* (pp. 313-335). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Tracy, S., Lutgen-Sandvik, P., & Alberts, J. (2006). Nightmares, demons and slaves: Exploring the painful metaphors of workplace bullying. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 20(2), 148-185.
- Vandekerckhove, W., & Commers, M. (2003). Downward workplace mobbing: A sign of the times? *Journal of Business Ethics*, 45(1/2), 41-50.
- von Bergen, C., Zavaletta, J., & Soper, B. (2006). Legal remedies for workplace bullying: Grabbing the bully by the horns. *Employee Relations Law Journal*, 32(3), 14-40.
- Walton, G. (2005). The notion of bullying through the lens of Foucault and critical theory. *Journal of Educational Thought*, 39(1), 55-73.
- Weinhold, B. (2000). Uncovering the hidden causes of bullying and school violence. *Counseling and Human Development*, 32(6), 1-18.
- Zapf, D. (1999). Organisational, work group related and personal causes of mobbing/bullying at work. *International Journal of Manpower*, 20(1/2), 70-85.