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**Consensus in Activism? Co-constructed Group Political Identity in
Food Not Bombs: A Linguistic Analysis of Stance**

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Submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of Linguistics MA by
Research

York St John University
School of Education, Language and Psychology

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Abstract

This study investigates the role of linguistic stance in co-constructing group political identity within the Food Not Bombs (FNB) activist organization. Using a variety of stance analysis frameworks on transcribed data from a semi-structured focus group interview with three members of a local FNB group, the research examines how participants position themselves and others in the context of mutual aid activism. The findings reveal that stances, particularly through the use of epistemic certainty, irony, and backchanneling, are crucial in negotiating power dynamics and maintaining group cohesion. Speakers employ strategies of upgrading or downgrading stances to establish equilibrium in status and maintain harmonious relationships. Irony and reporting, often used for humour, serve as tools for positioning, evaluating, and modifying the group's political identity, emphasizing resistance to capitalism, war, and discrimination. The analysis highlights the informal, non-hierarchical nature of FNB, where mutual aid and inclusivity are central to its identity, yet there are underlying disagreements on smaller topics concerning the group, or even frictions within individual's beliefs. However, contrasting ideas are allowed to exist in the conversation without compromising the emergence of a group political identity. Participants also express a desire for a more politically articulated stance. Overall, the study underscores the significance of the linguistic practices of stancetaking in shaping the collective political identity of grassroots activist groups.

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1.0 Introduction

This project explores what an analysis of speakers' stancetaking reveals about group political identity in the context of activism. *Stance* can refer to many communicative acts. Within this project it broadly concerns a speaker *positioning* themselves and others in a given social context, whilst making *evaluations* of an *object* of focus (Dubois, 2007). I apply stance analysis to transcribed data from a semi-structured focus group interview with three members of the Food Not Bombs local activist group. The research question asks: What does a linguistic analysis of stance reveal about co-constructed group political identity in the Food Not Bombs group?

Food Not Bombs (FNB) is a worldwide mutual aid protest formed of autonomous groups. The Food Not Bombs website (2025) states that groups do not rely on a leader and use "nonviolent direct action", "[...] solving problems like hunger, homelessness and poverty while seeking an end to war and the destruction of the environment." FNB protests see food as a human right and the food served is vegetarian or vegan. The global website also declares a resistance to racism and marginalisation of peoples. The local group typically intercepts food waste by working with local businesses and redistributes it in public places to anyone who needs it. Members also cook food to serve at gatherings. Decisions are made amongst members based on consensus. I am part of this group as a volunteer.

Existing literature both explicitly and implicitly link stance to identity. Stance and identity are often understood as closely intertwined. Studies specifically focusing on epistemics and identity are also prevalent (Clift, 2006, Delli and Dumanig, 2022). However, stance analysis relating to political identity and epistemics is a relatively untouched field (Sierra, 2023). Group identity also sees less research attention in comparison to the expression and positioning of individual identities through stance. FNB is a unique data source as the group has received no academic focus to my knowledge.

The rationale for this research is to contribute to a theoretical gap in stance analysis and its connection to group political identity and provide academic insight into how FNB

constructs political identity through language. I also aim to address a gap in people's political lives, hopefully offering insights into what language can enact politically – both in terms of material change and expression of identity when directed into activism. In the current global political climate, private corporations have increasing control over public discourse, they can influence and align to the dominant ideas of the state. For example, social media platforms such as YouTube and X have freedom to censorship and algorithms can swing the balance of desirable discourse on platforms such as YouTube. Amazon combines a worldwide techno-feudal monopoly with allegiance to a growing right-wing autocracy in the U.S. Researchers such as Bouvier (2020) and Wodak (2015) show how viewpoints on large scale political topics are influenced by politicians and media platforms, with expression being both the extreme and explicit, to the normalised and implicit. Bouvier (2020) describes a global rise of populism through mobilising publics against minority groups. Digital platforms give many opportunities for largely unsanctioned social influence, misdirecting individual political agency and the potential for it; highlighting the need for reflection in terms of what *can* we do? and *how* is it done? The analysis demonstrates how a group political identity is constructed and what this identity means to members in viewing and enacting resistance to the aforementioned social issues. This project offers a rigorous analysis of stance in face-face communication. I apply multiple interrelated analytical frameworks to the entirety of the data, showing that stance builds much of group identity through ideological squaring – collating representations of FNB juxtaposed with representations of 'outside' concepts, people and politics.

In the next section, I introduce the relevant literature informing the analysis of the data (section 2), then outline the methodology of stance analysis (section 3). I then present the analysis (sections 4, 5 and 6) in subsections organised according to topic shifts in conversation. Analyses are split into detailed grammatical breakdowns of stance to illustrate how speakers convey meaning (micro analysis), followed by a presentation of findings concerning large scale implications for group political identity (macro analysis). The final section of the project concludes these findings (section 7), discusses their relevance to the research question and reflects on future research possibilities.

2.0 Literature Review

I begin this review by introducing key literature concerning the connection between language and identity (2.1), more specifically stance's relation to political identity. Section 2.2 then provides an overview of how current literature defines stance. Stance analysis draws on theory and analytical frameworks from both interactional sociolinguistics and conversation analysis, it makes explicitly legible a speaker's descriptions or judgments about something, therefore showing an individual or collective viewpoint in relation to others in the conversation and wider social world. This project makes use of conversation analysis techniques to decode stances but is driven by an interactional sociolinguistic rationale – the aim to discover social meaning and its consequences.

Linguistic features of speech can *mark* a stance (signpost its emergence). These can be categorised by lexical classes such as *cognitive verbs*: 'I *think* it's good'. This explicitly marks the description as belonging to the speaker's expressed point of view. I will detail such markers in section 3.7. However, not every stance is marked by a single lexical item, many are marked by less tangible qualities such as using irony or reporting the speech of another, which themselves are indicated by a plethora of means. Sections on irony (2.3) and reporting (2.4) discuss how relevant authors define these concepts and the affordances they give speakers in making stances. Irony has a wide array of effects in all domains of stance and is not exclusive to meaning the opposite of what is said. Reporting is similar in variety, and can overlap with irony to position, evaluate and negotiate knowledge.

Politeness is present in all social interaction, whether it is adhered to or not, the rules are contextual but always present. Section 2.5 outlines some foundational literature concerning politeness, the theory of face, and how stance analysts have applied it. Politeness can be maintained in many ways including but not limited to: turntaking, showing the extent of one's knowledge, acknowledging others' knowledge, acknowledging others' expressions/contributions (backchanneling) and agreeing (or disagreeing) in a socially acceptable way.

Theorists place varying significance on stance's means of production and reasons for use. For example, viewing stance as having an overall descriptive effect on the subject of talk versus a stance relying on and expressing what is known to speakers – known as *epistemics*. Section 2.6 discusses literature relating to the knowledge of speakers in a conversation, how access to such knowledge is shown or obscured to modify one's expression and status relative to others. Epistemics have a wide variety of uses and effects, which can play a role in all the previously mentioned concepts, for example positioning oneself as unknowing can be an ironic statement to achieve multiple ends such as humour. It can be used to position oneself as the voice of another to make a judgement or it can simply fulfil a literal expression of unknowing, requesting information. The management of knowledge is also commonly seen to enact politeness in the data. Section 2.7 outlines theory surrounding the stance triangle and the diagraph method (Dubois, 2007).

2.1 Stance and Identity

Constructionist descriptions of identity production place high significance on intersubjective communication, positing it as the force which illuminates and obscures identities relative to social constraints of a given context (Butler, 2006, Sauntson, 2020). Appearing relative to context means identity is often described as '*emergent*'. Stance is enacted intersubjectively; therefore, it can be seen as a production of identity in itself – a performance of the self appears intersubjectively in relation to other social actors (Butler, 2006). In terms of emergence, stance analysis leads to similar conclusions to those of discursive constructionist theories, but with a focus on direct production and negotiation of identity. Discursive theories generally argue that all media of information can produce identity, work interchangeably, usually simultaneously, and can do so beyond face-to-face communication. Stance is emergent but grounded in personal experience and interaction. Sierra (2023), for example, applies stance analysis to a data set gathered from an informal group conversation. The study shows that displays of epistemic status authenticate and legitimise claims, and thus expressions of political identity, by relating them to one's own domains of knowledge. In the context of the study, participants' domains stem from university education and professional goals

which reinforce the identity of student activists. Alignment in stance and conversational features such as backchannelling amongst participants aids the construction of the individual and group identity, specifically portraying the group as ‘rational’.

Zents (2020) also finds that stance reinforces group identity, again in the context of activism. The data set from the study comes from Facebook, featuring both private and public female-lead groups representing feminist Texans, united in their dissatisfaction with Donald Trump’s republican government. The group identity is constructed as cohesive and “politically and morally motivated” (Zents, 2020:867). This occurred in both public and private group interactions, with users mirroring one-another’s tone and vocabulary whereby the leaders of the group construct “a shared discursive authority” (Zents, 2020:867).

In a study on identity construction in student-lecturer talk, Delli and Dumanig (2022) show that stance has a strong tendency to construct and co-construct identity and that every interaction in the data contains stances. The analysis concludes that not only the stance and interaction construct multiple identities for the speakers, but that the markers of stance, for example affective versus epistemic, determine the development of the student-lecturer relationship. *Affective* stance (relating to emotiveness) indicates the level of formality and is largely responsible for relationship management. This demonstrates how stance can manage intersubjective relations for the sake of a shared objective. A group constructing an identity for themselves, especially in the context of political identity, will often be guided by an underlying ideology or set of ideologies.

In this project, ‘ideology’ is understood in line with van Dijk (2024:3) who argues that “ideologies are cognitive systems [...]” which are “[...] based on the socioculturally shared knowledge of an Epistemic Community”. Van Dijk (2024:4) states that ideologies are organised by the below categories:

- Identity (Who are we?)
- Action (What do we do?)
- Goals (What do we want?)
- Norms/Values /(What is good/bad for us?)
- Reference Groups /(Who are our Allies/Opponents?)

- Resources (Which Resources (don't) we have?)

Van Dijk (2024:4) argues that “ideologies are acquired bottom-up from, and control top-down”. Heywood (2012) does not view ideologies as necessarily controlling top-down but does share similarities in describing ideological function. For Heywood, ideology and ideas structure political understanding and thus drive activism, shape political systems and form social cohesion. Heywood (2012) posits that smaller group ideologies can be unified and subsumed by wider ones. Politics, to Heywood (2012), is a midpoint between desire for power in an abstracted form and a desire to change material conditions. *Ideology* is an organisational framework for groups, and therefore a political identity is not the same, but ideological expressions can constitute group political identity. Van Dijk (2024) argues that no generalised ideology is a true monolith and will contain many smaller *clusters*. Van Dijk (2024:5) states “To ideologically define positions or collectives, we need to introduce notions such as ‘clusters’ or ‘configurations’ of ideologies”. These are expressions of ideology that must be treated contextually to understand their variance. Such diversified clusters will still need defining characteristics to maintain an identity, contrasting themselves with ‘the other’. This process of definition is achieved in discourse through the concept of the *ideological square*. This refers to a discursive process of polarisation in ideology concerning ingroups and outgroups. Van Dijk (2024:6) summarises it as such:

- Emphasize OUR good things.
- Emphasize THEIR bad things.
- De-emphasize OUR bad things.
- De-emphasize THEIR good things.

Whilst van Dijk applies this framework to analysis of radical right-wing discourse, the ideological square is relevant to any ideology that necessitates maintaining a political identity. With an understanding of identity emerging through the expression of stance, and politics being guided by underlying ideologies and relations, I define political identity in this study as “an emergent display of desires and efforts to change material and ideological conditions through both pragmatic and ideological means”.

I next detail more specifically the components that facilitate and constitute stance in discourse.

2.2 Defining Stance

Many aspects of interaction can be achieved within a stance act, Dubois (2007:163) defines stance as:

[...] A public act by a social actor, achieved dialogically through overt communicative means, of simultaneously evaluating objects, positioning subjects (self and others), and aligning with other subjects, with respect to any salient dimension of the sociocultural field.

Dubois' definition concerns stance's ability to position the subject, evaluate objects, and to do so in response to sociocultural environments. Viewing stancetaking as a constantly reflexive self-updating process allows for both interpretation of stance as interaction unfolds, and analysis of interlocutor's implicit understanding of its functions. To Dubois, stance and its analysis, is possible only through ties to anaphora within an ongoing interaction, a back-and-forth referred to as *dialogicality*. *Anaphora* refers to prior utterances and communicative acts within the conversation, in stance analysis anaphora are usually other stances. Such anaphora contribute to a matrix of contextualising cues. I will introduce these cues of stance within section 2.7. Stance is seen as emergent, not something one possesses but rather a social position which emerges through interaction and is subject to change (Clift, 2006, Dubois, 2007, Heritage, 2013).

For Kiesling, stance is evaluation, alignment and investment. Investment is the implicit or explicit display of proximity to one's utterance (and subsequently, stance) this proximity consists of author, animator and principal. Kiesling adopts a similar use of the terms to Goffman (1981) who builds on Roman Jakobson's initial use of the theory. Kiesling (2020:4) shows that both epistemic and evaluative means (including affective) can manage the scale of investment because "they are committing the speaker more or less to the world where the animator takes responsibility [...] of the message of the utterance".

Kiesling (2018) shows many similar perspectives to Dubois' stance triangle but with less concrete separation of grammatical elements, preferring 'stance focus' over 'stance object'. The focus arises through "the discursive creation of a relationship between a language user and some discursive figure, and to other language users in relation to that figure. This discursive figure can be an interlocutor, a figure represented in the discourse, the animator, ideas represented in the discourse, or other texts", Kiesling (2018: 687).

Taking a stance is an inherently intersubjective act (Dubois, 2007, Heritage, 2013, Myers, 2010) and hinges on a shared objective focus between two or more subjects, as shown by Dubois' stance triangle. From here, stances undergo a series of modifications by both the holder of the stance, and other members of the interaction who take counterstances to position themselves on a scale of alignment or disalignment, as well as scales of epistemic status within the field of discussion. A *counterstance* (Dubois, 2007) refers to the sequencing of alternating stances between interlocutors. Despite the term 'counter', it does not necessarily refer to a disagreeing position, simply a stance connecting to a prior stance. This connection is usually signalled by speakers orienting to the same object, but there may be a connection based on the themes of the evaluative, epistemic or positioning effects. Such effects of stance (and their categorisation) are not inherently tied to specific lexical or syntactic identifiers (Myers, 2010). Irony is a prominent example of such a concept, occurring multiple times in the data collected.

Stance bids

Kiesling refers to individual utterances as *stance bids*, these may be grammatically identifiable as stances when applying the stance triangle, but they do not contain the main stance meaning in themselves until contextualised through interaction. This view conforms to the interactional precondition for stance identified by foundational stance analysts such as Dubois. I will refer to individual utterances which perform stancework as *bids*, once a bid or series of bids appears to have a legible meaning, I will refer to the *stance*. This is less a theoretical position to add to the literature review, but rather an application of theory that will benefit the reading of the analysis. Stance bids are

functionally similar to counterstances –this project prioritises the term bids as they imply a more neutral start point for describing stancework.

2.3 Irony

Irony is contextual, with Myers (2010) noting that ironic or sarcastically marked stances (and thus their decoding) require participants to possess shared knowledge concerning the conversation or shared assumptions more generally.

An ironic utterance can be a form of stancetaking because it expresses an opinion that readers are not to take to be that of the writer. (Myers, 2010:271)

Within the study Myers (2010: 273) concludes that in the case of stancetaking “irony dramatises an opposing position to undermine it”. This holds true for some of the irony within this project’s data but does not represent the entirety of the usage. By applying Myer’s framework to spoken, in-person interaction, I argue that some functions of irony as a stance marker have other avenues which do not necessarily undermine or represent an opinion incongruent with that of the speaker. I do not place this here as a criticism of Myers’ framework. It is simply a by-product of applying the theory to a differing medium (in-person spoken language rather than the written, digital landscape).

Clift (1999:523) argues that multiple theories of irony are required to decode its meanings and that linguistic irony’s functions are best examined through conversation. Clift (1999) argues that the conception of irony as ‘meaning the opposite of what is said’ is inadequate. This perception is known as the *oppositional* model. I will detail two other models, which Clift (1999) provides as alternatives to the oppositional model.

Echoic Interpretation

Echoic interpretation is a concept from Sperber and Wilson which draws on the “[...] traditional linguistic distinction between the USE and the self-referential MENTION of a word or utterance, characterizing irony as a form of echoic mention” (Clift, 1999:525). This was later to be reconsidered as echoic interpretation. This form of irony allows for dissent from the original meaning. The source of the echo may not be present, but if the irony is to be successful it must be known by the listener. Clift (1999) demonstrates how

the presentation of the echo, features such as intonation, mark it as an echo and provide an evaluation of it.

Pretense

Clark and Gerrig provide the model of a speaker (S) addressing an audience (A) who can be present, absent, real, or imaginary. S takes the position of another party, saying something uninformed or injudicious to A, who is also required to assume the role of another, an audience who is ignorant to the content of the message. In actuality, A has the knowledge required know the true characteristics of both the participants' roles and the message. The scenario of an uninformed speaker being taken seriously by an ignorant audience reveals how the speaker views the two hypothetical parties and the content of their communication. Clift (1999) notes that dramaturgy is a prominent feature of the *pretense* model.

The definition of *irony* applied in this project includes the oppositional, echoic and pretense models. This requires a loose blanket definition of irony as an intentional disavowal or displacement of any facet of stancetaking (indicated by the three models). Most instances of irony include aspects of several, if not all models. This can be exemplified by one participant in the data who, when discussing anarchist theory, evaluates herself as such: "But also I'm a poser because I haven't actually finished reading any Kropotkin" (L36A). In oppositional terms, she is evaluating herself as "a poser" even when she is not (likely for politeness). She may be echoing an imagined speaker who sees reading theory as necessary to have authentic views, thus she is able to produce an evaluation of such a speaker whilst potentially enacting the stance for humour and politeness. Framed through pretense, she is adopting the position of an uninformed party (a naïve version of herself) who presents themselves as unknowledgeable, to another party who will potentially take this simplistic logic as truth to complete the ironic criticisms and functions previously mentioned. Irony may be achieved by an impression (or report) of another speaker. *Reporting*, however, is not necessarily ironic and forms its own category of stance marker which evades a universal lexical or syntactic marker.

2.4 Reporting

The concept of reporting another's speech or stance is a field of literature which falls under the umbrella category of stance research pertinent to this study. Analysis of reporting shows both the stance of the speaker and the speaker's evaluation of the perceived 'other', as well as an evaluation of other's stance. Reporting takes many forms within this project's data: self-reported speech characterising oneself, reporting other's speech, thoughts and positions (be it quotation or paraphrasing), and creating hypothetical speech for specific, or hypothetical others. Often this enacts a stance, but not exclusively.

Clift (2006), with a focus on self-reported speech, demonstrates it as a powerful *interactional evidential*: a tool used to produce or bolster epistemic stance. Clift specifies that reported speech is *interactional* because unlike a standalone evidential, its efficacy hinges on deictic interpretation. Deictic here refers to the understanding of utterances being context-bound. A claim about one's own speech can trump another claim in epistemic certainty by increasing the user's proximity to the topic being discussed. For example, by providing first-hand accounts of experience, or by placing oneself as 'already possessing' knowledge as topics enter discussion through other's utterances. The function of self-reported speech as an evidential also relies on the sequencing of turns as well as interlocutor's upgrades and downgrades to epistemic certainty. Clift's work pushes the notion that evidentials go beyond grammatical structure, and lexical evidential classes have been underexamined specifically in the context of reporting speech.

Reporting is not exclusively for individualistic evidential or epistemic purposes, however. Like any stance marker it can have a co-operative or open-ended quality, Niemelä (2010) demonstrates how reporting (whether it be a report of self or other) has a communal structure which can be implemented for many stancetaking functions.

Stance literature widely acknowledges that making a stance often begets the production of another stance from other interlocutors (Dubois, 2007, Heritage, 2013, Myers, 2010, Niemelä, 2010). Niemelä (2010) coins the term *reporting space* which demonstrates this tendency of speakers to enact a chain reaction. The reporting space

is signalled by prosodic shifts, body language and aspects of lexico-syntactics which produce a virtual space within interaction. This virtual space is “a frame for potential active multi-modal involvement in the stancetaking activity by all participants of the telling event” (Niemelä, 2010:3258). This space can be used to report on speech, thought and embodied activities (Niemelä, 2010). By producing the *other voice* (often prosodically signalled) participants can assign a stance to others (even if the ‘other’ is the self) whilst making their own evaluations of the reported other, event and/or stance. In creating this space, an opportunity arises for other interlocutors to take further stances by adopting the previous techniques of expression to remain within the reporting space. Niemelä (2010) states that converging in terms of expressive techniques does not necessarily mean a converging (agreeing) stance. Niemelä’s (2010) paper is concerned with the ‘conglomerate’ of speech, treating all communicative aspects of the stance as cues for analysis and resources of making meaning in interaction. Niemelä aligns with Goodwin’s (1984) position that tellers maintain a relatively fixed telling posture to indicate commitment to their narrative, however, shifting gaze, tone, expression and body language follows similar grammatical and stress patterns to the purely lexical. Niemelä takes the position that accuracy is not central in importance to reporting unless it is challenged by others or if precision holds significance to the stance being made.

Although the stance marker category of reporting does necessarily have a consistently apparent lexical or grammatical indicator, Myers (2010) demonstrates that even a single conversational particle can attribute a range of characteristics to a reported speaker. He also states that conversational particles function as a marker of reporting when there is no reporting verb, a finding shown to be prevalent within my own data. Analysis of conversational particles is highly contextual, but the contextualised, characterising function is central to my interpretation of their stance marking function within the data.

Kiesling’s use of a speaker’s investment can subsume both irony and reporting in stancework, as they both function through the distancing of a speaker from their utterances. Investment can describe all the interactions occurring when participants report speech as a coherent group however, the reporting space provides a holistic framing device which lends itself to intuitive application and readability in a study. The

reporting space also places a primary focus on the communal aspect of communication. Framing these interactions as inherently shared or offering entry points for sharing, is valuable in my eyes as it encourages a perception of talk that aligns with how the literature treats stance.

2.5 Politeness

The social conventions and contextual expectations of politeness affect which stances can emerge. Stance's manifestation changes to fit the contextual rules of politeness, and if it does not, the reactions of other speakers may nevertheless betray the fact that politeness rules have been broken. Politeness underpins all the previously mentioned stance markers and conventions of stance. For example, what is considered polite impacts how one may choose to use irony, how one expands or diminishes their epistemic status and in what manner should one deploy a reporting space.

Clift (2006:284) describes formal properties of interaction, specifically those which pertain to accountability and authority, as "indexed by evidentials". Evidentials can be viewed in this context as providing epistemic evidence to support one's stance. The evidentials in the context of Clift's work are reports of speech. The formal properties of speech and the ways they are indexed are shaped by interactional exigencies (Clift, 2006), meaning the requirements of the social context informs the character of utterances in a conversation. Clift (2006) views stance as emerging in relation to requirements of facework - a theory of social needs in interaction (Goffman, 2005). Clift compares such exigencies to interactional *housekeeping* in reference to Heritage and Raymond (2005:36).

The sequencing of stances also determines their power and influence within a conversation and therefore expected adherence to rules of politeness. *Primacy* and *subordination* denote which stances come before and after in a sequence. As Clift (2006) demonstrates, sequencing can imbue a stance with the power of setting the topic and epistemic claims associated with it, receivers of the stance are usually compelled to make further stances in line with the constraints established. Primacy and subordination are then subject to *upgrade* and *downgrade* in relation to social setting,

referring to boosting or downplaying one's stance respectively. Stances with primacy are typically expected to be downgraded so as not to appear rude, whilst making way for subordinate stances which will have the affordances of using upgrade. Speakers' (often unconscious) recognition of these conventions can be seen as a manifestation of facework.

Goffman's concept of facework takes a socially constructed view of reality, with a focus on life in a "[...] world of social encounters" (Goffman, 2005:5). Within such encounters it is unavoidable to take 'a line', described as expressing a speaker's "[...] view of the situation and through this his evaluation of the participants, especially himself [sic]" (Goffman, 2005:5). This is a different kind of evaluation to that which I identify through stance analysis, it does not necessitate the view of evaluation as a stance outcome but both evaluations take a social risk by volunteering themselves to be scrutinised. Goffman claims other participants will take such evaluations to be wilful, and therefore the actor of the 'line' will calibrate themselves and their interaction to this (generally true) assumption of the other's interpretation of their original line. *Facework* emerges from here as a framework to read participant's partial agency in managing and predicting one-another's *face*. Face can be broadly understood as one's social standing, maintained when congruent with how one perceives oneself and wants to be perceived, and lost when such congruity is broken. One can *have face*, *lose face*, and when concerning others: *give face* or *threaten face*. I refer to the previously mentioned *housekeeping* when participants co-operate to maintain one-another's face, otherwise I will specify where in conversation discordant management of face takes place. The underlying management in a conversation which (ideally) allows participants the right to express the knowledge they feel entitled to plays a large role in conversation, and thus the stance analysis in this study. Face is an integral component of politeness. Stancetaking is one way of attending to the face needs of those in conversation. Therefore, stance is linked to politeness. Adherence to politeness rules helps to construct a unified and coherent group identity. When referring to a portion of data as having adhered to housekeeping conventions or strategies, I argue that participants observe and maintain one another's face and that this process is significant in the production of group political identity.

2.6 Epistemic Stance and Epistemic Status

Epistemic status is founded on "(...) the notion that any two speakers, A and B, each have their own territories of information, and that any specific element of knowledge can fall into both of them, but often to different degrees." (Heritage, 2013:136)

Heritage identifies two absolute polarities: 'unknowing' and 'knowing'. When a gradient of *epistemic access* is between the two or more speakers, one knowing more and the other(s) knowing less, 'K+' and 'K-' are used to denote their comparative status. This knowledge "[...] itself may vary in slope from shallow to deep" (Heritage, 2013:376).

Epistemic status is a process of relative positioning which involves interlocutors' "[...] joint recognition of their comparative access, knowledgeableability, and rights relative to some domain of knowledge as a matter of more or less established fact", (Heritage, 2013:376). *Domains* of knowledge relating to someone's personal life such as relatives, jobs, friends and interests, are given by Heritage as examples of typically expected components of a person's epistemic status. In a similar context to the personal domain of knowledge, Clift (2006) shows that providing a report of one's own speech can be a boost to authority in a conversation.

Conversational authority in general is shown by Delli and Dumanig (2022) as predominantly informed by epistemic stance. Their study also shows that epistemics are often indicative of speakers caring about the accuracy of information. This contrasts with Zents' (2020) findings, who shows authority arising from a group adoption of similar tonal and lexical features which are not inherently epistemic. The two studies, however, do differ in that they study two individuals in face-to-face setting versus online, group text-based communication. This suggests that authority can come primarily from epistemic stance, and especially for individuals in conversation, but is by no means the sole source of authority. Authority in a group setting may rely more on cohesion and projection of a desired optics. On an individual, interactional level, epistemics still governs much of what will, or can, become a group's expression.

Heritage and Raymond (2005) describe the *epistemic right* to make a claim; this refers to individuals' epistemic status and others' awareness of it, which in turn set the norm

for the kinds of evaluations participants can make. An example, being present within this study's data, is speakers' indexing of relevant identities and experiences that grant access to epistemic domains. One participant describes the public's perception of FNB as a "crusty project", she follows by indexing a relevant experience:

"Because that's what usually is / the the way people see other anarchist projects that I've been involved in" (L34C)

Mentioning previous experience in "other anarchist projects" positions herself as having an epistemic domain including anarchist activism beyond FNB, thus giving her the epistemic right and authority to make this evaluation of the public's perception, it also authenticates her claims (Sierra, 2023). I argue that showing certainty of one's claims also expresses these rights and follows typical housekeeping conventions. For example, adverbs that upgrade or downgrade evaluation to follow in an utterance, implying a stronger or weaker epistemic basis. Here a participant discusses a memory of school:

"There was definitely a kind of pervasive sense of like oh communism is funny" (L121B)

The adverb "definitely" upgrades her epistemic certainty concerning the claim that there was a "pervasive sense". This implies that she has a strong basis (epistemic status) which supports the claim. This follows housekeeping as it does not threaten face to have confidence when describing one's own experience, if this level of upgrade was used when evaluating another's experience, it may threaten face.

The expression of knowledge through stance is described as emergent by Heritage (2013), with the ability to position speakers, and emerge relative to social positioning. However, the possession of epistemic content is presented as more of a fixed grounding point for stance, whereas Dubois focuses on describing the social outcome of the expression, even when grounded epistemically. This is not to claim the two writer's concepts are at odds, but two different focal points from which I create a midpoint and base my analytical framework on. For example, much of the data contains conversation in which participants have equal epistemic access or are orienting to myself (as an interviewer with a lesser-known epistemic status). Because of this, analysis often focuses on the positioning of agents and the evaluative output of discussion, which are modified by various markers of epistemic certainty.

Dubois (2007:143) states that “the general concept which subsumes both affective and epistemic stance acts [...] is positioning”. Dubois (2007) notes that relations between stance acts allow for detailed inferences about convergences and divergences of epistemology and affect. Such divergences and convergences fall on a scale and are referred to as *alignment* and *disalignment* – “[...] calibrating the relationship between two stances” (Dubois, 2007:144). This overarching theme of positioning describes the priorities of this study’s analysis aptly. Epistemic access is an important contextualising factor, epistemic status modulates the strength of claims, but ultimately the priority is in the interrelation of speaker’s stances and their outcome for producing political identity. When analysing interrelated stances, the grammatical structure of an utterance often clarifies what a speaker intends to evaluate or pose epistemically. It can also show how they position themselves (or are positioned) relative to others. The stance triangle and diagraph offer a systematic approach to mapping such structure.

2.7 The Stance Triangle and Diagraph Method

The stance triangle and diagraph are analytic tools developed by DuBois (2007). The *diagraph* visualises the grammatical structure of stance, illustrating the individual lexical components. It also aids tracking similarities between stances. The *stance triangle* provides a further visualisation for the social positioning that a stance enacts in conversation both in speaker-speaker relations and speaker-object, it also details alignment. Dubois (2007) notes that dialogicality and intersubjectivity bring a host of challenging facets to stance analysis due to their frequent evasion of a clear-cut analytical method. He draws on his previous work of dialogical syntax, “the process of mapping resonances between juxtaposed utterances in discourse.” (Dubois, 2007:140). Dialogical syntax, when applied to conversational interaction, finds 'stance pairs' to be a prominent feature. Stances that exist because of one another’s relation, for example both orienting to the same object of focus.

As stances build on each other dialogically, the analogy implied by their structural parallelism triggers a series of interpretative and interactional consequences, which will be seen to carry significant implications for the interaction at hand, and, at a more general level, for the theory of stance.

(Dubois, 2007:140)

Structural parallelism refers to the words and constructions used by speakers that bare resemblance to those used previously. To Dubois, stance is both a catalyst for, and response to stance. Stance has consequences for social actors and is evaluated by the dynamically produced framing from co-participants. The act of stancetaking inherently produces a claim, explicit or implicit and therefore must be oriented to an object.

According to Dubois (2007:146), there are three fundamental cues for interpreting stance:

- (1) Who is the stancetaker?
- (2) What is the object of stance?
- (3) What stance is the stancetaker responding to?

Once a stance has been made to position the subject(s) and evaluate an object, it falls on a scale: epistemic, alignment/disalignment and/or affective. An affective stance establishes an emotional status or evaluation e.g., “I’d *like* it to be more explicitly political” (L154C).

Units of a stance make meaning; absent units can still imply a full stance through the sequencing of turns. The diagram helps to illustrate such implications, here participants recall the name of another volunteer:

Subject 1

Stance Object	Evaluation
That	was um Anthea

(L206A)

Subject 2

Stance Marker	Implied Stance Object	Implied Evaluation
Yeah	that	was Anthea

(L207A)

The conversational particle “yeah” serves to backchannel, such particles (also stance markers) often enact a complete stance used to position the speaker on a scale of *alignment* and *disalignment*.

The stance triangle achieves something similar; it differs by visualising the intersubjective feedback loop of stance, and places simultaneous and equally distributed focus on all subdomains and practicalities of stancetaking.

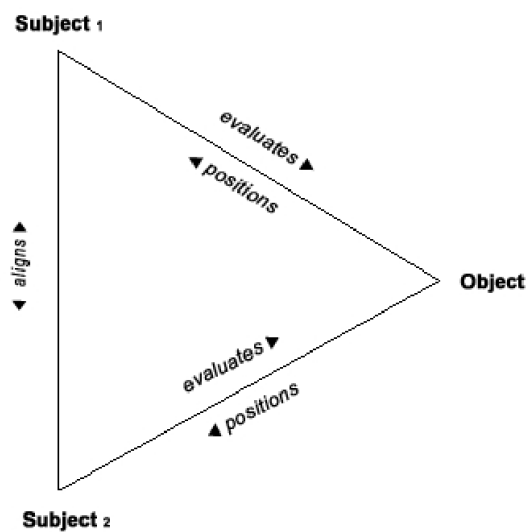


Figure 1: (Dubois, 2007) Stance Triangle Taken from Dubois (2007:163)

Using the previous diagram as a reference for object, evaluation and implied evaluation, the discussion about Anthea can be mapped onto the stance triangle:

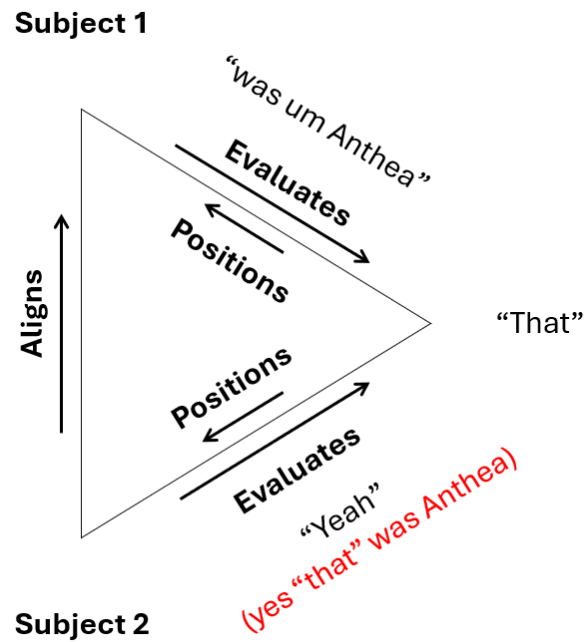


Figure 2: Example Stance Triangle

The triangle shows how stances are continuous, taking objects from previous utterances as their own, and continuing a ‘structural parallelism’. Should the object change, for example the next speaker evaluates a detail concerning an interaction with Anthea, the triangle orients to a different object but maintains connection between two subjects, and thus an analyst can trace the alignments and implications of previous interactions which act as anaphoric reference points.

2.8 Summary

In this section I briefly summarise the discussed concepts and theory surrounding stance analysis, outlining how they inform the data analysis and enable the research question to be answered.

Stance is an act which positions both the speaker and others, evaluates objects and signals degrees of alignment with other stances (Dubois, 2007). Stance is emergent and can produce identity through interaction. Previous research shows that epistemic stance can be used to bolster group political identity and status within conversation (Delli and Dumanig, 2022, Sierra, 2023). Affective stance can signal closeness and thus

manage relationships between individuals (Delli and Dumanig, 2022). Convergence in stance style can also enact a group political identity in the context of online communication (Zents, 2020). However, no single category of stance is confined to one function. Epistemics relates to the management and expression of knowledge, each person has an epistemic domain which (alongside social context) controls their epistemic access (and right) to make certain assertions of knowledge through their stance, thus positioning the epistemic status of themselves and others (Heritage, 2013). Making these expressions and giving space to others to make them, plays a significant role in politeness in conversation, or housekeeping (Clift, 2006). This is a shorthand within the project for the management of epistemics, expected conventions of upgrading and downgrading one's stance in relation to its sequentially granted strength (primacy and subordination) (Clift, 2006) and finally, most significantly, face work. Face work is the understanding of others social needs, and the requirement of one's own (Goffman, 2005). Two markers of stance which evade grammatical signals are irony and reporting, two concepts which can overlap. Irony is classified within this project as functioning through one or more of the following: opposition, echo or pretense. Irony can fulfil all functions of stance, often with intentionally humorous effects. Reporting functions by relaying the speech of another, including the self, the other can be real or a hypothetical. The reporting space refers to an instance where prosodic or linguistic features mark a report, which other speakers can join to negotiate or conform with the evaluations being made through the space (Niemelä, 2010). The stance triangle and diagraph method provide theoretical and visualising cues for breaking down stance, showing its components either literally, or by showing what should be present but is instead implied by omission. The diagraph allows a stance to be broken down into its functional parts. Using the diagraph, even if only for informing written analysis allows for comparison between two stances, as their meaning is only made and drawn out when in direct comparison and between individuals, interaction is a precondition for stance (Dubois, 2007, Myers, 2010). Ideology guides groups and the character their political identity will take. Ideology can be seen as the social and cultural knowledge of a community (van Dijk, 2024) and can be broken down into salient categories: Identity, action, goals, norms/values, reference groups and resources. Ideologies and their manifestations (such as political identity and action) are often

driven by the ideological square – reducing the status of ‘outside’ groups and increasing that of the ‘inside’ group. By identifying the signifiers, function and expression of participants’ stances, then placing them in the logic of the ideological square, analysis points to the existence, character and degree of cohesion in a group political identity.

3.0 Methodology

Stance relating to group political identity is seldom the focus of linguistics research and FNB remains unexamined by academic spheres. This study aims to apply stance analysis to transcribed data from a semi structured focus group interview with members of FNB. The analysis aims to reveal how group political identity is constructed, a process starting from analysis of atomic components of an utterance and concluding with contextualised discursive implications for the construction of FNB's political identity.

3.1 Focus Group Interview with Food Not Bombs

I chose FNB as a subject of research, specifically in a focus group interview context, because it is highly relevant to the project's interest of stance. Due to the group's use of consensus rather than top-down leadership, member's stances are inherently functional in the ongoing creation and maintenance of group identity and activity. Liamputtong (2016) uses the terms *homogeneity* and *heterogeneity* when referring to a group's social similarities and differences respectively. A homogenous group can be beneficial when a precise topic is the focus of research, especially when related directly to the participants (Liamputtong, 2016). My decision to use FNB was ideal for a question of political identity as the group possesses a homogeneity concerning shared political goals and activities.

A further strength of selecting FNB is that pre-existing groups hold the advantage if the study wants to investigate a group dynamic (Leask, Hawe and Chapman, 2001). Group dynamics are central to the research question.

Focus groups provide both complementary and argumentative interaction (Kitzinger, 1994). *Complementary* refers to sharing experiences, concerns and needs. *Argumentative* refers to questioning, disagreeing with and challenging others. These forms of interaction are beneficial for a reflective gauge of group politics but are subject to change based on the group's composition. Heterogeneity can restrict interlocutors' tendency toward openness and sincerity due to differing backgrounds and identities,

conversely it can also lead to discussing new ground, sparked either by differing stance or experience (Liamputtong, 2016). FNB is unified by its wider political aims, but this project illuminates that people have different experiences and interpretations of such aims. The focus group format allows for unstructured and structured naturalistic interaction amongst participants, with both homogenous and heterogenous characteristics setting a good balance for providing rich qualitative data.

3.2 Data Collection Procedure

Participants were recruited based on their expressed interest in response to a poll. The poll was posted in a WhatsApp group chat used for organisational purposes for a singular branch of FNB. I included myself as part of the recruitment process in-person before using any of the digital channels associated with the group, several months before the data gathering. This made my new role as a researcher known but maintained the usual relationship of co-volunteers in time spent before the interview.

I was present for the recorded discussions, acting as a facilitator of the talk. The risk of demand characteristics in participants' responses was a factor. However, a study taking place within the field of interactional sociolinguistics naturally treats localised qualitative data as reflective of social reality, as Holstein and Gubrium (1995:4) emphasise: "both parties to the interview are necessarily and unavoidably active". Considering the constructionist episteme this study takes place in, my position as a pre-existing member of the group gives me resources to interpret the context of the group's social dynamics and compare potential changes from the usual context of group work and meetings. For example, knowing the practical roles participants usually play within group meetings, such as fielding queries and taking notes, provides insight into some of the groups' interpersonal relationships and the shared experiences. My insider status within the group also helped participants feel more comfortable, beneficial for the production of naturally occurring conversation. Sierra (2023), for example, includes herself as both participant and researcher and I follow this approach in this study. The demographic varies from my own study in its homogeneity. All participants (including Sierra) are students and friends of one another, unlike the

participants within my study who do not necessarily share the same occupational backgrounds. Like my own study, participants are all recruited based on their membership of an activist group. The methodology bears similarity in terms of its loose structuring, although questioning is more precisely focused on encouraging participants to discuss a singular facet of identity in relation to another: career and academic goals in connection with political identity. I do not aim to establish such connections unless participants raise the topic. Sierra's decisive selection of participants and directing questions concerning the connection of aspirations and identity may draw a positivist critique of 'contamination' or artifice, or more neutrally, demand characteristics. However, given that the group is reflective of a pre-existing institution, and the emergence of identity is always formed relative to an object of stance, it can be argued that the findings of the study offer a snapshot of identity construction that is reflective of the contexts it aims to investigate - much like this project which encourages the production of stance through questioning.

The interview was held on the university campus within a privately booked room. This setting offered both practicality for audio recording and privacy. I met the group outside of the university where we bought some hot drinks to bring with us - I also brought some homemade cake to share. Sharing food is a ritual that grounds the group's usual practices as well as organisational meetups. Given that I was unavoidably influential on the conversation I wanted to try and treat the occasion with the same level of formality and care as usual.

After introductions and checks to ensure participants had agreed to and understood the consent/information forms, I began recording. I split the interview into three sections, each approximately 15 minutes long. This allowed time for breaks and reduced the risk of data loss should recording faults arise. The individual transcripts (A, B and C) each represent a section which comprise a full transcription of the interview.

I presented the group with prompt words and phrases to introduce the themes I would prefer conversation to be focused around. Using key values from Food Not Bombs (2025) and personal understanding of FNB I planned the initial cues as such:

- Mutual aid

- Anarchism
- Vegan/vegetarian
- War
- Group aims
- Group political views/ideologies

After these cues had been introduced, if there was still time to continue the conversation or if the initial discussion ended, the plan was to introduce further, more specific prompts for discussion:

Where did you learn about (vegetarianism, food as a human right, anti-capitalism, anti-war, mutual aid)?

- Are all these values important to the project and aims of the group?
- What is anarchism as you understand it? Follow up - How do you think the group's anarchism compares? Is there anything that struck you as different or surprising?
- What is mutual aid to you?
- How do you think the group is perceived by the public? Are there misconceptions?
- Do you think the group structuring is effective? Any pros and cons that come to mind?
- What do you think the impacts of the group's work are?

Despite this initial outline, heavy structuring was unnecessary due to participant's lively response. I began by introducing the initial talking point of 'mutual aid'. At first the structuring caused some reticence, perhaps due to lack of specificity, so I added some extra lines of questioning: "What do you think about it?", "How would you define it?" (L7A). Conversation from here began to cover much ground in terms of political themes, so the next prompt I introduced was from the secondary list "What is anarchism as you understand it?" (L161A).

In the second recording I used a further secondary prompt. Participants had already discussed most of the initial talking points in the flow of topic changes, including many

of the values of FNB. Because of this it seemed appropriate to ask where participants learnt about such values and how they were exposed. From here, all I added during the recording was a question to request clarification (L166B).

In the third recording I introduced the prompt concerning public perception of FNB. Whilst participants mentioned this in the first recording, I felt it had potential to be expanded and move into new themes for conversation. This led to one improvisational question on the group's political message (L125C). Finally, I introduced the secondary prompt of group structuring but reframed to focus on experience (L207C) this seemed to be a successful theme, it encouraged lively discussion. Finally, I included one improvisational question for my own clarification (L268C).

3.3 Data Analysis Procedure

In this section I outline the process of analysis, from transcription to presentation of micro and macro-scale findings.

Transcription

I used Microsoft Word's automated transcription tool for audio files, serving as a skeleton for the finished transcript. I fixed misinterpretations and applied notation as I added the script into table formatting.

I transcribed the entirety of the interview using a simplified version of Atkinson's notation (in Edley and Litosseliti, 2018, adapted from Atkinson and Heritage, 1984). The main modifications to Edley and Litosseliti's usage is omission of some prosodic features such as recording the length of pauses, extension of sounds and intake of breath, amongst others. Despite these omissions, supplementary notes such as descriptions of voice quality or 'character' are included where relevant to stance production, usually when a speaker uses the reporting space.

After notation was complete, participants' stances were located using stance-markers from Myers (2010) and reporting spaces (Niemelä, 2010) which I then highlighted to indicate their relevant category (find highlight key in appendices).

Myers' (2010) study focuses on stance within online blogging, using stance analysis and corpus linguistics. Myers concludes with a set of four main stance markers and their respective applications and implications. Due to the differing data source, this project does not assume that a marker inherently reveals the same type of stance bids or effects of stance when applied to spoken conversation. The following list of markers is adapted to remove their implication, my analysis uses them primarily as a tool for indexing stances regardless of evaluative, epistemic or affective content.

1. Cognitive verbs
2. Adverbs
3. Conversational particles
4. Irony

Micro Analysis

Micro analysis follows a process I am referring to as 'sequential'. I analyse utterances in order of appearance – this has the benefit of being able to consistently reference contextualising anaphora. Each stance bid which directly or indirectly relates to group political identity is subject to the micro-analytical process. This includes:

- Grammatical breakdown in accordance with diagraph presentation and stance triangle (Dubois, 2007)
- Identifying stance markers and their effects, including irony and reporting
- Alignment with or reference to other stance bids
- Relations to epistemic status (Clift, 2006, Heritage, 2013) positioning people as K+/K- (more and less knowledgeable)

Micro analysis aims to find linguistic techniques used by participants which make stance readable. The smallest contributing units of meaning (such as markers, objects and evaluative content) must all be identified to get the most accurate reading of what the participants express and how others are reading the stance. An accurate reading and presentation of participant's epistemic, affective, evaluative and positioning-based expressions allows a researcher to begin a more descriptive process of relaying wider

implications from conversation, answering what utterances and their stancework builds in terms of a wider political group identity. Micro-analytical sections of this project will often refer to individual utterances as stance bids (bids for shorthand) because they can be defined as stances grammatically – possessing a marker, an object and an evaluation. However, it is important to note that such instances are not separable from those that precede and follow, multiple bids dynamically produce a wider stance that is ultimately more representative of the concerned groups and individuals. Even though analysing smaller stance bids allows one to point at what an overall stance may be, the overall stance is rarely finalised in the sense that it precipitates into a stance with demarked boundaries and clarity, the meaning will exist dynamically between people in its localised time and place.

Macro Analysis

Positionings, epistemic claims and evaluations of stance objects are presented concisely within micro analysis. They are a fundamental piece of what constructs a stance grammatically, whether explicit or implicit (Dubois, 2007), and are often suitable for indexing the macro-scale discourse of a group. However, discursive theories of ideology and representation (Machin and Mayr, 2012, van Dijk, 2024) provide much of the framing for presenting macro-scale themes by identifying how participants represent concepts and people to position them as inside, outside or ambivalent in relation to FNB.

Connecting the outcomes of stance to a wider discursive political landscape and context of identity is achieved by drawing on concepts from further stance literature and discursive theory (detailed further within literature review sections 2.0 – 2.8):

- Concepts from Machin and Mayr (2012) such as representing others (collectivisation) and presupposition
- Discursive elements constructing the ideological square (van Dijk, 2024)
- Turntaking and politeness impacting stance, literature from Clift (2006), Goffman (2005) and Heritage (2013)

- The reporting space (Niemelä, 2010) offering complex ideological representations of people, institutions and concepts

Macro analysis needs to use evidence from micro analytical findings to answer:

- What do participants think about the concepts they make stances about?
- What do these thoughts imply about the group identity?
- What is the character of such implications?
- Are such implications clearly describable? And do participants unanimously align with them?

Sequencing of Analysis

Analysis is separated into chapters based on intersections of the following:

- Topic shift via epistemic stance enacting sequence initiation and expansion (Heritage, 2013)
- Shifts in conversation's conclusive discursive themes
- Shifts in the analytical tools required

This approach is most appropriate because being able to follow conversation and present it in its original sequential form, whilst grouping sections, allows for an intuitive application of the diagraph method and stance marker analysis without creating an unending list of co-dependant pieces of analysis. Segmenting by topic enables a clear presentation of the political themes discussed by the group and presents an opportunity to reapply the research question to a larger context in macro sections. Such themes are seldom isolated to individual sections of conversation. However, focus on one theme typically emerges in a notably condensed form at points of interaction, often an emotive highpoint in terms of interest. Such highpoints are often oriented around storytelling through a reporting space (Niemelä, 2010).

Sequence initiation and expansion refer to the topic shifts and expansion within spoken interaction. Epistemic stance can form the basis of such shifts. When a speaker positions themselves as K+/K-, the process begins (Heritage, 2013). K- can serve as a request for information on a given topic, either as an unprompted utterance, or in

reference to a prior utterance and its contents. K+ functions likewise but instead offers information, therefore ‘motivating a telling’ (Heritage, 2013).

The first stance of each section is presented within a diagraph. This allows for the clear presentation of the object of stance, markers used and evaluation. The object is the target of the evaluation, which drives the discursive conclusions of a section of talk. Clearly identifying stance markers (or lack thereof) demonstrates a stance’s epistemic proposition and certainty, whilst showing its ability to initiate and expand sequences.

The highlighting of stance markers and transcript notation will remain in larger, exemplary extracts of data. Transcript notation and highlight keys are found in the appendices. Quotes embedded in analysis, displayed in diagraphs or my own speech in the transcripts will have such conventions removed. Line numbers of the transcripts are referred to as ‘L’ and the corresponding number, e.g., ‘L50’. Within analysis this will refer to the corresponding transcript, denoted in the title of the section. Line references outside of analysis or referring to those in a different transcript will denote the lettering of the appropriate transcript, e.g., ‘L50A’.

3.4 A Reflexive Approach to the Focus Group Interview

During the interview we shared some drinks and homemade food, mirroring FNB’s usual routine not only gave the participants a relaxed atmosphere but allowed me to feel as if the group was in a natural setting. Consoli (2022:1402) calls *life capital* “the repertoire of one’s life experiences”, promoting all researchers to observe the positive tools that life experience offers in the case of a subject, even when identity and sociality are not the focus of research. The concept builds on Pierre Bourdieu’s *social capital*, instead positing how social experience produces instead of purely constrains the subject. Consoli (2022) applies life capital to TESOL and the relationship between teacher and learner. Consoli and Ganassin (2023) demonstrate that reflexivity, and by extension life capital, should be minded throughout the entirety of any linguistic project, from beginning to end, used to both examine the researcher-participant relationship, and the researcher’s relationship with themselves within the project.

My life capital informs my position as researcher in this context: as I am a member of FNB, it forms part of my day-to-day life – there is likely to be a degree of assumption amongst participants that I have shared goals and values with them. This may be true to an extent and is undoubtedly an influence on the responses of participants. However, to move away from the pitfall of simple self-supervision when applying reflexivity, the move to intentionally mirror my non-researcher self during recruitment, data gathering and communication can arguably reduce a palpable scrutiny for participants. Application of my life capital means participants may be more likely to offer contrasting and nuanced stances if they are surrounded with a group of people already ‘in’ the group. There may be less feeling compelled to defend or promote aspects of the FNB ideology. Reflexivity plays an important role in analysis, my membership of FNB informs my interpretation of members’ utterances. It also allows me to present the conclusions of analysis with a nuanced assertion of representativeness. I am familiar with the members both present and absent from the interview, so I can reflect on the character of the identity projected, measuring it as localised and not an inherent synecdoche for the entirety of the FNB identity.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

FNB is a non-hierarchical, consensus-based group and no leader or gatekeeper exists to seek permission to recruit from the group. Instead, much like the management of the group’s usual objectives, group discussion and consensus were used. I proposed the idea at a group planning meeting for future events. I made an announcement that any members who felt comfortable were welcome to join a separate organisational group chat should they be interested, with no obligation to confirm their participation for definite. In place of a gatekeeper, introducing the idea in a group setting allowed for members to ask questions and assure any doubts or misunderstandings about the project.

I acquired ethical clearance through the university (approval code: ETH2425-0105), producing a consent form and participant information sheet (see in appendices) which I sent to participants ahead of the interview date. In the ethical consent form, I state that choosing not to participate or withdrawing from the study will not affect how

participants are treated and that they may withdraw at any time. I reiterated this before recording and added that if participants wish to not discuss any topics or stop recording for any reason that would be completely acceptable.

I asked participants to choose their own pseudonyms. I informed them that any details relating to the locality of the group or identity of members (present or absent) would be anonymised in the transcripts.

After recording for the purpose of the project's data, I had a conversation with the participants on my own views: both on the prompts, and some of the topics discussed. This was because everyone seemed interested in sharing ideas, myself included, and giving my own stances may help to reduce any scrutiny felt after the interview.

Throughout analysis I have considered how the project portrays participants, not only for the sake of anonymity but for the ethical duty in representing individuals and the group. Whilst stance analysis ultimately aims to find the meanings and interpretations amongst participants of a conversation, my position as facilitator means I was often completely or partially addressed as receiver by participants' stances. This puts the burden of interpretation on me twofold. To make responsible claims I often provide a caveat for my interpretation, especially when participants make claims that border on face-threatening. When participants make such stances, I offer multiple suggestions of what identity this may constitute for the group - to avoid depicting a conflict where there may only be negotiated disalignment.

4.0 Analysis: Transcript A

4.1 Initial Stances on Mutual Aid

Transcript Lines 1-35

1	Interviewer:	Okay / thank you for joining me everyone / um / as I've mentioned within the / consent forms / if you want to stop recording for any reason at any point / that's completely fine / there's no / obligation to [/ discuss anything / you don't want to]
2		((bang)) {pen falls on table}
3	Karis:	[oh shit / sorry]
4	Interviewer:	And I'll begin with some of the / simpler small prompts / so the first word / is /
5		mutual aid / [first two words]
6	Karis:	[mutual aid] /
7	Interviewer:	Mm / what do you think about it / um / how would you define it? / things like that /
8	Karis:	So we just discuss now?
9	Interviewer:	Yeah / [yeah] feel free
10	Columbo:	[Yeah] / When I / hear mutual aid / I'm / thinking about / the definition / that I sort of
11		know of / which is / just helping each other really / I think quite sort of / yeah / very
12		informal way / I don't know
13	Karis:	*Yeah* I think it's an important concept I think it's something a lot of people can
14		agree on/ It's like uh / It's kind of a core concept in anarchist political philosophy
15		probably but it's also something I think that will be in common with kind of other
16		schools of leftist thought as well / um / and you can think about it on kind of a
17		regular scale like we do things as you know like just / basically people helping one
18		another / uh or as kind of / on a larger scale/ it can probably refer to like a different
19		organisation of society / where kind of the means of production and stuff are
20		organised around mutual aid instead of / hierarchy where you know / that's how
21		most of society could be organised / as you know / with the personal level stuff as a
22		model maybe / you have like mutual aid funds too / where people will pay into it and
23		then if you n-specifically need money for anything like if you can't make rent or
24		something then you can make it / I got a bit of / money from the mutual aid fund /
25		the other the other month / mm
26	Ludovic:	I think of mutual aid as / a way to / put something into a community / [and] / take
27		something out not necessarily at the same time or its it doesn't have to be two
28		people / in an exchange / um / which is kind of what we do in general in a society
29		but I think of mutual aid as existing outside of / uh institutions / outside of um / that
30		kind of / institutional societal structure / it it's / it steps in where / the / the
31		institutions fail /
32	Columbo:	[*Yeah*]
33	Interviewer:	Mm
34	Karis:	Yeah / for the audio recording I'm nodding /
35	All:	Chuckles

In this section I give the first prompt for discussion:

“I’ll begin with some of the simpler small prompts so the first word is mutual aid” (L4)

Receiving a minimal response from the group, I ask:

“What do you think about it um how would you define it? things like that” (L7)

Karis asks permission to discuss (L8), I grant it and encourage (L9), then Columbo is the first to offer a stance bid:

Stance Object + Adverb	Evaluation	Adverb
The definition that I <u>sort of</u> know of (L10)	which is just helping each other	really

Here there is no cognitive verb following a first-person pronoun in the grammatical position of a subject, instead the cognitive verb “know” is within a sub-clause. The most prominent stance marker is the adverb “really”. ‘I know of’ is not a stance marker, it shows a state of knowledge (Myers, 2010) and serves to qualify the “definition”, it downgrades the epistemic claim, implying “the definition” is not the *only* definition. “Really” functions as a stance marker, specifically a booster, strengthening the claim that mutual aid is “just”, or primarily concerned with, one process.

The next utterance (Columbo again) begins with a cognitive verb as a stance marker, but shifts what she is saying:

“I think quite sort of / yeah / very informal way” (L11)

The emerging bid is cut short, there is no grammatical object of ‘I think’, thus no evaluation. However, “very informal way” functions adverbially to further downgrade the prior epistemic bid. This downgrade is typical in interaction given the utterance’s primacy. This is immediately followed with an epistemic bid “I don’t know” used to position herself relative to the epistemic status of others and act as a filler.

Karis responds to Columbo: “Yeah” (L13). This backchannelling signals attention and a general alignment (as is shown by the following utterances). This conversational particle may also serve to mark stancework and announce the beginning of a turn, several bids are made in the utterance:

“Yeah I think it’s an important concept” (L13)

“I think it’s something a lot of people can agree on” (L13)

“It’s kind of a core concept in anarchist political philosophy probably” (L14)

“It’s also something I think that will be in common with kind of other schools of leftist thought” (L15).

Three of the first four are marked with a first-person pronoun and a cognitive verb: ‘I think’. These four all take mutual aid as a stance object, referred to with the third-person singular pronoun ‘it’.

The first bid follows an archetypal evaluative structure, stating mutual aid is important. The second follows likewise but has wider implications politically. Karis asserts that mutual aid is “something a lot of people can agree on”. The third is not marked with a cognitive verb, but instead the adverb “probably”, this is the first bid thus far within the turn that is epistemically downgraded. Mutual aid is evaluated as “a core concept in anarchist political philosophy”. “Probably” may be deployed to counteract what is an epistemically strong and confident set of bids – at least ‘strong’ relative to how early within the interaction this turn appears, and in comparison to the downgrades displayed in Columbo’s initial bid. This is not atypical however, as Columbo appears to make way for more assertive bids to follow, a process shown by Clift (2006). The fourth bid is again marked by a cognitive verb, “think” and evaluates mutual aid as being “in common with kind of other schools of leftist thought”.

When referring to dynamic modality in analysis I refer to a modal state denoting a subject’s ability to do something. Whilst framed as a hypothetical, with dynamic modality regarding how mutual aid “can” be viewed, Karis makes a further bid evaluating mutual aid:

“You can think about it on kind of a regular scale like we do things as you know like just / basically people helping one another” (L16)

To simplify: ‘(mutual aid) can be thought of as basically helping one another’. This bid is arguably detached from personal ownership, it is not cognitively marked, just adverbially by “basically”. However, given some of Karis’s prior bids are marked as her own thought, some implication of ownership is present. The wording is almost a direct

quotation of Columbo's initial evaluation ("just helping each other really", L13) showing strong implied alignment.

Karis then makes another adverbially marked bid stating: "it can probably refer to like a different organisation of society [...]" (L18), "probably" being the marker, which downgrades epistemic certainty and paired with "can", again, provides dynamic modality. An epistemic bid and evaluation is made in terms of defining mutual aid.

Next Ludovic takes a turn:

Cognitive Verb	Stance Object	Evaluation
I think of	mutual aid	as a way to put something into a community and take something out
(L26)		

In Ludovic's turn, although "I think of" can be used to show a state of mind, the object of thought (mutual aid) is clearly given an evaluation, the prior turns all contain personal stance bids marked with cognitive verbs and adverbs. This gives the appropriate context to say Ludovic is also offering a personal stance, just within her own idiolect. Therefore, all structurally and contextually same uses of "I think of" will be treated as such from hereon. This bid evaluates mutual aid as reciprocal: "a way to put something into a community and take something out". The sub-clauses "not necessarily at the same time" (L27) and "it doesn't have to be two people in an exchange" (L27) give further context to the definition provided. Ludovic then compares this functionality to the wider social structure, evaluating the prior utterance as a whole: "which is what we do in general in a society" (L28). She continues, contextualising the comment on society:

"I think of mutual aid as existing outside of / uh institutions / outside of um / that kind of / institutional societal structure" (L29)

Another evaluating phrase is added:

"it steps in where / the / the institutions fail" (L30)

Here a cognitive verb again signals a bid, "think", with the second evaluation possibly working under the assumption that it will be taken as an opinion, given the prior stance marker. Regardless of intention, "it steps in where the institutions fail" has the strongest

epistemic certainty of Ludovic's comments thus far. Not only due to an omitted cognitive verb, but a presupposition that institutions *do* fail. This shows that institutions are evaluated negatively in terms of their efficacy to support people. Other than being marked as an opinion, there is no downgrading to Ludovic's bid. Both Columbo and Karis backchannel after Ludovic's turn "*Yeah*" (L32) and "Yeah / for the audio recording I'm nodding" (L34), respectively. Karis makes this backchannel feature humorous by referring to the recording and, by extension, to a potential unusual atmosphere.

Macro Analysis

This is the first discussion of the focus group, Columbo is first to offer a bid so her downgrading its epistemic strength adheres to housekeeping, making space for assumed subordinate stancework to follow without being overshadowed. In Karis's utterance concerning 'agreement' (L13), evaluation is used to imply the alignment of an imagined group, the people who "agree on" mutual aid are collectivised in terms of discursive, macro scale representation. Machin and Mayr (2012) argue that this collectivised representation has a dehumanising effect, however, the effect is closer to evading specificity - the statement does not have to elaborate on which kind of people agree or why. Van Leeuwen and Wodak (1999) suggest that wherever actual details are replaced by abstractions we can assume that some kind of ideological work is taking place. Karis mentions anarchism (L14). This was an early, yet pivotal moment for the focus group as it allowed me to later bring anarchism into focus – an aim I wanted to achieve without leading participants to link anarchism to FNB and mutual aid inherently.

Karis links mutual aid and 'leftist thought' (L15) coupled with a previous bid about anarchism (itself a politically diverse category) may enact the stance that mutual aid is not politically niche, and somewhat ubiquitous conceptually. This is thematically different from Columbo's bid, which makes an evaluation of the practicalities of the term, however, one can argue that Karis has aligned with Columbo thus far by both

backchanneling and identifying a broadness to the definition of mutual aid which Columbo established.

Ludovic's initial bids (L26-31) address similar themes to Karis, suggestions that mutual aid is about negotiating, what is generally considered by the group, a negative social structure. However, participants tend to be making more isolated statements compared to some of the evidence of alignment/disalignment in later interaction. This can be inferred from the minimal back channelling between the first three turns which contain little overt reference to each other's content. This is likely due to early reticence and partial uncertainty of the group dynamic. Conclusions about alignment, and participants' commitment to the content of their stancework must be tentative at this point. Humour takes many forms in this section of the recording, including irony and reporting. Humour and positive affective responses in the form of laughter and reciprocal joking punctuate most stancework in this section of the data. This suggests a pre-existing positive relationship and high degree of alignment.

4.2 Knowledge and Public Perception

Transcript Lines 36-89

36	Karis:	But also I'm a poser because I haven't actually finished reading any Kropotkin and I
37		don't know what I'm talking about / um / mutual aid to me is um / it's when I go and
38		help serve coffees but also I can have some of the garlic bread / and then when we
39		wash up the cutlery then I'm short on forks and I can steal one of the forks [/ for
40		myself] and that's mutual aid /
41	All:	[chuckles]
42	Ludovic:	Well / at least you started Kropotkin /
43	All:	[[Chuckles]]
44	Columbo:	[[Laughter]]
45	Ludovic	I downloaded [and then deleted] it ~laughing voice~ laughter /
46	Karis:	Laughter
47	Columbo:	[[I think I've still got it]] in my / room at *ho[me*]
48	Karis:	[[I got like halfway through]] / [you own a copy] /
49	Columbo:	I think I do / um / but its low down the reading list / um / I think in the context of food
50		not bombs / it it comes across with / when we have / the-there's a core group of
51		people that do food not bombs / and a lot of us are / um / and-and we we you know
52		we'll eat some of the food as well / um / but I think it's / I see it more when
53		people will / sort of just help and join in even if they're not / maybe in the / WhatsApp
54		group or / when they sort of / aren't / regulars / um / that's when I / I guess I kind of
55		see / it a bit more / um /
56	Karis:	Like when someone will just show up with a bike full of like / too good to go
57		/pastries in it /
58	Columbo:	Exact[ly]
59	Ludovic:	[[Oh yeah]]
60	Karis	[[And also those]] / *um* / um
61	Ludovic:	Oh w-when people come up and just say/ oh how can we help?
62	Karis:	[[Yeah]]
63	Columbo:	[[mm]]
64	Ludovic:	And it's quite
65	Karis:	[How can we help?] / ~mock-authoritative voice~
66	Columbo:	Chuckle
67	Ludovic:	They well they seem it's quite=
68	Karis:	=For the transcript that's an impression of / King Arkinian in / CDI Zelda /
69	All:	Chuckles
70	Columbo:	Wonderful [Go on]
71	Ludovic:	[It's] it's / [it's] quite interesting when they / feel a bit confused? They're like oh / so
72		are you at church? / are you a charity? [/] and once they realise that what we do is /a
73		lot more informal
74	Karis:	[Sorry]
75	Columbo:	[Chuckles]
76	Ludovic:	They feel a little / I-lost sometimes
77	Karis:	Yeah
78	Columbo:	Mm
79	Karis:	There isn't a point of reference of it people expect you to have an organisational
80		structure / or like a registered charity / and of course when people ask what

81		organisational structure we have then I just quote / Monty Python The Holy Grail at
82		them and I say we're an autonomous collective
83	All:	<i>Chuckles /</i>
84	Ludovic:	Which is true
85	Karis:	Yeah
86	Ludovic:	It is accurate
87	Karis:	But then I don't know the rest of that spiel from that sketch so I can't keep making
88		the reference I just know the one line
89	Interviewer:	Mm

In the extracts below, Karis downgrades her prior bids and general epistemic status and therefore brings about a new sequence of negotiation amongst speakers. The object of stance is now herself rather than mutual aid. She also introduces the topic of being knowledgeable in anarchist theory, which extends to membership and public perception. The following section of analysis concerns the data spanning between L34 and L86.

Stance Object

I

Evaluation

'm a poser

Stance Object

I
(L36-L37)

Adverbial + Evaluation

haven't actually finished reading any Kropotkin

Karis makes a joke by ironically evaluating herself as a stance object "I'm a poser" following immediately with a further epistemic downgrade "and I don't know what I'm talking about". The connective "but" and the adverb "actually" both indicate a contrastive stance in relation to her previous one. Repositioning her epistemic status here has several potential implications. One implication is that Karis is saving face, not wanting to appear as overbearing by offering a wide set of epistemically strong stancework and thus threatening the face of others. Another is an attempt to dissipate a formal atmosphere both after her own in depth and complex bids, and in reaction to a slightly tense atmosphere. Ludovic offers a boost to Karis's epistemic status after her admission of not finishing Kropotkin (L36): "Well / at least you started Kropotkin", this follows a typical co-operative structure: confirming embedded conventions of housekeeping. Adequate opportunity for displaying epistemic status is managed amongst participants, maintaining a relationship of equality.

From L49-52 Columbo makes several utterances, varying in object and completion, one stands out in terms of defining the group identity, concerning a "core group":

"The-there's a core group of people that do food not bombs / and a lot of us are / um / and-and we we you know we'll eat some of the food as well / um /" (L50)

A core group is shown here to exist, with a sub-clause showing they “do food not bombs”. A cognitive verb “I think” precedes a collection of starts which contain this stance. Whilst the marking is not explicit within this claim, contextually it is likely readable as opinion. By emphasising “do” Columbo is suggesting a “core group” has more input.

The following extract continues directly from the above.

“But I I think it it's / I see it more when people will / sort of just help and join in even if they're not / maybe in the / WhatsApp group or / when they sort of / aren't / regulars”
(L52)

Here a cognitive marker shows the beginning of a bid, “I think”. The stance object, “it” is still mutual aid, or the definition of it. However, Columbo instead makes a statement about how she perceives the group. She makes a point that group membership is not central to the function of mutual aid, “but” makes this evaluation explicitly contrastive to the previous notion of “core” membership. Columbo follows with:

“that's when I / I guess I kind of see / it a bit more” (L54)

This bid is marked with an affixed cognitive verb “I guess”. Rather than a qualifying evaluation of “it” Columbo makes an epistemic evaluation regarding the ontological status of mutual aid using the comparative “more”. This suggests that the object of stance, which the group is consistently orienting to, is emergent and not always present and definable in her view. This bid functions as a response to one’s own stancework, Columbo reiterates the personal ownership of the prior statement and builds on its implications whilst downgrading epistemic certainty.

This downgrade again could be viewed as a politeness feature but can also signal generalised epistemic uncertainty as members of the group are providing their thoughts emergently, positioning themselves relative to wider discourses and complex personal values in real time, whilst responding to the immediate social context.

Karis shows alignment with Columbo, making her own evaluation of mutual aid as object:

“Like when someone will just show up with a bike full of like / too good to go / pastries in it” (L56)

This bid may not have a directly accessible marker, but it follows a grammatical structure of evaluation. Here “like” could be a conversational particle but seems more likely a marker of simile. One could interpret the implication of a stance object as such:

(The point that mutual aid is more visible and present in certain situations than others is) “like when someone will just show up [...]”

This stance shows Karis’ interpretation and application of Columbo’s definition as a signal of alignment. Columbo then aligns to Karis strongly with the adverbial marker “exactly” (L58). Ludovic also shows a confident degree of alignment by following with the conversational particles “oh yeah” (L59).

The next full turn is made by Ludovic, who opens a reporting space. Before analysing what is said within this turn, there is a contextual shift that must be introduced. There is a topic shift in terms of epistemic proposal and object of stance, the discussion still can be grouped by discursive themes of membership status. Previously, Karis and Columbo were discussing membership, or lack thereof, concerning mutual aid, these conclusions seemed widely accepted. Next, Karis begins an utterance which seems to pertain to a topic shift of some degree: “[[And also those]] / *um* / um” (L60). She does not finish the utterance. This seems to prompt Ludovic to open a reporting space, an evaluation of a different kind of social interaction begins, one with arguably less positive evaluation. I explain this context because when looking simply at the two aforementioned utterances, it can appear as if further co-construction of the prior stances regarding membership is occurring.

Ludovic begins her turn with the conversational particle “oh” as a marker:

“Oh w-when people come up and just say / oh how can we help?” (L61)

There are several indicators that this is reported speech, most obvious of which is the reporting verb ‘say’, the reporting space is also used to evoke characteristics of the reported speakers. Further evidence of the space is a prosodic shift; Ludovic puts emphasis on “we” as well as using a conversational particle “oh” to mimic spoken dialogue (Myers, 2010). Next Karis uses the reporting space to say, “How can we help” (L65) this utterance uses a deeper, mock-authoritative voice, later explained as “an impression of / King Arkinian in / CDI Zelda” (L68). In between this impression and its

explanation Ludovic begins to elaborate on her report “They well they seem it’s quite=” but is interrupted, this elaboration has an adverb and a conversational particle as markers, “they” (those who offer to help) are the subject of an upcoming evaluation. After the explanation everyone laughs - a unanimous affective display of alignment. Columbo makes a sarcastically marked stance “wonderful”, using a lower tone of voice (L70). This could be both an appreciation of the joke and a sarcastic evaluation of it, perhaps hinting toward the fact that Karis has interrupted Ludovic twice and broken a conventional chain of elements that were forming Ludovic’s emerging bid. Columbo prompts Ludovic to “[Go on]” (L70), soon followed with Karis’s apology “[Sorry]” (L74). Ludovic resumes her evaluation of the reported interaction:

“[It’s] it’s / [it’s] quite interesting when they / feel a bit confused? They're like oh / so are you at church? / are you a charity? [/] and once they realise that what we do is /a lot more informal” [...] “they feel a little lost sometimes” (L71-76)

Ludovic evaluates the scenario (previously identified on L61) of people being confused as “quite interesting”, the adverb “quite” acting as a stance marker in the form of a booster. The evaluation of “lost” is uttered with rising intonation. This has the effect of downgrading epistemic certainty and seeking confirmation or alignment from other participants. This bid is further epistemically downgraded by adverbs “little” and “sometimes”. Both Columbo and Karis show alignment, backchannelling with conversational particles on L77 and L78. The reporting space is re-engaged by Ludovic with the conversational particle “oh” as marker, rising intonation is applied noticeably, with emphasis on “church” and “charity”. The speakers in question are represented as uncertain, perhaps naïve.

Karis takes an aligning turn containing several bids which co-construct Ludovic’s points, discussing the structure and public perception of FNB:

“There isn't a point of reference of it people expect you to have an organisational structure / or like a registered charity / and of course when people ask what organisational structure we have then I just quote / Monty Python The Holy Grail at them and I say we're an autonomous collective” (L79)

This is met by laughter and two strongly aligning epistemic evaluations from Ludovic (“Which is true”, L86, and “It is accurate”, L88).

Macro Analysis

Whilst everyone seemed comfortable and well acquainted, the structuring of the conversation starts off with some reticence at the beginning, as well as interview-style 'question and answer' structuring with less backchanneling and interruption. Jokes help to minimise this successfully as participants respond with laughter and co-operative interactions such as on L42,48,56,58. Interruptions, and management of them suggest that this section graduates into a more natural conversation.

Karis's Zelda joke does not evaluate an object like the beginning of the reporting space it occurs in; it appears to be purely for humour. The joke breaks the established tonal conventions of the space - the vocal tone and type of character it mimics is different from that which Ludovic established. This runs counter to the continuous tendencies identified by Niemelä (2010) but is not out of the ordinary for Karis's apparent sense of humour.

In this section Karis uses ironic humour to make a bid about the rights she has to make evaluations within the broader epistemic community of anarchism. Framed within the discourse of authenticity, she ironically proclaims herself a "poser". This is ironic in part because Karis makes confident claims about her epistemic status and is unlikely to want to entirely undermine her own epistemic status. Karis is making a dramatic downgrade to her status, presenting an uninformed character to be taken seriously by the other for the purpose of completing the pretense, however the reality is that Karis does not fully believe herself to be lacking expertise, and knows the others will believe likewise. Authenticity is significant here as a normative technique for evaluating others (and selves), stemming heavily from values in traditional media, social media and advertising discourse (Serazio, 2023). To appear artificial devalues one's social capital and persuasive power. This may be why Karis ironically frames her lack of credentials surrounding Kropotkin, which conversely *is* authentic insofar in that it admits to an 'amateur' status. Karis may also be making a meta-commentary on the concepts of intellectual gatekeeping and credentials. Humorous exchanges bookmark this section of talk, whilst they are enacting epistemic and evaluative stance bids, they encourage

affective responses from others and point to a thus far consistent underlying prominence for affect in stancework. All participants discuss what it means to be a member of FNB in some way. FNB's membership and political identity is shown to be fluid and unfixed, with an agreeable discussion between Karis and Columbo giving an overall conclusive stance which could be summarised as such: membership is not central to the process, and mutual aid emerges most prominently when the power dynamic between beneficiaries and volunteers dissipates. However, despite this fluidity, members of the public are portrayed as unknowledgeable when it comes to mutual aid and its function via the reporting space. With direct evaluation representing them as "lost" and "confused".

Through overt stancework, the representation of others and self, the concept of mutual aid (established in the prior section) is continually edited, and a process of ideological squaring highlights a potential friction with the public. However, this is not without nuance, Karis notes the lack of a point of reference for the public. This ideological square creates an image of the group's political identity – thus far a willingness to join in and accept the ambiguity is shown as significant. Politeness features such as expected flow of upgrade and downgrade relating to primacy and subordination, as well as conventions of housekeeping maintain the relationships of the participants.

4.3 Mutual Aid versus Charity

Transcript Lines 90-122

90	Columbo:	I then tell them about / um / that they should stop basing their system of
91		government on / old ladies hand-handing out swords from bogs
92	Karis:	Yeah that's right / that's right
93	Columbo:	Um
94	Karis:	I think in some way / I mean / what food not bombs does is uh / it's kind of /
95		informed by mutual aid but because of the structure of the society we're in and a lot
96		of people d-contributing will be people in a position of privilege with like you know
97		free time / or / uh you know a job that they can live on [properly] / yeah and exactly
98		that they can contribute and then people / that / receive the food and come and get
99		servings of it will be like you know homeless people or people who don't have very
100		much at all so it's kind of more one directional just because we're / we're we're kind
101		of trying to / look towards what we want with mutual aid as a model and kind of
102		providing that
103	Columbo:	[Employment]
104	Interviewer:	Mm
105	Ludovic:	[[It it]]
106	Karis:	[[More than that being the way things already are]] /
107	Interviewer:	[[Yeah]] / that makes sense
108	Ludovic:	[[it]]
109	Ludovic:	It is important to me that we do couch it in terms of mutual aid / even if sometimes
110		things don't / sometimes things don't come back to you in [[the]] same direction
111		that you / put things in / I guess because it distinguishes what we do from say
112		charity
113	Columbo:	[[Mm]]
114	Karis:	Mhm [[yeah]]
115	Ludovic:	It's it's not / charity [[it's]] I've got some / you need some / it's it's sort of more
116		couched in terms of ex-exchange? I guess ? / gifting?
117	Karis:	[[Yeah]]
118	Columbo:	I liked it how Amy put it when we were discussing a while back about like um / if uh /
119		you know the rozzers [[showed up or whatever]] and uh had a problem with us we
120		would just sort of say / well / we're just having a picnic with our friends / [[because]]
121		that's what we're doing in a way really it's a bit more / you know /
122	Karis:	[[<i>Chuckles</i>]] [[yeah]]

The joke surrounding Monty Python continues, then Karis reroutes to the topic of discussion with a cognitively marked bid (shown below). There is a shift in tone, moving away from the humorous exchanges. The bid makes this a clear example of a topic shift: shifting from humorous depictions of explaining the group structure to the public, to gauging FNB's proximity to mutual aid. An evaluation is posed with relatively low epistemic certainty, positioning Karis as K-, inviting responses from others. Whilst the proposition still hinges on defining FNB's action, it initiates the first main disalignment amongst participants.

Cognitive Verb + <u>Conversational Particle</u>	Stance Object	Evaluation + <u>Adverb</u>
I think in some way I <u>mean</u>	what food not bombs does	is uh it's <u>kind of</u> informed by mutual aid

(L94)

Karis continues, stating that a lot of volunteers are “in a position of privilege” (L96), citing free time and jobs as examples. Columbo overlaps with the example with “employment” (L103) and Karis continues and aligns to this contribution with “exactly” (L97). Karis's concludes that “it's kind of more one directional” (L100) because “we're kind of trying to / look towards what we want with mutual aid as a model” (L101). This bid is given a lower epistemic commitment with “kind of” as an adverbial phrase of degree, it nonetheless is a site of disalignment amongst participants. After some interrupted starts (L105, L108) Ludovic makes a contrasting bid, evaluating the process of defining the group:

“It is important to me that we do couch it in terms of mutual aid / even if sometimes things don't / sometimes things don't come back to you in [[the]] same direction that you / put things in” (L109)

Couching 'it' as mutual aid (presumably 'it' here is the stance object of prior discussion - “what food not bombs does”) is evaluated as “important” to Ludovic personally. The object of this stance is a verb phrase, affectively evaluated. This affective evaluation is still given strong epistemic certainty. “*It is important...*” rather than ‘it is kind of important’ or ‘I think it is important’.

Ludovic continues:

“I guess because it distinguishes what we do from say charity” (L111)

Here the assertion that “it” (the act of mutual aid) should not be defined as charity is made once again. Marked cognitively with “I guess”. Distinguishing FNB’s action from charity shows how Ludovic views mutual aid as opposing in principle, or at least incomparable to the act of charity. Columbo and Karis both respond to with backchannelling, “Mm” (L113) and “Mhm yeah” (L114) respectively. Ludovic continues, reinforcing the stance, this time using the reporting space:

“It’s it’s not / charity [[it’s]] I’ve got some / you need some” (L115)

“It’s not charity” acts as a stance by itself, performing the same evaluation as her previous bids. Karis aligns to this beginning statement by overlapping with “yeah” (L117). “I’ve got some / you need some” reports the speech of a hypothetical person, presumably meant to represent FNB addressing another hypothetical party. There is a tonal shift in Ludovic’s delivery, use of first and second person pronouns and emphasis on “some” all give cues that she is opening a reporting space. The emphasis of “some” places significance on the object of focus between the two hypothetical speakers: food. Ludovic continues:

“It’s sort of more couched in terms of ex-exchange? I guess? / gifting?” (L115)

Ludovic adds more evaluations, cognitively marked and modified with an adverb, using a rising tone to indicate potential epistemic uncertainty and/or seek confirmation from the group, who were previously aligning with a relatively differing stance on the matter. Keisanen (2007) finds tag questions often request confirmation or agreement in stancetaking, Ludovic’s interrogative tone may perform similarly.

Columbo recalls a conversation with another volunteer:

“I liked it how Amy put it when we were discussing a while back about like um / if uh / you know the rozzers [[showed up or whatever]] and uh had a problem with us we would just sort of say / well / we’re just having a picnic with our friends” (L118)

Here a hypothetical reporting space, signified initially with a reporting verb and conversational particle “well”, is used to show the conclusions of a previous discussion. Judging by context, the reported discussion concerned defining the action of FNB, since

it involves an explanation to the authorities, and is said in response to a similarly definition-oriented utterance (L115). Columbo announces this “picnic” with a shift to a higher tone of voice, taking on a carefree characteristic, potentially to imitate ‘playing-dumb’ to police who may want to intervene with the protest. This can be viewed as a reporting space within another reporting space; a report of a real past conversation, in which, a hypothetical report is deployed. The scenario is thus ‘re-summoned’ by Columbo for purposes of further stancetaking. This report prompts Karis to backchannel, interrupting with laughter and “yeah” (L122) - a show of positive affective alignment with the implications of the report. This reporting space brings forth a conclusive plan of action, which is then paraphrased and aligned with affectively “I liked how Amy put it”. While the main stance object being evaluated is “how Amy put it”, the reporting space arguably makes more impactful conclusions about how Columbo and Amy view FNB.

After this report Columbo says:

“[[because]] that's what we're doing in a way **really**” L120

The adverbial booster “really” marks this bid. The stance object “that” refers to the announcement within the previous reported speech and is evaluated as being “what we’re doing”. “In a way” adds epistemic downgrade and functions as an adverbial phrase, perhaps to concede that this is a simplification, but boosted with “really”, potentially asserting that this generalisation holds validity. Karis chuckles – aligning both affectively and explicitly (L122).

Macro Analysis

Karis gives a definition of the group’s action that harkens to the conventions of charity and a separation from being entirely mutual aid. Ludovic has previously taken a stance on FNB’s action, implying it is not charity, with critical evaluations when voicing a portion of the public who assume the contrary (L71).

Ludovic’s bids (L109, L111, L115) seem to be making a stance on the opposite side of a ‘mutual aid versus charity’ dichotomy, Columbo and Karis provide backchannelling

which usually signals alignment. This may be a politeness feature of avoiding conflict, or simply an acceptance of the proposition and a change of mind. Karis's original stance, regarding the 'one sided' nature of the giving, was not epistemically certain and incorporated a mention that mutual aid is still a model for guiding the group towards desired ends. This site of disalignment shows conceptualisation of FNB's practice is not universal amongst its members.

When discussing confrontation through the adoption of the reporting space, Columbo adopts a more softly spoken tone. She reports a plan to reply to legal questioning with the announcement of a 'picnic with friends'. This has many implications, firstly, that FNB is viewed by multiple people as fluid in definition. Secondly, the police, informally referred to as 'the rozzers', are, or could be, an opposition to FNB. Finally, although indirect, this arguably aligns with Ludovic's resistance to being defined as a charity. Columbo's report places both the volunteers and beneficiaries within an equal relationship of "friends", police functioning as a contrasting institution aids construction of an anti-authoritarian viewpoint attributed to FNB via the ideological square, by ascribing unsympathetic characteristics to the police, FNB becomes empathetic through comparison.

In summary this section shows the reporting space enacting stancework concerning power relations between authority, the group, and those who benefit from the group's action. There is disalignment in how the group is or should be construed of theoretically, but the discussion is still managed with politeness features in the form of downgrades as well as affective practices such as humour - ultimately no speakers present a prescriptive political stance. There is a general agreement in fluidity of the group's identity.

4.4 Group Structuring and Consensus

Transcript Lines 123-159

123	Columbo:	Not many picnics have group names and uh uh a fold out table they keep uh at a
124		[[pub]] um /
125	Interviewer:	[[Chuckles]]
126	Columbo:	Um there's still that sort of aspect of um / It's just that we like to do and it's
127		friendly and there's not really any / there's no pressure on it really other than that
128		we want to try and do it consistently / um / and on the aspect um / of of that of
129		mutual aid a bit and of what you were saying um
130	Karis:	She's pointing at me for the transcripts
131	Columbo:	Laughter / and can the transcript know as well that I'm looking absolutely fabulous
132		today
133	Karis:	Oh [[same]] here
134	Ludovic:	[[Laughter]]
135	Karis:	Can the transcript reflect that I had a haircut
136	Columbo:	Laughter
137	Interviewer:	Let it be known
138	Columbo:	I think one of the one of my favourite / I guess memories of food not bombs and / or
139		something along those lines was um we were doing it and then I think one of the
140		homeless people that we were help- or that we were giving some food to said oh /
141		can I help give out some food as well /
142	Karis:	[[Mhm]]
143	Interviewer:	[[Mm]]
144	Columbo:	[And] that felt a bit more like that that mutual laid thing [and] a bit about like that
145		breaking down the / um / the / um / I suppose barriers *that's a bit a bit liberal
146		speaking* breaking down the barriers [between / laughter] between social class I
147		don't know no but you know breaking down that idea of it being in a socie-like the
148		standard social structure
149	Ludovic:	[[Mm]]
150	Karis:	[No liberalism here] ~louder, mock-angry voice~
151	Karis:	In a way it is already kind of / definitely mutual aid in the way it's carried out just
152		because you know I mean / I'm contributing labour but also I just enjoy being there
153		and kind of talking to people and [anyone] who does come and get stuff or just
154		passes by and everything which is kind of mutual aid in an exchange of less what
155		you might think of in you know in existing capitalist society is like exchanging goods
156		and services but you know like just / uh
157	Interviewer:	[Mm]
158	Karis:	I mean what I'm getting back is not necessarily material I guess /
159	Columbo:	Definitely yeah / no / good conversations / well worth /

Columbo makes a bid evaluating FNB. Whilst this has little epistemic function, it does prompt a new topic in the following conversation: a re-emergence of describing FNB's action in terms of organisation and practicalities.

Columbo follows on directly from her previous utterance, adding:

Stance Object	Evaluation(s)
Not many picnics (L123)	have group names and uh uh a fold out table they keep uh at a [[pub]] um

Despite not containing any stance markers from the analytical framework, “not many” does function adverbially to show the degree of scarcity (of these kinds of ‘picnics’). The evaluation reinforces the irony of the previous hypothetical announcement to the police, outlining it as partly contradictory because of the groups clear scheduling and intentionality, thus building a nuanced co-constructed stance regarding FNB’s mix of improvisation and organisation. There is a pause and Columbo continues:

“Um there's still that sort of aspect of um / It it's just that we like to do and it's friendly and there's not really any / there's no pressure on it really other than that we want to try and do it consistently” (L126)

“Um” is a marker here, Columbo is evaluating “that sort of aspect”, which can be described as informality (mentioned by Columbo and Ludovic on L12 and L73 respectively) presented most recently as a ‘picnic’. Informality is evaluated as being ‘still there’ despite the aforementioned planned elements on L123. The conversational particle “um” may indicate a contrastive self-response, modulating the previous assertion of scheduling and intentionality.

“It” (L126), the groups action, is then evaluated by Columbo as “friendly” (L127). She makes the bid: “there's no pressure on it really other than that we want to try and do it consistently”. The bid is marked with a boosting adverb “really”. “We want” and “we like” represent desires and affect, and pre-supposes a stance held by a collective. The first-person plural pronoun “we” positions members of the ongoing conversation within the same ideological ‘side’ (Machin and Mayr, 2012). This showcases Columbo’s perceived balance of informality and structure in FNB.

L130-37 contains jokes and meta comments on recording and transcription. After these subside Columbo exemplifies some of the previous themes in a cognitively marked stance bid. She evaluates a scenario (containing a report of a homeless person asking to help) as a favourite memory.

“I **think** one of the one of my favourite / I **guess** memories of food not bombs and / or something along those lines was um we were doing it and then I **think** one of the homeless people that we were help- or that we were giving some food to said **oh / can I help give out some food as well /**” (L138)

The reporting space is indicated with the conversational particle “oh” as well as the reporting verb “said”. Karis aligns with this evaluation (L142).

Columbo once again evaluates this scenario:

“[And] *that* felt a **bit** more like that that mutual laid thing [and] a bit about like that breaking down the / um / the / um / I **suppose** barriers” (L144)

Once again Columbo is making a bid that discusses the group’s action in terms of power dynamics. The relationship is shown as multidirectional through the metaphor of ‘barriers’. The utterance continues:

“*that’s a **bit** a **bit** liberal speaking* **breaking down the barriers** [between / *laughter*] between social classes I don’t **know** no but you know breaking down that idea of it being in a socie-like the standard social structure” (L145)

‘Breaking down the barriers’ is evaluated as ‘liberal’ in a lower tone, acting as a recalibration of Columbo’s positioning of herself. The phrase is re-presented through echoic irony (echoing both herself and another who would genuinely use this phrase) and is given an ‘other voice’. It is overlapped by Karis’s joke outburst “no liberalism here”, arguably attaching to this new reporting space. These two utterances, simultaneously position liberalism as an ‘outsider’ political ideology and highlights FNB’s action as radical: not in “the standard social structure”. Ludovic backchannels (L149) at the start of this utterance but this is likely in response to the utterance just prior. Only Columbo laughs in response to Karis’s joke, therefore this position seems to be shared explicitly between Columbo and Karis at this point. Columbo downgrades her epistemic status: “I don’t know”.

Karis then makes an adverbially marked bid which evaluates the FNB's action as mutual aid in practice:

“In a way it is already **kind of** / **definitely** mutual aid in the way it's carried out” (L151)

At first Karis uses the adverbial phrase “kind of” to downgrade the epistemic certainty of FNB being mutual aid, but after a pause, changes to a stronger adverb “definitely”. This contrasts an earlier stancework on L94-L102 where mutual aid is shown as partially distanced from FNB's action. Karis indirectly aligns with Ludovic's prior stancework with this utterance.

Karis then discusses contributing labour, enjoying volunteering and talking to people (L152-L153). She refers to these experiences, “which”, as object:

“Which is **kind of** mutual aid in an exchange of less what you might think of in you know in existing capitalist society is like exchanging goods and services” (L154)

Karis reiterates this point on L158. Columbo aligns to this unfolding stance with the adverb “definitely” on L159, establishing her own further aligning stance, marked with a conversational particle. Columbo evaluates conversations had whilst volunteering as “well worth” L159.

Transcript Lines 160-234

160	Interviewer:	Hm / okay well / on / on those kind of themes it made me think of this point / which
161		is / what is anarchism as you understand it? [um]
162	Karis:	[What about] this prompt? / think of a place / an occupation um [chuckles]
163	Columbo:	[Laughter]
164	Interviewer:	Um / yeah it it made / it made me want to ask because you said/ I think you
165		mentioned
166	Karis:	I think I said it was a concept in anarchist political philosophy
167	Interviewer:	Yeah / and um it's interesting because / the food not bombs website doesn't
168		describe itself as [anarchist] explicitly but it does link to anarchist resources so
169	Karis:	[Mhm]
170	Ludovic:	And it is based on um whilst there's no requirement for anyone to be anarchist /
171		there is / you kind of have to um / behave within certain anarchist principles [of]=
172	All:	=[[Mm]]
173	Karis:	=[[Well]] obviously you can only call yourself an anarchist group if you're an elected
174		paying member of the Anarchist International ~sarcastic, authoritative tone~
175	All:	Laughter
176	Ludovic:	You need to bring your membership card
177	Karis:	Yeah I have my anarchist membership card and it's got the correct anarchist logo
178		on it ~sarcastic, authoritative tone~
179	All:	Chuckles
180	Karis:	Not one of those unsanctioned ones
181	Columbo:	I I think as well within the group there is sort of an assumed anarchist
182	Karis:	Mm
183	Columbo:	Um / ideology in like in like within our WhatsApp group / forgetting about the wider
184		food not bombs but just our local one / when I talk to someone in there I'm I go into
185		a conversation assuming yes no / you probably want to break down the political
186		structure et cetera uh=
187	Ludovic:	=See I don't ~surprised, energetic, higher tone of voice~
188	Columbo:	You don't? ~surprised, higher, questioning tone~
189	Ludovic:	No I under it's a very loose / especially because I don't know a lot of people in that
190		group
191	Columbo:	[[Mm]]
192	Interviewer:	[[Mm]]
193	Ludovic:	I assume that people come from all sorts of that the only sort of um / the only ideas
194		that kind of connect them that you know it's non-sexist um non-racist uh non-
195		hierarchical um / group so that those anarchist principles are underpinning but I
196		don't assume everyone there necessarily um uh wants to dismantle the state and
197		that kind of thing
198	Columbo:	Mm interesting
199	Karis:	I think I kind of have a similar kind of thinking on it to participant 3 wherein um
200	All:	Laughter
201	Karis:	Wherein like I think there is a kind of assumed consensus politics that I have at
202		least like uh when we stopped off at one person's house um was it yours? The first
203		session I came to when we we stopped at someone's house and *I don't remember
204		who that was* we stopped at someone's house and like they we had some of it
205		there in their kitchen before we carried out with the pot=
206	Columbo:	=that was um Anthea

207	Karis:	Yeah
208	Columbo:	And you know / anonymized person
209	Karis:	We yeah / that was anonymised member of collective um and you know I mean we
210		were talking about like when if we'd been participating recently or like when people
211		got started in food not bombs and someone was like yeah I've like been in
212		anarchism for a while and like / I think I basically assume if someone isn't directly
213		anarchist they're at least like left politically
214	Interviewer:	Mm
215	Karis:	And we basically have the same kind of thinking and goals and not someone is
216		going to be like / I don't expect anyone at least like kind of a core participant in the
217		group because obviously we have a strict in group and out group ~smiling voice~
218	Columbo:	<i>Laughter</i>
219	Karis:	I don't expect someone to be like you know a [tory voter] or someone who's
220		completely clueless about politics I at least expect kind of a shared like / level of
221		understanding of reality
222	Ludovic:	[<i>Chuckles</i>]
223	Columbo:	Mm
224	Interviewer:	Oh sorry just to butt in for a second feel free to use each other's names because it's
225		very=
226	Karis:	=mhm find and replace
227	Interviewer:	Perhaps even easier because then I know who is referring to who
228	Karis:	Yeah but if we constantly call each other different nicknames then it's much harder
229		for us to use find and replace
230	Interviewer:	<i>Laughter</i> / oh sorry Ludovic I cut you off
231	Ludovic:	Oh no no don't worry um I was going to say that even within anarchism there are so
232		many different and [sometimes] very conflicting views say even revolutionary
233		anarchism versus evolutionary anarchism / it's miles apart that
234	Karis:	[Yeah]

I introduce the next prompt: ‘what is anarchism as you understand it?’ (L161), Karis makes a joke, then recalls her previous bid regarding anarchism (L166). Next, I add some context to the prompt, detailing how I have found anarchism as a concept that relates to FNB (L167). This relation becomes a focus of the following discussion, rather than the original prompt to share one’s personal understanding. Ludovic discusses requirements of identity and behaviour:

“And it is based on um whilst there's no requirement for anyone to be anarchist / there is / you kind of have to um / behave within certain anarchist principles [of]=” (L170)

These two bids highlight Ludovic's perception of FNB and begin to consolidate stance, there is no “requirement” to be anarchist, but there is a need to act in ways that can be described as such. Ludovic is interrupted by Karis’s sarcastic utterance. She intentionally contradicts her own (and the group’s) prior stance that FNB has a loose structure of organisation and membership. The bid is marked with the conversational particle “well” and the adverb “obviously”:

“=Well obviously you can only call yourself an anarchist group if you're an elected paying member of the Anarchist International” (173)

Everyone responds with laughter, and Ludovic joins in the sarcastic narrative:

“You need to bring your membership card” (L176)

Karis responds:

“Yeah I have my anarchist membership card and it's got the correct anarchist logo on it” (L177) “Not one of those unsanctioned ones” (L180)

Conversational markers, “well” and adverb “obviously” form an ironic contrastive tone (Myers, 2010) within Karis’s utterance. This serves to build rapport and show alignment by ironically presenting an opposing position, which both participants then cooperatively undermine. Irony in this instance can be mapped onto all models (oppositional, echoic, and pretense).

Columbo makes a cognitively marked bid regarding anarchism:

“I think as well within the group there is sort of an assumed anarchist” (L181)

Columbo pauses and Karis backchannels, “Mm” (L182), Columbo continues:

“Um / ideology in like in like within our WhatsApp group / forgetting about the wider food not bombs but just our local one / when I talk to someone in there I'm I go into a conversation assuming yes no / you probably want to break down the political structure et cetera uh=” (L183)

“Um” is potentially a conversational particle marker here. Whilst Columbo is finishing the evaluation of the previous bid, it establishes that she is resuming stancework. A cognitive verb marks the final bid within the utterance “assuming”, leading into a reporting space. This space shows an example of Columbo’s inner monologue in terms of perceiving other member’s political identity. The reported thought is given conversational marking “yes” as well as an adverbial booster “probably”.

Ludovic makes a contrasting bid:

“=See I don’t” (L187)

Implied *object* and evaluation: “See I don’t” (assume that *others* want to break down the political structure).

The bid is marked with a conversational particle, and interrupts Columbo. This is the first time Ludovic has interrupted another speaker, often being on the receiving end of interruption. This is more pro-active stancework and suggests a stronger boundary between Columbo’s stance, and a finalised stance for Ludovic. Columbo responds by mirroring in a questioning tone, potentially to indicate surprise, as well as prompt for more information: “You don’t?”. Both Ludovic and Columbo seem surprised in this interaction and intrigued in the differing viewpoints. Until now there had been a high degree of alignment amongst speakers.

Ludovic responds with this utterance beginning with a false start:

“No I under it’s a very loose / especially because I don’t know a lot of people in that group” (L189)

Whilst incomplete “it’s a very loose” functions as a grammatical stance, “it” is the object. There are no utterances directly prior - “it” is likely referring to the group, group’s structure or politics. “Loose” likely refers to the consensus of political views amongst members. The adverbial booster “especially” marks the bid, stating she does not “know

a lot of people” in the group. Here Ludovic, “I”, is the object. Both myself and Columbo backchannel in response.

Ludovic takes the next turn from L193 to L197. I will be breaking it down within the analysis for clarity. Ludovic displays several bids with varying degrees of completion. The first: “I assume that people come from all sorts of” is cognitively marked with “assume”, it evaluates “people” as an object, but the evaluation is not concluded. It hints at people’s origin, whether this be place, time, political or cultural background. The next bid is “that the only sort of um / the only ideas that kind of connect them that you know it's non-sexist um non-racist uh non-hierarchical um / group”. Conversational particles “um” and “uh” place emphasis on each item as markers. This stancework is highly conclusive in terms of relation to the research question: ‘connecting ideas’ placed in the conversational context of group political identity, are evaluated as an object. This claim is epistemically downgraded with the adverbial phrase “kind of”. Ludovic perceives these “ideas” as against sexism, racism and hierarchy. The utterance begins with “that”, as if to continue from “I assume”, but does not have an explicit cognitive marker. Next, she says “so that those anarchist principles are underpinning”, implying that the “ideas” are “anarchist principles”. She follows with: “but I don't assume everyone there necessarily um uh wants to dismantle the state and that kind of thing” here Ludovic reiterates her disalignment with Columbo, using the same cognitive marker “assume” and phrasing surrounding ‘dismantling’.

Columbo backchannels with “Mm interesting” (L198), suggesting a continued diverging opinion. Through a cognitively marked bid Karis announces having a similar opinion to Columbo, making a joke to avoid using her real name (L199). Karis makes a cognitively marked bid regarding an “assumed consensus politics” this likely refers to the views of the group:

“Wherein like I think there is a kind of assumed consensus politics that I have at least [...]” (L201)

Karis and Columbo establish the context of a group cook, where a conversation about membership was taking place. Karis reports:

“[...] someone was like yeah I've like been in anarchism for a while and like / I think I basically assume if someone isn't directly anarchist they're at least like left politically”
(L211)

The reporting space is a quote from a real conversation, using the conversational particle “yeah” to mimic the tonal quality of conversation with “like” functioning as a quoting verb. The report is used to exemplify that others within the group share the identity of anarchist.

Karis reinforces this stance (L215) and says:

“I don't expect someone to be like you know a [tory voter] or someone who's completely clueless about politics I at least expect kind of a shared like / level of understanding of reality” (L219)

Here are two bids, both cognitively marked, the second downgraded with adverb.

Ludovic responds to this utterance with laughter, Columbo backchannels with “Mm”.

Karis prefaces the bids by saying she wouldn't expect a “core participant” to have these views (L215-L217), although the connection between the core participant comment and the above quote is interrupted with a sarcastic comment on her own outlining of a ‘core group’.

I interrupt the conversation for a recording practicality (L224-L229) and then prompt Ludovic to continue (L230):

“Um I was going to say that even within anarchism there are so many different and [sometimes] very conflicting views say even revolutionary anarchism versus evolutionary anarchism / it's miles apart that” (L231)

Karis aligns with this, overlapping with “[Yeah]” (L234).

From here on Karis makes jokes that reinforce this shared stance. Conversation moves back to defining anarchism in etymological terms (Karis) and Columbo recalls literature informing her understanding of anarchism. These utterances have been omitted due to their repetition of discussion topics and esoterically humorous tangents.

Macro Analysis

Some presupposition serves to make political stances about the group's politics.

"Assumed" (shown in the previous extract from L201) works in the position of a pre-modifier to presuppose that others have a "consensus politics" and obscure who this is by appearing in a passive grammatical form. Implied ideological leanings are delivered and partly treated as taken for granted (Machin and Mayr, 2012). Karis does, however, downgrade this to a personal opinion by adding "that I have at least".

Irony, both in and out of the reporting space is responsible for reinforcing group political identity largely through an oppositional function to undermine other positions (Myers, 2010). This further constructs the ideological square. Columbo self-parodies (L145) to separate herself from 'liberal' usages of metaphor, which are positioned as inauthentic. The sarcastic exchange between Karis and Ludovic (L173-L180) has many implications for defining FNB's group political identity. Terms within a political and institutional register such as "elected", "membership card" and "unsanctioned" ironically invoke the style of regulatory discourse. This discourse implies fluidity of membership status, lack of fixed political identity, and minimal institutional structuring. Politeness conventions are broken by Karis (L173) but with the outcome of alignment and co-operative construction of stance through affective practices such as sarcasm and humour. Karis also ironically self-parodies to reduce her commitment to a claim on the existence of a core group (L217).

The exchange on L173-L180 borders on becoming a reporting space, Karis adopts a direct mode of address toward Ludovic ("you"), as well as an authoritative tone of voice. An authoritative character is built up. Ludovic does not mirror the full vocal quality of Karis's character but does converge by using high imperative modality and mirroring direct address. I am hesitant to call this a reporting space in full however, because there is very little to evidence that this is a plausible hypothetical voice, aside from a theatrical one. It appears closer to the category of purely irony.

When discussing the group's characteristics, informality unfolds as an agreeable theme between Karis and Columbo, and although Ludovic does not express direct alignment during these discussions, she also mentions informality as a characteristic of FNB on

L71-73, describing how the public struggle to come to terms with it. This builds the stance that FNB is structurally informal– setting them in opposition to the public.

Between L181 and L219 there is a strong prevalence of ‘assume’ as a cognitive verb, reporting verb and adverb, with usage of ‘expect’ too. The disalignment in this section highlights how although there is agreement on fluidity of structure and the existence of some opposing ‘forces’ to the group, political identity does not share consensus when it comes to the finer details of ideology.

5.0 Analysis: Transcript B

5.1 Vegetarianism

Transcript Lines 1-35

1	Interviewer:	Okay / we are we are live once again / um / I think maybe I'll introduce some of the
2		values which I found on the food not bombs global website / which the main
3		espoused values are / vegetarianism / food as a human right / anticapitalism /
4		antiwar / mutual aid / and I basically wanted to ask where did you learn about any of
5		those values? or where were you first exposed to them?
6	Columbo:	Um vegetarianism / I think / I knew it existed and I'm not actually vegetarian myself
7		at the moment / but I guess I-just more and more I've met more and more people
8		that went *yes* it's good to be vegetarian and I heard more and more things that are
9		telling me quite how bad the meat industry is and / um / yeah / I don't / I'm just
10		saying / words / that I'm because I'm avoiding the ability to think
11	Interviewer:	<i>Chuckles</i>
12	Ludovic:	I don't remember how but / I'm not vegetarian now but / but I turned vegetarian
13		when I was fourteen / I think I was just going to some punk gigs and a lot of those
14		other values and all that stuff you know / you'd go to a gig and if it was very DIY
15		people would be bringing some vegetarian food to / or vegan food to give out / um /
16		and a lot of that came from there / so I think it's first just like school subculture type
17		of / thing / and when I was thirteen I think I found / I found peta online and [um] /
18	Columbo:	[[Oh]] ~joke disappointed tone, tone lowers towards end of utterance~
19	Karis:	[[Laughter]]
20	Ludovic:	and [immediately] ordered all the stickers [and shouting at my mother]
21	Karis:	[[Laughter]]
22	Columbo:	[[Laughter]]
23	Ludovic:	That was / that was why ~said whilst laughing~
24	Karis:	We have to go and put down some stray dogs now I got these stickers
25	All:	<i>Laughter</i>
26	Columbo:	I think I I didn't really consider vegetarism-ism as a thing that I would do until I got to
27		university / because my parents / not being vegetarian / we you know we could eat
28		meals that weren't meat based but they weren't *as good* um /
29	Ludovic:	<i>Chuckles</i>
30	Columbo:	And then I met people that were vegetarian that actually cooked nice food / not to
31		say my parents cooking's bad it's good but but *they they have a reliance on it* /
32		and so like now / I mean like I'm much more vegetarian than I was um and I think it's
33		more possible because I've encountered that actually you can just make nice
34		curries / *that's the thing you can do and you can make them vegetarian or even
35		vegan*

After a pause in recording, I ask a prompt surrounding some of the main espoused values of FNB:

- Vegetarianism
- Food as a human right
- Anti-capitalism
- Anti-war
- Mutual aid

I outline these values to the group, then ask where participants learnt about them, and when they were first exposed to them (L1-L5). Columbo is the first to respond with multiple bids within an utterance, the first describes her epistemic access to ‘vegetarianism’ in the past:

Conversational Particle	Stance Object	Cognitive Verb(s)	Stance Object	Evaluation
Um (L6)	vegetarianism	I think I knew	it	existed

The first marker is the conversational particle “um”. “Vegetarianism” is announced as an object, likely as an extra contextualising utterance in response to my prior listing of multiple ‘values’. “I think” sets the epistemic certainty for the recollection of her past K-state concerning vegetarianism (“it”) which she “knew” of existing. Columbo follows with several bids, again positioning herself in relation to the ideology:

“and I’m not **actually** vegetarian myself at the moment” (L6)

“Actually” marks contrast (Myers, 2010). The bid contrasts with the previous by modifying her epistemic access to vegetarianism or ‘the right’ to make epistemic claims about it, since she is not a vegetarian “at the moment”. This disclaimer may be provided to downgrade the strength of the following stancework, strength imbued by primacy. She adds a cognitively marked bid (“I guess”):

“but I **guess** I-just more and more I've met more and more people that went ***yes*** it's **good to be vegetarian**” (L7)

Here she reports the viewpoints of various “people”. A conversational particle marks the beginning of the reporting space (“*yes*”) where the reported speakers affectively evaluate ‘being vegetarian’ as “good”. She continues:

“And I heard more and more things that are telling me quite how bad the meat industry is” (L8)

Whilst “things” are the object being heard *by* Columbo in terms of grammatical transitivity, a qualifying subclause shows them acting on Columbo “telling” *her* a stance which is marked by the boosting adverbial “quite”, evaluating the meat industry as “bad”. The content seems to be aligned with and presented as something that she has internalised to a degree. Next, Ludovic takes a turn:

She begins with an epistemic statement positioning herself as K-: “I don't remember how” (L12). Despite this downgrade, Ludovic provides considerable details about “how” she experienced learning about and being exposed to vegetarianism, making the same non-vegetarian disclaimer as Columbo:

“but / I'm not vegetarian now but / but I turned vegetarian when I was fourteen” (L12)

“I think I was just going to some punk gigs and a lot of those other values and all that stuff you know / you'd go to a gig and if it was very DIY people would be bringing some vegetarian food [...]” (L13)

The cognitive marker “I think” modifies the epistemic certainty of the punk gigs’ effects, rather than that of ‘going’ to them. “A lot of those other values” seems to hint at a collection of values relating to punk, that the group assumedly know of (“you know”).

“so I think it's first just like school subculture type of / thing /” (L16)

“It” (readable as ‘the process of exposure’) is conclusively evaluated (“so”) as originating from school subculture. Next, she adds:

“and when I was thirteen I think I found / I found Peta online and [um] /” (L17)

The recollection of finding Peta shows hesitations, “I found” is repeated, and the word “Peta” is spoken in a rising intonation, as if anticipating a joke backlash from the group. Karis laughs at Ludovic’s reveal. At the same time Columbo overlaps, saying “oh” (L18). She uses a descending intonation, as if to sarcastically signal disappointment in Ludovic. The utterance does use dramatisation through an oppositional function; however, the negative evaluation of Peta is not disavowed at any point. The implied disalignment however, which takes an arguably face-threatening tone, is made non-threatening by its ironic presentation. This example confirms Myers’ (2010)

understanding in terms of undermining the content of disapproval of Ludovic but diverges because it provides a sincere evaluation of Peta packaged within an ironic stance. “Oh” can be echoic of an imaginary speaker who represents those against Peta ideologically. Framed through pretense, Columbo is assuming a judgmental (and uninformed character) and Ludovic is positioned much as she had already positioned her younger self (naïve), the dramaturgy arises from presenting disappointment, not just because it is untrue, but also because Columbo may be evaluating the act of moral policing as unnecessary.

This criticality of Peta is a stance amongst the group to which Ludovic is already hinting at sharing - by jokingly presenting shame. Ludovic continues:

“and [immediately ordered all the stickers and shouting at my mother]” (L20)

With an implied object of herself, this bid is marked adverbially to convey her younger self having an ‘immediate’ emotional reaction to discovering Peta. Karis and Columbo both laugh in response to this telling. Ludovic, laughing too, says:

“That was / that was why” (L23)

The implication is likely: “that was why” (I became vegetarian). Karis replicates this characterisation in a hypothetical report of a younger Ludovic:

“We have to go and put down some stray dogs now I got these stickers” (L24)

Using an excited tone, Karis opens an ironic reporting space here for humour. Pretense plays a large role in dramatising the character of a younger Ludovic and arguably forms a stance on how she views Peta as an institution. The whole group laughs in response to this – an affective display of alignment. Columbo makes a bid:

“I think I I didn't really consider vegetarianism as a thing that I would do until I got to university / because my parents / not being vegetarian / we you know we could eat meals that weren't meat based but they weren't *as good* um /” (L26)

Columbo builds on describing her experience with vegetarianism, a cognitively marked stance (“I think”) details how she previously evaluated the stance object (“vegetarianism”) as ‘not a thing she would do’ “until” going to university. “Until” is said with emphasis, this places significance on the relation of university and its effect on her.

Columbo outlines issues with family interpretations of vegetarian cooking and the effect of other people introducing new ways of cooking. The latter is presented with a contrastive adverb, and then an ironically presented revelation:

“I've encountered that **actually** **you can just make nice curries** / ***that's the thing you can do and you can make them vegetarian or even vegan***” (L33).

The adverb “actually” acts to contradict viewpoints such as those attributed to Columbo’s parents: “they have a reliance on it” (L31) (“it” being meat). She uses a quieter voice, ironically presenting the knowledge as a secret or novel piece of information, and therefore humorously presenting the obviousness of this realisation. This has characteristics of all irony models but appears explicitly echoic of a past self.

Transcript Lines 35-93

36	Karis:	I think I mean where I first heard of vegetarianism / it's kind of a very you know it's a
37		wide it's a mainstream concept at this point easily so / I would have had it at some
38		point you know when I was my younger I think my mum said she was kind of early
39		into vegetarianism when she was at uni when she was like in the 70s or something /
40		when it was less widespread and there were just like / um specific vegetarian cafes
41		in like Edinburgh which she went to / but then it's become much more mainstream
42		obviously and you know uh/ lots of people will be vegetarian I'm not really a
43		vegetarian either / I think the way I think about is kind of / that there's two
44		motivations to vegetarianism which is like a personal preference where you might
45		kind of feel disgusted at meat / or just like a dietary thing where you don't
46		particularly like eating it and like like you know you want to eat other stuff and then
47		also the political motivations which are obviously very real where like / mass over
48		consumption of meat is kind of / ecologically catastrophic because you know / it's
49		so much less efficient to feed uh animals with crops than just to eat crops directly /
50		and you know like all of that stuff is kind of / meat production is very subsidised by
51		the government which is why it's kind of massively / it's massively over eaten at
52		least in kind of Anglo American society / where in the past it might have been
53		considered luxury and maybe eaten as I don't know like 10% of the diet which is
54		much more appropriate or less / but um / and then also there's specifically in the
55		current way we produce meat where it's very cruel to animals but then also I'd
56		consider like you know with the whole like no ethical consumption under capitalism
57		slogan / which people like and you know / I mean it's not necessarily a form of
58		successful activism to just stop eating meat as an individual / uh / where the same
59		way that you know it might not be a successful form of action to just like you know /
60		I mean not buy from Amazon or something cus I mean they're everywhere there's
61		nothing much you can do about it just by voting with your wallet / but then also you
62		know people who are just not eating meat as a kind of preference thing will also
63		agree with the political ideas and use that as a / as a reason / as well um / I think
64		with how it relates to food not bombs is like / I mean the global organisation has a
65		professed vegetarianism like you said but also um / as an organisation I don't think
66		we're that ideologically like vegan / but I think pretty much all of the foods that we
67		serve will be / which is also just partly for like you know dietary reasons cus it's
68		easier / it's easier to do stuff without allergens in it when you look at vegan recipes
69		and also because you know / like meat will be more expensive as too / so if you're
70		like volunteering to kind of / of buy ingredients and purchase food like just as a
71		member of a collective then it's easier that way
72	Interviewer:	Mm
73	Ludovic:	It's also because then we can share with everyone / [whilst] there will be people
74		who say I eat only [meat / I don't]
75	Karis:	[[Yeah]]
76	Columbo:	[[Mm]]
77	All:	[Laughter]
78	Ludovic:	No there [are] uh / and we do have sandwiches for those people [sometimes]
79	Karis:	[You know like] if [Joe Rogan] came along to our store then we wouldn't be able to
80		cater to him / but everyone else it's kind of a common denominator kind of thing
81	All:	[Laughter]
82	Ludovic:	But we could make him a cup of coffee [and] give him a sandwich laughter
83	Karis:	[[Yeah]]

84	Interviewer:	[[Chuckles]]
85	Karis:	You ever tried DMT? ~Joe Rogan impression~
86	All:	<i>Laughter</i>
87	Columbo:	Um / pull that up ~Joe Rogan impression~
88	Karis:	Oh yeah we should do Joe Rogan bits right now
89	Ludovic:	No but yes [we we're not running] we're not running a canteen [we can't] offer multi
90		/ a lot of options of different hot dishes
91	Karis:	[Interviewer pull that up]
92	Columbo:	[[Mm]]
93	Karis:	[[Yeah]]

Next Karis makes a large utterance spanning from L36 to L71, from which I will select salient representative extracts. Karis begins with how she “first heard of vegetarianism” (L36); the following two extracts occur in direct sequence from each other:

“it's **kind of** a **very** you know it's a wide it's a mainstream concept at this point **easily** so / I would have had it at some point you know when I was my younger” (L36)

“Kind of”, “very” and “easily” ascend her epistemic certainty as the stance unfolds, boosting the evaluation of vegetarianism as “mainstream”. She then indirectly reports her mother’s speech, where certainty is modified by the cognitive marker “I think”:

“**I think** my mum said she was **kind of** early into vegetarianism when she was at uni” (L38)

This recollection is presented as an exposure to vegetarianism, the degree to which her mother is “early into vegetarianism” is downgraded by the adverbial “kind of”, potentially to show uncertainty of the recollection.

Karis also makes an evaluation of herself in relation to vegetarianism, “I’m not really a vegetarian either” (L42). Within the larger utterance Karis continues discussing how vegetarianism relates to wider politics and FNB:

“[...] also the political motivations which are **obviously very** real where like / mass over consumption of meat is **kind of** / ecologically catastrophic” (L47)

“Political motivations” are evaluated as “obviously very real”, “real” is boosted strongly by two adverbs. “Mass over consumption of meat” is a nominal group here, a verb phrase ‘to over consume’ has become a noun, where the premodifier “mass” and qualifier “of meat” can be attached. This nominal group is then evaluated as “ecologically catastrophic”. Karis makes a bid relating to consumption more generally:

“I’d consider like you know with the whole like no ethical consumption under capitalism slogan / which people like and you know” (L55)

The slogan is evaluated by a qualifying subclause “which people like”. To “stop eating meat as an individual” (L58) and to “not buy from amazon” (L60) are evaluated as “not necessarily a form of successful activism” (L57) and “it might not be a successful form of action” (L59) respectively. Both evaluations display a form of adverbially functioning downgrade, “not necessarily” and “might not”.

Karis acknowledges the ‘professed vegetarianism’ of the global FNB organisation, but evaluates the local branch as such:

“As an organisation I don't think we're that ideologically like vegan” (L65)

She makes a cognitively marked bid (“I don't think”) with an evaluation of ‘we’ (FNB). She adds nuance to the stance, contrasting with “but”. It is cognitively marked (“I think”) and boosted adverbially: “pretty much all of the foods that we serve will be” (L66) the food is evaluated with an implication of being vegan. She cites “dietary reasons” (L68) and that “meat will be more expensive” (L69) as reasons for FNB's adoption of vegetarianism/veganism. Ludovic makes a bid:

“It's also because then we can share with everyone / [whilst] there will be people who say I eat only [meat / I don't]” (L73)

The reporting space is opened with a reporting verb “say” and Ludovic adopts a marginally different tone of voice, but not with any noticeable evaluative signals, unlike previous reports that adopt dramatized and bold characteristics. Ludovic's stance appears to function epistemically more so than evaluatively by stating the existence of people who make the mentioned stance. This does not mean there is no evaluative content for those who ‘only eat meat’, however, that becomes clearer in following utterances. This report suggests alignment with Karis's point on vegetarianism for utility, “also” shows the cooperatively constructed intention and the emphasis placed on “share” matches Karis's discussed themes of universal access.

Karis and Columbo backchannel, showing alignment to the report with “yeah” (L75) and “mm” (L76) as well as laughter on L77. Ludovic reinforces her point with a conversation particle-marked bid: “no there [are] uh / and we do have sandwiches for those people [sometimes]” (L78), seemingly to ensure her previous stance is not taken solely for humour, she uses a more assertive tone for this utterance, reiterating the K+ status of an epistemically certain claim. During this reiteration Karis makes a humorous pair of utterances that overlap. The content shows further, indirect alignment with Ludovic:

“[You know like] if [Joe Rogan] came along to our store then we wouldn't be able to cater to him / but everyone else it's kind of a common denominator kind of thing” (L79)

Karis makes an epistemic bid concerning FNB (“we”) not being able to meet the demands of a certain dietary outlook, which is attributed to Joe Rogan. Joe Rogan is a widely known podcast host from the U.S., whose YouTube channel currently has over 20 million subscribers. His political views can be described as conservative and libertarian, with previous displays of republican support. He hosts guests with similarly describable leanings, such as Jordan Peterson, Elon Musk and Donald Trump. Rogan endorsed Trump in the 2024 election campaign, citing Elon Musk as pivotal in influencing his decision (BBC News, 2024). Rogan has shown support for a carnivore diet and has provided a platform for anti-vegetarian discourse in his podcast episode featuring Taylor Sheridan (PowerfulJRE, 2024).

Humour arises from the juxtaposition of a media personality arriving at the stall. Joe Rogan nevertheless serves a purpose to illustrate supposedly incompatible or contrasting ideologies. “Everyone else” outside of this extreme can fall within the “common denominator”, the object of stance here is not “everyone else” a connective is missing, it seems Karis changes the intended evaluation slightly, the vegan/vegetarian cooking is more likely being evaluated as ‘common ground’. Everyone responds with laughter which confirms the stancetaking function underlying the joke – no one disagrees with the evaluations it is making. Ludovic adds to the scenario, starting with a contrasting connective “but”:

“But we could make him a cup of coffee [and] give him a sandwich” (L82)

She laughs at the end of her utterance. The joke’s scenario is continued, but by changing the narrative (FNB *can* accommodate to Joe Rogan) Ludovic implicitly disaligns with Karis’s previous evaluation, therefore FNB is construed as more inclusive. To give context to Ludovic’s utterance: the local group of FNB will serve some meat sandwiches if donated, the main cooked meal is always vegan or vegetarian. Karis backchannels, aligning with Ludovic’s addition, “yeah” (L83). Karis then opens a reporting space, using a deeper tone of voice and direct mode of address “you” to imitate Joe Rogan “You ever tried DMT?” (L85), everyone laughs in response. Karis and Columbo continue to add to and discuss this reporting space (L87, L88, L91). In between this continuation, Ludovic makes an utterance containing two bids:

“No but yes [we we’re not running] we're not running a canteen [we can't] offer multi / a lot of options of different hot dishes” (L89)

Conversational particles mark these contrasting bids, epistemic claims reiterate what the group can feasibly achieve, as if defending against the hypothetical critique mentioned earlier. Karis and Columbo backchannel and show alignment: “mm” (L92) and “yeah” (L93), respectively.

Macro Analysis

The initial two turns of this recording show no direct alignment or backchannelling but do share content thematically. This seems to be a symptom of formally beginning a recording and questioning much like at the start of transcript A. This dissipates after a few turns. Karis and Columbo both describe a perceived ubiquity of approval for vegetarianism (L7 and L36). All participants announce their non-vegetarian status, arguably a framing convention established by the primacy of Columbo’s initial utterances. Columbo’s use of irony on L33 positions her past self as oblivious or naïve, when Ludovic recounts her first experiences with vegetarianism/Peta, her younger activist self is presented as naïve and excessively emotive. Irony, self-reporting and reporting of others form a basis to criticise or highlight poor epistemic access or judgement. However earnest depictions surrounding vegetarianism are also brought into conversation through stancework. Whilst Ludovic never explicitly condemns Peta on L17, her tonal delivery and positive reception of laughter and irony in response to her telling signals a general alignment amongst the group. Ideological squaring is present here, it can be implied that FNB ‘does animal rights’ in a more acceptable way than Peta by emphasising the negatives of an ‘other’ institution (van Dijk, 2024). This section of talk features many institutions as comparison or influence on participants’ views. Educational institutions, internet and conflicting family ideology are mentioned by all participants.

Karis’s stances on vegetarianism contain nominalisation, Machin and Mayr (2012) argue that nominalisation not only obscures the agent but presents the verb (in this case ‘to consume meat in excess’) as a pre-established fact. Karis concludes that vegetarianism

and veganism are not central to the local group's political identity. No one actively backchannels to this, but later bids are made with similar themes of convenience rather than purely ethical reasons (L73). Karis disaligns with the statement from the global website, saying the local group is 'not that ideologically vegetarian', this may show where the priorities in ideology lie (at least for the participants present). Priority is shown to be supporting the reduction of meat consumption, not complete omission.

Hypothetical, humorous stancework become sites for participants to articulate and negotiate their perceptions of FNB and its relation to other ideologies. For example, the use of the Joe Rogan character is deployed both for stancetaking function, but also a social function. This allows for the description of FNB as 'more open minded' by comparison and is utilised by Ludovic (L82) to further demonstrate FNB's ability to include people of diverse and even combative political outlooks.

5.2 Anticapitalism

Transcript Lines 94-193

94	Karis:	I mean there were also like three at least three other values you mentioned and
95		we've just been talking about vegetarianism=
96	Columbo:	=Anticapitalism / that was one of them
97	Karis:	Yeah
98	Columbo:	I don't know where I learned about anticapitalism / um / I think I was vaguely left
99		wing for a very like as soon as I became politically aware / conscious I was in the
100		[Labour supporting camp] early on / listening to that radio four tutting at those
101		conservatives ~joking voice~
102	Karis:	[Developed consciousness]
103	All:	Chuckles
104	Karis:	Listening to radio four and shaking my head so people know I don't agree ~loud,
105		laughing voice~
106	Columbo:	Well really it falls relatively low / uh / well *it's liberal* um / but I think / I don't know
107		where I learnt about like going further than the left than the you know Labour Party
108		because I just kind of assumed that they were / sort of left wing and then that was
109		good and I didn't really do much more thinking than that / maybe it was when
110		Corbyn was around and I heard what he said and thought oh that's kind of
111		reasonable and then Labour decided that that was not so reasonable / and I went
112		oh maybe these guys aren't as left wing as I thought
113	All:	Chuckles
114	Karis:	I think when I was younger there was kind of a very pervasive / anticapitalism or like
115		casual / kind of communism as a joke like in meme culture and like in secondary
116		you know like people would be like like I'm playing the anthem of the USSR at max
117		volume in the school bus as a joke it's it's the loud version it's funny / and I actually
118		did like you know I memorised some of the some of the that national anthem so I
119		could sing it as a joke whereas you know now I guess I developed it to a point where
120		I memorised the the national anthem because I actually believe in it / but like yeah
121		there was definitely a kind of pervasive sense of like oh communism is funny or like
122		it's good I don't really know what it means but like yeah I love Communism and the
123		hammer and sickle and Marx / but then like also at the same time as that then there
124		was actual leftism where like my form tutor was very good and kind of like you know
125		he ran like the debate society and in like / like in form time as well then he'd kind of
126		talk about political issues and we'd have a discussion about like uh / what was
127		going on in electoral politics as well cos like Columbo said that when uh / that was
128		when Corbyn was leader of the Labour Party / in like you know / it was probably you
129		know 2017 / you know before the 2017 election or just after that when we were
130		talking about it in form times um / and then also I have a very specific memory /
131		which is probably my first memory of thinking anything about politics when I must
132		have been like I don't know / probably still in primary when uh when I was just
133		probably on the way back to my grandma's with my family and uh we were like in a
134		pub getting a meal and I I specifically just thought oh yeah I've thought of I've heard
135		about left and right wing stuff I wonder what that means and I asked my mum like
136		what does left and right wing mean? / And that was like my my my first ever
137		engagement with political ideas I guess um / but then I don't know / I don't know if
138		I'm being a bit long winded here / but then actually when I developed political
139		thought was also probably when I came to uni or like earlier than that when /

140		when I mean when lockdown happened definitely I started thinking about it a lot
141		more because I was just you know / spending all my time on the computer reading
142		Wikipedia and stuff / and also earlier than that I probably was thinking about anti
143		capitalism just because I probably developed in a way like where I liked wasting my
144		time looking at Reddit / and you know I'd just I'd be looking at like R slash facepalm
145		or something and I just like laughing at people being wrong / and obviously all of the
146		people being wrong are like conservatives because [you know] I wasn't stupid so I
147		wasn't like watching Ben Shapiro and actually believing that like oh blue haired
148		people are wrong or whatever so you know I'd laugh at like someone saying
149		something stupid about that and then you know / develop into like looking at stuff
150		about how oh no this bad thing has happened / because capitalism like this bad
151		thing has happened because of private healthcare and the USA or whatever / and
152		then you know / when lockdown happened I was reading a lot more about that / and
153		specifically I remember when I came to uni / then the first time I started taking
154		anarchism seriously / whereas before I'd kind of thought of it in a bit of a centrist
155		way where like oh no obviously I don't like authoritarianism but anarchism is just an
156		unserious idea because you need to have some kind of organisation / you know you
157		can't just be running around in the streets or whatever / was when like / I was at uh /
158		I was eating lunch with / like / the Computer Science Society and someone was
159		talking about mutual aid / and just like talking about what mutual aid stuff there is
160		going on in CITY and what they could participate in / and you know / because like
161		they were people I kind of uh trusted and were friends with and I thought oh maybe
162		there's I'll I don't know what mutual aid is so I'll read about that and look at that
163		more and that was kind of how I read about those concepts
164		
165	Ludovic:	[Chuckles]
166	Interviewer:	Mm / so it's a bit like / I guess the usual impacts like school family internet?
167	Karis:	Well family was more where I got like social conservatism from
168	Interviewer:	Mm
169	Karis:	And some kind of somewhat neutrally explanation of like what left and right is / and
170		then also I guess you could say that I developed uh / leftist political ideology as like
171		an opposition to my family
172	Columbo:	I I was the opposite of that
173	Karis:	Yeah
174	Columbo:	My parents Labour voters / apart from mum and mum / voted for Thatcher [but she
175		regrets that]
176	All:	[[Laughter]]
177	Karis:	[[What?]] I need you to tell me more about that at some point ~louder / laughing
178		voice~ if [not now]
179	Columbo:	I don't know much more other than that she says she feels bad about it
180	Karis:	Laughter
181	Ludovic:	You'll have to leave [food not bombs your lineage is not pure] ~laughing voice~
182	All:	[[Laughter]]
183	Karis:	Sorry you're not ideologically pure enough we have to get rid of you / we're gonna
184		have another round of purges I think
185	All:	Laughter
186	Karis:	In the group soon so
187	Columbo:	That you um you mentioned about uh the the Internet and looking at like uh / face
188		palm and whatnot and I I think I I remember

189	Karis:	Murdered by words
190	Columbo:	I remember early on in / when I was younger I was interested in like watching that
191		sort of similar sort of content of people being stupid and then me laughing at them
192		because I was cleverer than them
193	Karis:	Exactly <i>laughter</i>

Karis addresses me with two utterances which build stance, the first is epistemically K+, thus explicitly prompts a topic shift:

Conversational Particle	Evaluation	Stance Object	Evaluative Subclause
I mean (L94)	there were also like three at least three	other values	you mentioned

Karis continues: “and we've just been talking about vegetarianism=” (L94). Columbo interrupts, making a bid:

“=Anticapitalism / that was one of them” (L96)

This positions Columbo as K+, thus motivating a telling and furthering the topic shift into discussion of anticapitalism. Whilst Karis’s bid creates a topic shift initially, Columbo’s following utterance opens the discussion in full, making epistemic bids and evaluations concerning anticapitalism:

“I don't **know** where I learned about anticapitalism / um / I **think** I was vaguely left wing for a **very** like as soon as I became politically aware / conscious I was in the [Labour supporting camp] early on / **listening to that radio four tutting at those conservatives**”
(L98)

The utterance begins epistemically, marked cognitively with “know”, Columbo positions herself as K- relating to where she learned about anticapitalist politics. The next bid takes herself as stance object, evaluated as “left wing” and is downgraded with the adverb “vaguely”. Conversely this evaluation is then boosted with an incomplete utterance “for a very like”, following with “as soon as I became politically aware”, demonstrating her early commitment to leftist politics. Karis makes joking overlap “developed consciousness” (L102), co-operatively constructing the narrative. Columbo continues with a recollection of listening to radio four, predominantly through echoic irony. She presents a relatively middle-ground, innocuous reaction: “tutting at those conservatives”. This pokes fun at the scope of ideas she was engaging with; humour also arises from the juxtaposition of the labour party with the current setting of radical political conversation. Everyone responds with amusement to this, affectively co-constructing the stance that labour is ‘not radical enough’.

Next, she reinforces the mainstream quality of her past beliefs: “Well really it falls relatively low / uh / well *it's liberal*”. As a conversational particle, “well” marks this bid and gives a contrasting tone to her previous point, undermining the ‘leftist’ qualities of her beliefs (presumably “it”) even further by evaluating them as ‘falling low’ (on a political scale of radicalness), boosted by “really”. She also evaluates “it” as being “liberal”, which is said in a lowered voice. Next Columbo reinforces her previous limited perspective, she cites the Labour party:

“I just **kind of** assumed that they were / **sort of** left wing and then that was good and I didn't **really** do much more thinking than that” (L108)

She then presents a turning point in her thought with a reporting space, evaluating Corbyn’s politics. The space is opened with the reporting verb “thought” and conversational particle “oh”.

“I heard what he said and thought **oh that's kind of reasonable** and then Labour decided that that was not so reasonable / and I went **oh maybe these guys aren't as left wing as I thought**” (L110)

The second reporting space details a feeling of disillusionment with mainstream party politics. This reported narrative is met with further laughter, showing further group alignment.

Karis takes a long turn; the first bid is marked with a cognitive verb “I think”, describing a “very pervasive anticapitalism” in secondary school, “very” boosts the epistemic certainty of the evaluation of “pervasive”. There are two hypothetical reports of thoughts of “people” (L116) and a “sense” (L121) which build on her description of a humorous pro-communist environment in her school. This sentiment seems to be shared by herself: “I” ‘memorised the national anthem’ (L120) (the anthem of the USSR).

“There was **definitely** a **kind of** pervasive sense of like **oh communism is funny or like it's good I don't really know what it means but like yeah I Love Communism and the hammer and sickle and Marx**” (L121)

The “pervasive sense” is given high epistemic certainty upgraded with the adverb “definitely”.

Later in the turn, three more reports show Karis’s thoughts when she was younger. The main bid that pertains to group identity is at the end of the utterance. After a

recollection of the school political climate and personal experiences online, she uses the reporting space:

“specifically I remember when I came to uni / then the first time I started taking anarchism seriously / whereas before I'd kind of thought of it in a bit of a centrist way where like oh no obviously I don't like authoritarianism but anarchism is just an unserious idea because you need to have some kind of organisation / you know you can't just be running around in the streets or whatever” (L154)

The adverb “specifically” marks this bid, lending a sense of accuracy to the recollection. “Authoritarianism” is given a negative affective evaluation, and then anarchism is evaluated as “unserious”, likened to “running around in the streets”. The report of a past self is a contrastive tool for reinforcing Karis’s current personal politics, as well as positioning centrism as ‘outside’ and opposed to FNB – who by comparison may appear as radical or decisive.

Columbo makes a bid: “I was the opposite of that” (L172), ‘that’ presumably refers to Karis’s political exposure. She adds:

“My parents Labour voters / apart from when my mum / voted for Thatcher [but she regrets that]” (L174)

This is met with laughter and Karis requests more information (L177). Columbo adds little detail, Ludovic makes an ironic joke on L181, which Karis joins on L183. After this subsides, Columbo directly addresses Karis, recalling a past mention of a subreddit (online forum), modified as K- by cognitive verbs at the end of the utterance, requesting information from Karis, which she provides: “murdered by words” (L189). Columbo then recounts a similar experience on L192. Karis aligns strongly to this experience with the adverb “exactly” and laughter (L193). The pair joke about online debate culture, conversation continues but stancework seldom pertains to group identity.

Macro Analysis

Within this section, participants discuss their exposure to anticapitalist ideas. More isolated statements arise, much alike the start of prior recordings, but nonetheless

show the effect of primacy when it comes to controlling the themes and structure of following stancework.

Columbo's initial bid shows a continuation of a naïve younger self, being deployed as a contrasting factor for current political views. This naivety does however graduate into the realisation (shown through disillusionment with party politics) of more radical discourses. Karis portrays a similar narrative which also uses the reporting space, Karis's epistemic certainty on L121 is likely because the topic relates to aspects of Karis's personal life experience, as shown by Heritage (2013). Karis also describes her prior 'centrist' viewpoint through the reporting space. Described in terms of the ideological square, the centrist viewpoint is given an exaggeratedly simplistic understanding (portraying anarchism as having riot-like qualities), this de-emphasises the critical thinking abilities of a 'centrist' thus strengthening the portrayal of FNB's brand of anarchism.

After Karis's large turn, I try to summarise on L166. I request confirmation of what I perceived to be the overall forces that prompted participant's political development and exposure to the FNB values and more generally. However, Karis misinterprets my prompt (due to my unspecific phrasing), she assumes that I meant family was a source of radical politics. She disagrees and explains her family was a source of "social conservatism" (L167). This has positive implications, as it shows that she is comfortable to clarify and disagree with my comments if she perceives an incorrect analytical perspective.

Housekeeping conventions of talk remain throughout this section; humour and laughter often signals approval for ideas presented by speakers and maintains a friendly environment to facilitate the discussion of personal viewpoints. For example, Karis interrupts Columbo to make a joke about developing consciousness on L102, this loosely relates to the topic at hand but seems primarily for social cohesion and sharing a pre-existing joke between the pair – an act which seems to reoccur between the two throughout the interview.

6.0 Analysis: Transcript C

6.1 Public Perception of FNB

Transcript Lines 1-49

1	Karis:	So why did your mum vote with Thatcher? tell us
2	All:	<i>Laughter</i>
3	Columbo:	She hated the norther the north and those bloody coal mines ~mock-angry
4		voice~
5	All:	<i>Chuckles</i>
6	Interviewer:	Um / I wanted / I was thinking we've talked a lot about like / I suppose / your
7		political leanings and how they relate to the group / a question I had planned
8		that kind of weaves in is / how do you think the group is perceived by the
9		public? and are there any misconceptions?
10	Karis:	Hm / well the question we always get immediately is why is it called food not
11		bombs? / and we just kind of mumble about oh well we're serving food but we
12		don't have bombs and we don't like war
13	Columbo:	I think yeah we we go for the joke about / you know we give out food not bombs
14	Karis:	We don't we're not giving out any bombs
15	Columbo:	Yeah
16	Karis:	*If you're looking for bombs you've come to the wrong place*
17	Columbo:	But um / I don't know I I remember talking to one of your / um uh [neighbours
18		once] / because we were picking up food from your house and he commented
19		on the fact that we were we were doing it on a Friday night / and so=
20	Ludovic:	[Oh yeah]
21	Karis:	=She should be at the club
22	Ludovic:	He said oh you'll be feeding all the drunks
23	Columbo:	Yeah / all the drunks / and I thought=
24	Karis:	=Good
25	Columbo:	Yeah I thought why are you so? like it sounded quite=
26	Ludovic:	=Dismissive
27	Columbo:	Dismissive / yeah and I thought why is that so bad? Like / they need food
28	Karis:	Well you know they're morally inferior and they don't [deserve to live]
29	Columbo:	[[No it's true]] / that is true / Yeah whereas me / when I go back to my house
30		and I drink / *that's when it's good*
31	Ludovic:	[[Chuckles]]
32		I just assume people think/ it is a sort of like a crusty project <i>laughter</i>
33	Interviewer:	<i>Chuckles</i>
34	Ludovic:	Because that's what usually is / the the way people see other anarchist
35		projects that I've been involved in / you know / a bunch of fairly homeless
36		looking people / turning up to do something / and you know, especially
37		because we have like a [trailer] with us dragging behind ~laughing voice~
38	All:	<i>Laughter</i>
39	Columbo:	A little raggedy
40	Ludovic:	Although now we look very professional we have a marquee and everything so
41		maybe maybe we'll have that=
42	Karis:	Maybe the perception will change

43	Ludovic:	We'll get the respect we deserve [<i>laughter</i>]
44	Karis:	[<i>Laughter</i>] I kind of would have assumed people saw us as like just like some
45		kind of charity or something / like people from a food bank maybe? I haven't
46		really examined that assumption very much though
47	Ludovic:	They I have been asked a few times if we were a [church] or a charity
48	Karis:	[Yeah]
49	Ludovic:	So that's what people assume first

At the beginning of the recording, Karis asks Columbo about her mother voting for Thatcher. It is framed in the tone and mode of address that an interview question would be and is used for humour. Columbo responds but not in detail, she ironically presents a hatred for the North and coal mines. I then introduce the first prompt:

“How do you think the group is perceived by the public? and are there any misconceptions?” (L6).

Karis responds:

Conversational Particle	Stance Object + Qualifying Nominal Group	Adverb	Evaluation
Hm / well (L10)	the question <u>we</u> <u>always get</u>	immediately	is why is it called food not bombs?

A conversational particle marks the bid (“well”), the stance object of “the question” (from the public) is evaluated as being the phrase “why is it called food not bombs”. The adverb “immediately” does not boost epistemic certainty in the explicit way an adverb such as ‘definitely’ might do, but suggesting this response from the public is immediate, implies reliability for the claim’s accuracy. The indirect reported speech of the public, has strong epistemic power in conversation because of its ability to position Karis’s knowledge as existing prior to the conversation (Clift, 2006), further boosted by its primacy within this section of talk. All these factors position Karis as K+, motivating her continued telling:

“And we just **kind of** mumble about **oh well** **we're serving food but we don't have bombs and we don't like war**” (L11).

The quoting verb “mumble” portrays FNB (“we”) as not confident or uncertain of the group’s politics, a seemingly negative evaluation. The reporting space is punctuated by conversational particles and is shown as a simplified and potentially sarcastic variation of the group’s main political aims. Columbo makes a bid, marked with a cognitive verb “think” and a conversational particle “yeah”, which may signal a degree of alignment, however, the implications seem to differ from Karis’s prior utterance:

“I **think** **yeah** we we go for the joke about / you know **we give out food not bombs**” (L13)

Here, similar content is placed in a reporting space, which does take on tonal conventions alike the prior, but the content is presented as a “joke”- which attributes less of the disorganised and non-committal characteristics to FNB. Karis makes two more reporting space-based jokes(L14-16) and Columbo aligns and backchannels between them. Columbo addresses Ludovic:

“But **um** / I don't **know** I **remember** talking to one of your / um uh [neighbors once] / because we were picking up food from your house and he commented on the fact that we were we were doing it on a Friday night / and **so**=” (L17)

Ludovic overlaps by backchannelling, “oh yeah” (L20), Karis interrupts with a joke (L21). Ludovic finishes this telling with a reporting space:

“He said **oh** **you’ll be feeding all the drunks**” (L22)

Columbo confirms this:

“**Yeah** / all the drunks / and I thought=” (L23)

Karis interrupts with emphasis:

“=Good” (L24)

Columbo backchannels and continues:

“**Yeah** I thought **why are you so?** like it sounded **quite**=” (L25)

Ludovic interrupts:

“=Dismissive” (L26)

Columbo confirms this co-operative construction and resumes:

“Dismissive / **yeah** and I thought **why is that so bad?** like / they need food” (L27)

This section features a high frequency of sequentially occurring co-operatively constructed stances, by use of the reporting space, co-operative overlap to finish other’s utterances and overlaps to backchannel. Both Ludovic and Columbo have equal epistemic access to the telling, but Columbo is trying to include a report of her own thoughts to evaluate the neighbour. However, Karis constructs the rest of the thought with an interruption “=good” and Ludovic fills in a description with “dismissive”. These are both met with positive backchannels and confirmations, but Columbo is

persevering to finish her point. Ludovic may feel an epistemic right to evaluate this scenario given that she was present and it concerns her neighbour - an element of her own epistemic domain. Throughout this exchange all participants seem to have a negative evaluation of the reported speaker:

Karis: “Well you know they’re morally inferior and they don’t [deserve to live]” (L28)

Columbo: “[No it’s true]] / that is true / Yeah whereas me / when I go back to my house and I drink / *that’s when it’s good*” (L29)

Here conversational particles mark the bid alongside irony. “No” acts to ironically contradict Columbo’s own previous stancework and thus reinforce it with an oppositional function. This may be a report or echo of the first person ‘thoughts’ of the dismissive neighbour, or simply Columbo taking on an ironic and pretensive position attributed to herself. Columbo tends to use the quieter voice as a punctuation for humour throughout the interview. Ludovic affectively aligns with laughter and continues to construct a stance about the way people see anarchist projects:

“I just assume people think/ it is a sort of like a crusty project” (L32)

She laughs and continues, offering two bids:

“Because that’s what usually is / the the way people see other anarchist projects that I’ve been involved in / you know / a bunch of fairly homeless looking people / turning up to do something” (L34)

She cites the “trolley dragging behind” (L37) as a further example of this disorganised status, which Columbo aligns to with “a little raggedy” (L39).

The cognitive verb “assume” positions Ludovic as having an ongoing viewpoint of the public generally having significantly less epistemic access to understanding FNB than members. Humour arises from the public’s perception having some truth to it. “Sort of” may mean ‘a form of...’ or be intended to modify the epistemic certainty of the claim. Regardless, both uses serve to evade the specificity of what people think, something approximating a “crusty project” is presented as the evaluation. “Crusty” here refers to a dishevelled appearance, a slang term having roots in ‘crust punk’ a musical genre and subculture associated with anti-authoritative ideology and dishevelled dress. She cites experience of other “anarchist projects” taking a strongly K+ position due to her personal first-hand experience (Heritage, 2013). She provides an evaluation (although

not grammatically connected) readable as ‘people see anarchist groups as’ “a bunch of fairly homeless looking people turning up to do something”. Again, there is an undertone of irony as Ludovic provides these evaluations attributed to the public. She may align to them partially given the previous joke surrounding the dishevelled appearance of the cart. There is irony in presenting the public as ignorant whilst nonetheless justifying their impressions.

In L40 – 49 there is a joke in perceptions changing because of a recent new marquee, and a repetition of the public’s assumption that FNB is a church or charity.

Macro Analysis

Ideological squaring plays a role in positioning individuals and FNB within this section of the interview. Columbo attributes an ironic ‘anti-northern’ stance to her mother, relating to previous support for Margaret Thatcher, to distance herself from conservatism, and to provide the same distancing for her mother, who is said to regret voting for Thatcher (L174B). Using the reporting space to attribute a callous attitude to Ludovic’s neighbour (L17-30) has the implication that the FNB members present for the conversation, and the politics of the group, are compassionate. Presenting the public as ignorant, both in the recollection of the neighbour and in describing a limited public perception of FNB (L34-37), implies FNB is knowledgeable.

Machin and Mayr (2012) argue that reporting verbs allow for evaluation of both reported speaker and the content of their speech. This is seen in Karis’s report of FNB members as ‘mumbling’ (L11), attributing a lack of confidence, commitment or knowledge to the members and their claim that “we’re serving food but we don’t have bombs and we don’t like war”. This is potentially because Karis perceives FNB as disorganised or not as radical as she would like - a theme that re-emerges later in conversation. A further interpretation, which is not mutually exclusive to the prior, is that she is showing the simple presentation of the FNB ideology - the ‘common sense’ presentation that appeals to the public whilst being the most conveyable and consumable. Liamputtong (2016) shows that humour allows for people to take control over their own stereotyped image, in this case group humour allows for social cohesion through adoption of the

“crusty”, “raggedy” anarchist stereotypes, the unanimous positive affect also suggests the stance being created is shared by all participants to a degree.

6.2 Political Explicitness

Transcript Lines 50-93

50	Columbo:	I don't yeah I don't think we sell our anarchist / ideologies very / explicitly
51	Karis:	I think like maybe only once or twice has someone talked to me about like oh
52		it's bad how we're sending weapons to all of these conflicts and Gaza and
53		[stuff] and I've been like yeah agreeing with them and discussing that / most of
54		the time politics doesn't doesn't come up at all / I did I learnt why we're called
55		food not bombs so now I can explain that to people / and talk about how
56		weapons is bad / but um
57	Interviewer:	[Mm]
58	Ludovic:	I think we also / like comparing to another food not bombs group I used to be
59		in we're very deliberately toning down / maybe because it's City it's more it's
60		m- sorry I identified <i>laughter</i>
61	Interviewer:	Oh no=
62	Ludovic:	=You can cut that out
63	Karis:	Maybe cos its beep ~quotes Ludovic, imitates censor beep~
64	Ludovic:	Beep yeah / it's it's so maybe it's because it's a small place / but for example
65		when I was doing the posters for it and there were some comments / um some
66		people said oh you don't want to use that word that's a little bit / don't use the
67		[word protest] or don't use a word you know it's a little bit too inflammatory? /
68		which to me / it seems like very im / like I don't / that doesn't even seem as
69		very / sharp?
70	Columbo:	[[Yeah yeah]]
71	Karis:	[[Mm]]
72	Karis:	I wouldn't have thought that / I didn't realise it was an intentional toning down
73		/ I do know we say that one of our main things is like / we're distributing food
74		as a form of protest
75	Columbo:	Yeah
76	Karis:	Like the government isn't doing it properly
77	Ludovic:	Maybe it wasn't the word um / yeah I don't know what was the word was but it
78		wasn't a very uh=
79	Karis:	Can you quote Lucy Parsons on it by accident?
80	Columbo:	What?
81	Interviewer:	Honestly / no idea who that was
82	Ludovic:	<i>Chuckles</i> so yeah / we don't do things very explicit uh very politically / we
83		could
84	Columbo:	[[We could have some big signs and give out]]
85	Karis:	[[I would be in favour of that]] / this is just a committee discussion now we're
86		just going to decide the future of the group here
87	Columbo:	No yeah I don't=
88	Karis:	I dropped my anarchy symbol ~nasal joke voice~
89	Columbo:	<i>Chuckles</i> I don't think we / yeah I don't know much we sort of hide our/ hide is
90		a bit of a strong word for it but
91	Karis:	Hiding our power levels
92	Columbo:	<i>Chuckles</i> hide our political ideologies / but yeah we don't wear them too
93		openly on our sleeve / I suppose

Columbo makes a bid:

Conversational Particle	Cognitive Verb	Stance Object	Evaluation	Adverb + evaluation
I don't yeah	I don't think	we	sell our anarchist / ideologies	very / explicitly

(L50)

After a false start, Columbo marks this bid with a conversational particle “yeah”. This punctuates a shift in topic whilst acting as a summary to the discussion. There is a topic shift (to explicit discussion of ideology) as well as a tonal shift from humour to a more analytic and focused reflection on how the group expresses its views. Despite inviting response, it is not epistemically K-, rather K+ as it functions more as a statement of an opinion. It is the first time the topic of international war has been brought into discussion.

“I think like maybe only once or twice has someone talked to me about like oh it's bad how we're sending weapons to all of these conflicts and Gaza and [stuff] and I've been like yeah agreeing with them and discussing that” (L51)

This is cognitively marked (“I think”) and epistemically downgraded with the adverb “maybe”. Karis makes a bid, in summary saying: ‘seldom have people talked to me about international wars’. Karis’s self-report (“yeah”) placed to show past alignment with the reported stance provides strong epistemic status. The evaluation of the stance is made through a reporting space, characterising people who approach the group. The stance within the report is marked with the typical convention of a conversational particle (“oh”), evaluating the act of sending weapons to overseas conflict as “bad”. Presumably this position is seen by Karis as emblematic of some anarchist or broadly ‘leftist’ viewpoint, as she is starting to build a contrasting stance to the recent assertion that anarchist ideologies are not displayed explicitly by the group. Karis continues:

“most of the time politics doesn't doesn't come up at all” (L53)

Ludovic makes a bid:

“I think we also / like comparing to another food not bombs group I used to be in we're very deliberately toning down / maybe because it's City it's more it's m-” (L58)

Ludovic refers to previous experience, comparing another FNB group to the local one. The adverb “very” boosts the evaluation that the group is “deliberately toning down” political activism, specifically ‘anarchist ideology’ if reading the stance through the previous references. Lines 60-63 contain jokes about the transcript censoring mentions of FNB’s location.

Ludovic continues:

“**maybe** it's because it's a small place / but for example when I was doing the posters for it and there were some comments / um some people said **oh** you don't want to use **that word that's a little bit** / don't use the **[word protest]** or **don't use a word** you know it's a **little bit too** inflammatory? / which to me / it seems like **very** I'm / like I don't / that doesn't even seem as **very** / sharp?” (L64)

Ludovic reports other FNB members who are shown as being averse to the word ‘protest’, in the reporting space they censor Ludovic. Within this utterance rising intonation features twice. The first seems to show uncertainty for the description of the viewpoint, whilst potentially inviting confirmation. The second invites confirmation: “That doesn’t even seem as very / sharp?”. She makes the point that, in her perception, “protest” is not an extreme.

Karis and Columbo simultaneously overlap to align when Ludovic reports the discouragement from others: “yeah yeah” (L70) and “mm” (L71). Karis then makes two bids:

“I wouldn't have thought that / I didn't realise it was an intentional toning down / I do **know** we say that one of our main things is like / we're distributing food as a form of protest” (L72)

Here, Karis is introducing a contrasting stance saying how she “wouldn’t have thought” ‘FNB were intentionally toning down their politics’. In doing so, she appears to be disaligning with Ludovic. Ludovic’s quote of another speaker censoring her holds epistemic power as an aspect of her personal life and experience. Karis positions herself as K- “I didn’t realise”. Karis may still disagree with the sentiment partially, as she asserts that she ‘knows’ the group announces its protest status. Columbo aligns to Karis’s utterance (“yeah”) (L75). Karis adds “like the government isn’t doing it properly”.

Ludovic makes an utterance with two bids, through which she shows uncertainty about her previous report:

“Maybe it wasn't the word um / yeah I don't know what was the word was but it wasn't a very uh=” (L77)

“Maybe” is a marker which modifies the epistemic certainty surrounding the word that was deemed “inflammatory”. She reiterates, using a cognitive verb “I don’t know” to more explicitly position herself as K-. However, she does reinforce her original point with a contrasting connective “*but* it wasn’t very”. This could be interpreted as ‘but it wasn’t very inflammatory’ if read in the context of prior conversation. She is interrupted by Karis who makes a joke, after the exchange subsides Ludovic resumes:

“so yeah / we don't do things very explicit uh very politically / we could” (L82)

Conversational particles mark this bid (“so yeah”) and evaluations are boosted with adverbs (“very”). Emphasis is placed on “could”. Her position is reinforced with less specificity, without having to challenge or reopen the disalignment about previous censorship.

Next, Karis and Columbo begin turns simultaneously. Columbo begins a suggestion for modes of political expression for FNB (L84) and Karis (referring to Ludovic's stance that things ‘could be done more politically’) makes an aligning bid: “I would be in favour of that” (L85), she continues with a joke, claiming that the conversation has become a group meeting. Columbo begins an utterance with conversational particles, marking an emerging stance and to possibly show alignment. She is interrupted by Karis (L88) but continues:

“I don't think we / yeah I don't know how much we sort of hide our/ hide is a bit of a strong word for it but” (L89)

Karis makes another joke (L91), Columbo laughs and continues:

“hide our political ideologies / but yeah we don't wear them too openly on our sleeve / I suppose” (L92)

Both utterances contain cognitive and conversational markers. Adverbs are used as markers and both downgrade epistemic certainty. They modify a partial disalignment

with the prior stancework from Ludovic concerning purposely obscured politics and the evaluation of “we” as not being explicit in expression.

Macro Analysis

The group is presupposed by Ludovic to adopt anarchist ideologies (L50). This contrasts with her previous assumption that other’s do not share anarchist principles, and rather the principles ‘underpin’ the group’s politics (L195A). This is not so much contradiction, but a recognition that the members present have diverse personal politics which fall under the FNB values more broadly. Simultaneously she expresses a desire to be more explicitly anarchist. Disalignment in this section of talk centres around Ludovic announcing that she experienced a form of censorship within the group, Karis and Columbo want to deny this without explicitly saying Ludovic is wrong. Within this disalignment housekeeping applies insofar as direct confrontation is mitigated with cognitive verbs and adverbs which soften claims.

Personal firsthand accounts play a significant role in strengthening epistemic claims, manifesting as recollections of life experience (L58), reporting one’s own talk and others (L51).

Ludovic is often interrupted in this section, cutting off several evaluations within her bids. Despite this her intended stance is still highly readable because of anaphoric evaluations within the conversation. For example, Ludovic says, “I don't know what was the word was but it wasn't a very uh=” (L77). She is interrupted before the evaluation, but the same “word” was previously evaluated as (not) “very sharp” (L69). This may be why she is cut off by Karis – she knows the evaluation already since it is a reinforcement.

Stance analysis of this section shows a lack of consensus in terms of how expressive FNB is when it comes to its political messaging, or expression of its identity. There is alignment on wanting to be more expressive.

6.3 Balancing Politics and Action

Transcript Lines 94-195

94	Ludovic:	I mean there's a balance say I don't know if we / put up this big um / you know /
95		pro [Palestine posters] for example right next to a stall I think that would make
96		some people not come up
97	Columbo:	[Mm] Yeah=
98	Karis:	[Cos] they'd assume it was a political thing so they wouldn't want to get the
99		food
100	Ludovic:	[But]
101	Ludovic:	Yeah / and we'd get the people who want to rant coming up <i>laughter</i>
102	Karis:	Yeah / which I wouldn't complain at I like arguing with people ~laughing voice~
103	Ludovic:	But yeah we're putting definitely putting the food forward / [it's not] necessarily
104		wrong.
105	Karis:	[Yeah]
106	Karis:	In big words food *not bombs* <i>chuckles</i>
107	Ludovic:	<i>Laughter</i>
108	Columbo:	Yeah no I think I think when I think about it and and side aspects like that I do /
109		try and balance in my mind how much I want to like be a protest and and be
110		openly a protest and how much I want to focus on getting food to people that
111		need food
112	Karis:	I'm just here to hang out with you and I don't believe in anything ~joking voice~
113	Ludovic:	we're like uh like pride / next time maybe we'll be sponsored by Tesco <i>laughter</i>
114	All:	<i>Laughter</i>
115	Karis:	We're now sponsored by Raytheon <i>laughter</i>
116	Columbo:	But I I don't think they're always in direct conflict but I I do see that there is a
117		possibility that they could / and so I think / I do think about like how we / sell
118		ourselves I suppose or how we how we explain ourselves to people I think that
119		something I think about a bit but / um yeah / I don't know what to say /
120	Interviewer:	I / it's interesting / I didn't think of / the divide between / you know giving out
121		food as an objective / and making a statement about the way food is
122		distributed and the way we want to criticise things and / they you could say
123		clash / in terms of meeting meeting one cancels out the other sometimes um /
124	Karis:	Yeah / I'm nodding lightly
125	Interviewer:	Do you think we should be weighing on one more than the other? / cus like you
126		said Ludovic the last group you were part of was maybe more forward about
127	Ludovic:	But it was in a very big city and it=
128	Karis:	=Where was it? So Interviewer has more work to do=
129	Ludovic:	= <i>Laughter</i> it was / in one of the world's capital cities ~laughing voice~
130	Karis:	Was it in London?
131	Ludovic:	No it was in New York / that's not even a capital city <i>laughter</i> ~laughing voice~
132	Karis:	[[It's the capital of the state]]
133	Ludovic:	[[It was not]] / it was not London ~laughing voice~
134	Columbo:	What if we say every city it wasn't / and then you might have to anonymize all
135		of them because
136	Karis:	<i>Laughter</i> yeah
137	Interviewer:	[[Well]]
138	Columbo:	[[if you don't anonymise them then you / process of elimination

139	Interviewer:	We're free to refer to places that aren't here / that's not a problem
140	Karis:	Okay
141	Columbo:	Okay
142	Karis:	You can just say it was New York
143	Columbo:	Milan
144	Ludovic:	I think we make um=
145	Columbo:	=Barbados *sorry*
146	Ludovic:	Our statement when people come and / =
147	Karis:	=Swansea
148	Ludovic:	And they when they find out that it's free / [and] when they find out that we are
149		not funded / when we have those conversations / um / and when people are
150		like oh are you a charity? and we say we're not we don't get receive funding
151		from anywhere we're just people doing something and that / kind of brings a
152		whole mutual aid thing into focus / we are just people doing a thing
153	Columbo:	[Mm]
154	Columbo:	In in some ways I'd like it to be more political
155	Karis:	Yeah agreed
156	Columbo:	Because / I do another food thing and that one is so so sort of just / [middling
157		labour] / like sort of vibes
158	Karis:	[Mm chuckles] Mhm
159	Columbo:	They're all lovely but they're just very
160	Karis:	Person I was serving pastries with told me about how she doesn't agree with
161		economic migrants
162	Columbo:	There you go
163	Ludovic:	Ouch
164	Columbo:	Yeah / they / they sort of /
165	Karis:	They have a bit on the banner about community building / which is / good
166		~mild sarcastic tone~
167	Columbo:	Um / but yeah so they're like / in some ways, just for my own personal like / I
168		guess / expression of my political opinions I'd like it to be more more explicitly
169		political um / but I I don't know how how I'd go about that without sort of just
170		putting up a big sign that says down with capitalism etc
171	Ludovic:	Chuckles
172	Karis:	Down with this sort of thing ~mock disapproving tone~
173	Columbo:	Laughter um and and sort of waving that round whilst we give out some food /
174		at which point I'd say maybe I just want to go and walk around and tell people
175		that we're giving out food / because that would be more useful
176	Ludovic:	Well we could have some kind of flyers and [stuff] available on the table
177		without it being a mandatory / massive [fuck off sign]
178	Columbo:	[Mm] [we'd need a second table] at this rate
179	Ludovic:	Hm?
180	Columbo:	We'd need a second table at this rate
181	Ludovic:	Tuts ~in acknowledgement of the issue~
182	Columbo:	*We've got a very busy table*
183	Ludovic:	[[We need to expand]]
184		[[What if we had a]] a place that you could go that was indoors and it was open
185		maybe throughout the working day and maybe we could actually ask for a little
186		bit of money and and uh ah

187	Karis:	Yeah
188	Ludovic:	But you know what
189	Columbo:	Damn it we've made another cafe ~mock frustration~
190	Ludovic:	If we had the bandwidth / we could also express our political identity more by
191		pairing up with actual protests [and] being like okay you want to do this like
192		little protest thing? We're going to bring food
193	Columbo:	[Mm] ~excited tone~ [[that would]] be really good actually I'd be interested in
194		doing that definitely
195	Karis:	[Mm mm]

The following are two bids from Ludovic's utterance. Although uttered as a response to Columbo (L92), "I mean there's a balance" (L94) introduces a new stance object - "balance" rather than "political ideologies" (L92). The bid is confidently K+, it is framed as a statement marked with a conversational particle and there are no epistemic downgrades – this motivates the further telling and begins a topic shift in conversation.

Conversational particle	Evaluation	Stance object
I mean	there's	a balance

She provides an example:

"Say I don't know if we / put up this big um / you know / pro [Palestine posters] for example right next to a stall"

Cognitive verb	Stance object	Evaluation
I think	that	would make some people not come up

(L94)

Ludovic here identifies a balance between the objective of sharing food and making political statements. She gives the example of how a pro-Palestine poster could discourage people from using the stall. Conversational particle "say" coupled with "I don't know" seems to be a typical introduction of a hypothetical example rather than a signal of epistemic uncertainty.

Columbo backchannels, presumably in signal of alignment "[mm] yeah" and Karis simultaneously begins a turn, a response to Ludovic where she is orienting the bid around the previous evaluation:

"[Cos] they'd assume it was a political thing so they wouldn't want to get the food" (L98)

This does not have any explicit markers, "cos" may fulfil a conversational particle role. The utterance is nonetheless structured as a typical evaluation, orienting to the object "they". It conveys the same message that Ludovic was delivering, but with the people in question being the object of stance rather than within the evaluation. It serves as an

emphatic signal of alignment and reinforces a shared stance concerning the public's political sensibilities of avoidance.

Comments are made about explicitness attracting argumentative people (L100-L102). Ludovic reroutes to the theme of politics and food. She attempts to begin on L100 (“[but]”), which is itself a response to her own commentary on “balance” (L94).

“But **yeah** we're putting **definitely** putting the food forward / [it's not] necessarily wrong”
(L103)

“But” positions this as contrasting to her summary of a balance which cannot stray too far into the politically explicit, as if to counter this shortcoming or at least summarise it. The bid is marked with a conversational particle (“yeah”) and is given a strong boost to epistemic certainty through the adverb “definitely”. Karis backchannels, overlapping with “yeah”, and demonstrates alignment with humour on L106: “In big words food *not bombs*” - emphasis through volume expresses the priority of food. Ludovic laughs in response to this utterance. Columbo then makes a larger utterance expressing her own consideration of balance in terms of what she ‘wants’ to achieve through the activism. She appears to position herself in alignment by beginning the bid with two conversational particles “yeah no” (L108), following a thematically similar description of ambivalence.

Next, a humorous exchange between Karis and Ludovic arises, it is hypothetical and exaggerated but ideologically potent:

Karis: “I'm just here to hang out with you and I don't believe in anything”

Ludovic: “we're like uh like pride / next time **maybe** we'll be sponsored by Tesco”

Everyone responds with laughter.

Karis: “**We're now sponsored by Raytheon** *laughter*”

(L112-115)

Karis's first bid is marked with irony and a reporting space. The reporting space is established tonally with a cheery and unassuming voice, a first-person pronoun “I” and second-person address (of a group) “you”. The irony predominantly functions through pretense: boldly stating a hypothetical character's uninformed lack of belief, addressing

a version of FNB who may or may not be ignorant and take this character at face value.

This bid produces two main implications for stancework:

- Karis is using oppositional irony to say members believe nothing, therefore implying that they have complex and conflicting beliefs that are hard to articulate.
- Karis is using double irony (much like Ludovic's partial alignment with the group's improvisational optics) where a lack of directed political action is partly real, and the desire to "hang out" can be posed as important.

The exchange treads a line between ironic statements and a reporting space. Ludovic responds to Karis's report, but it is unclear whether she intends to adopt a character. She does not use any tonal similarities but thematically her humour makes similar implications and presents another first-person perspective through pretense. Ludovic expands the ironic treatment of apolitical viewpoints to the domain of corporation's leverage of pride as a marketing strategy. This is more prototypical irony in which there is no genuine alignment with the propositional content. Using a joke about pride's Tesco sponsorship serves to critique the adoption of progressive politics for advertising purposes.

Columbo makes an utterance building a stance initiated on L108, concerning the binary of action versus political expression:

"But I I don't think they're always in direct conflict but I I do see that there is a possibility that they could" (116)

This bid is marked with a cognitive verb "think", and functions contrastively ("but"). She evaluates the stance object "they" (referring to the binary) as 'not always in direct conflict'. The adverb "always" describes frequency and may also soften the epistemic strength of the claim. The second bid is not explicitly marked although "see" plays a cognitive role in ascribing the stancework to her point of view. The bid shows that there 'can' be a conflict between action and politics. This utterance continues – she reiterates similar descriptions of thought seen on L108.

I make a comment on the balance between these two factors, asking "do you think we should be weighing on one more than the other?" (L125). This only prompts reiterations

of previous stances, however. After this, jokes about anonymising conversation unfold. Columbo says “in in some ways I'd like it to be more political” (L154). She puts emphasis on “like” showing an affective stance evaluating “it” (FNB). Columbo aligns to this strongly (“agreed”, L155). Columbo continues:

“Because / I I do another food thing and that one is **so** so **sort of** just / [middling labour] / like sort of vibes” (L166)

This bid is marked adverbially, emphasis is placed on “so”, giving an overall boost to the evaluation rather than the downgrading function of “sort of”. The object (“another food thing”) is evaluated as ‘middling labour vibes’ - a pejorative in this case. Karis, who also attends this group, overlaps by backchannelling with affirmation and amusement “[Mm *chuckles*]” and again in response “mhm” (both L158). Columbo makes two stances within an utterance, the second lacking an explicit evaluation of the object “they”:

“They’re all lovely but they’re just very /”. Karis responds with a recollection:

“Person I was serving pastries with told me about how she doesn't agree with economic migrants” (L160)

Columbo responds by saying “there you go” (L162), pointing to her previous evaluation of “middling labour”, and Ludovic says “ouch” (L163) – making a negative affective evaluation. After a false start from Columbo, Karis takes a turn:

“They have a bit on the banner about community building / which is / **good**” (L165)

Karis sarcastically evaluates the other group’s ‘community building banner’ as “good”, this is marked by an initial mock-optimistic, higher tone of voice and a pause before “good” to feign hesitation. The use of irony matches the findings of Myers (2010), following the oppositional model.

On lines 167-189, participants reiterate some desire to be more explicit, discuss balance and make jokes about charging for food. Ludovic makes an utterance:

“[...] we could also express our political identity more by pairing up with actual protests [and] being like **okay you want to do this like little protest thing? We're going to bring food**” (L190)

The reported voice of FNB (“we”) addresses a hypothetical other running a protest, the voice is assertive and conversational.

Columbo overlaps to backchannel (“mm”, L193) in an excited tone of voice. She then follows with a response:

“[[that would]] be **really** good **actually** I'd be interested in doing that **definitely**” (L193)
 Collaborating with other protestors (“that”) is evaluated as “good”, boosted by “really”. “Actually” may show surprise at an idea not before considered. She reiterates this sentiment by positioning herself with the evaluation of being “interested in doing that” boosted adverbially again (“definitely”). Karis overlaps to align with Columbo’s show of enthusiasm (“mm mm”, L195).

Macro Analysis

Previous analysis of Ludovic’s experience with censorship in FNB (section 6.3), paired with a (generally aligned) presentation of the public as averse to explicit radical anti-war discourse shows that the group political identity is perceived by members to be under pressure from the wider political atmosphere.

The ideological square places FNB in direct opposition to corporations who co-opt radical discourse. This portrays FNB by comparison as authentically believing in its cause. Karis makes another ironic bid announcing a hypothetical Raytheon sponsorship, creating an opposition to warfare and the profiteering of it. Raytheon is a global technology company that produces weapons, it has a branch in the UK (Raytheon UK, 2025). Like prior examples, irony does not always seek to purely undermine the stance content, an ironic presentation of FNB as ideologically scattered may be in part genuine. Karis makes the ironic joke that she does not believe in anything. By producing this apolitical and uninformed character the ideological squaring has the opposite effect in evaluating the group’s political identity as motivated, educated and informed. A theme which is central to constructing the political identity of FNB – seen in similarly functioning ideological squaring on L34-37 (also see 6.2 macro analysis), where presentation of an ignorant other consolidates FNB’s knowledgeable image. Instances such as this use absurd humour to nevertheless enact highly complex stancetaking sequences, and often encourage a very high degree of affective alignment or at least participation in expressing the boundaries of one’s alignment (seen in the previous

deployment of the Joe Rogan character). Negotiating when and how the group exerts their knowledge is important to constructing its identity, for example, plans of feigning ignorance to fool authorities are their own unique displays of knowledgeability and the ability to control when the group is seen as knowledgeable (L119A-121A).

There is alignment amongst all participants on being more explicitly political as an objective. Using van Dijk's (2024) criterion for ideology of shared goals, we can see the emergence of a concrete, positive attribute that constitutes the political identity of FNB. This is at first described as a lack, but later Ludovic uses the reporting space to suggest plans for actively achieving more political activism. The reporting space acts to position FNB as a collective ready to co-operate (form allies) with other activist groups.

6.4 Group Structuring and Workload

Transcript Lines 196-265

196	Ludovic:	We don't have massive massive protest encampments here but it does
197		happen sometimes
198	Columbo:	Yeah / there was one recently
199	Karis:	Did food not bombs provide / food for the uh the encampment on campus at
200		all? [last year] cus I wasn't involved with food not=
201	Columbo:	[I think] =but it was not organised / I know a couple members <u>did</u>
202	Karis:	Mhm
203	Columbo:	But I don't know how / but it wasn't like a / us named will work with you sort of
204		thing / um /
205	Interviewer:	Maybe / maybe a sort of closing topic on this
206	Karis:	E-mails
207	Interviewer:	This discussion / um I also wanted to ask about how people felt about the
208		group structuring / I suppose in principle like we've already talked about the
209		the lack of hierarchy but then also in practice like / how how do you feel about
210		the experience of being part of that structure?
211	Karis:	I think it's basically good
212	All:	<i>Chuckles</i>
213	Karis:	I <u>do</u> have to condemn food not bombs for reaction / because having admins in
214		the WhatsApp group is a form of hierarchy
215	All:	<i>Chuckles</i>
216	Columbo:	That is true / [[yeah but I enjoy it because I'm one of the admins]]
217	Karis:	[[I think it basically works and people are chill]] <u>ah</u>
218	Columbo:	Ah yes / um I think it / it sometimes falls on a- as I said there was a sort of a
219		close group of people that [that do it] and there's sort of / there are there is a
220		slight hierarchy to the number of like how much people how much time
221		people put in / um and sometimes that can like we I think we've we've
222		explicitly tried to avoid it in a lot of ways / by saying don't overwork yourself to
223		people / me included / um at times / which is <u>good</u> and important /
224	Karis:	[Mm]
225	Ludovic:	I find it very comfortable because I could just / when I came in I was like oh
226		shall I do this? / and people were like yeah [so I] could just [choose] how much
227		or how little I wanted to do / and that was comfortable / but to some degree
228		you also / that organisation and very very much depends on whether people
229		have it in them / to put some structure in place / because the structure is not
230		the same as hierarchy right? ~"yeah" in a nonchalant tone~
231	Columbo:	[Mm] no yeah
232	Ludovic:	For example we could definitely do with a more robust um / kind of structure
233		for organising who's coming who's coming when? just so so much work
234		doesn't fall on the shoulders of the same people over and over again
235	Columbo:	Definitely
236	Ludovic:	But we are talking about it it's we are developing a <i>chuckles</i> non hierarchical
237		solution to /
238	Columbo:	Yeah I think I see some people cooking a lot and I go oh I think / it like / when
239		people <u>do</u> I normally try and check and say look you don't have to if it's too
240		much and people normally say oh yeah no it's okay I'm I'm happy to I've I've

241		got the spare time and and kitchen and whatnot um but I do / always think
242		about it or we should try and fix this and make it as as u-I guess not uniform
243		but as as spread out as possible not only for the for the sake of um / just sort
244		of saving people's mental energy a bit and and giving people more time
245		because it can take up a fair bit of time out of your day to cook up a whole
246		thing
247	Ludovic:	Yeah, there is a difference between thinking oh I want to do this
248	Columbo:	Mm
249	Ludovic:	Versus thinking oh I've got to do this because otherwise it's not going to be
250		anyone to do this
251	Columbo:	Yeah
252	Ludovic:	And the latter you lean too heavily on the latter and at some point you burn out
253	Columbo:	Definitely yeah / and I think that's the thing I worry about but it's I suppose
254		that's a slightly different hierarchy but it does kind of interact and mingle with
255		it a bit and structure yeah
256	Ludovic:	I wouldn't say it's hierarchical because ultimately it doesn't mean that say for
257		example you are there a lot right? Both of you
258	Columbo:	Mm
259	Ludovic:	It does not mean that / there isn't a feeling that you have more of the say over
260		things because of that
261	Columbo:	[[Yeah that's true]]
262	Karis:	[[Like if anyone else wanted to be there more anyone would stop them]]
263	Columbo:	No yeah
264	Karis:	Or if we wanted to be there less anyone would stop us
265	Columbo:	I suppose so yeah

Based on a variation of a planned prompt - “do you think the group structuring is effective?”, I introduce a final prompt asking about the group structuring, creating a topic shift:

“[...] How do you feel about the experience of being part of that structure?” (L209)

Karis is the first to respond:

“I think it’s basically good” (L211)

This cognitively marked bid (“I think”) evaluates FNB’s structure (“it”) as “good”, boosted epistemically by “basically”.

Jokes are made about hierarchy in the FNB WhatsApp group chat (L213-216). Karis produces an utterance containing two bids:

“I think it basically works and people are chill” (L217)

Here Karis is forming a stance in dialogue with my question, evaluating FNB’s structure, people are evaluated as “chill”. Columbo makes an utterance containing multiple bids. The first is initially marked with conversational particles (“ah yes”) which appear to indicate sudden recollection, rather than alignment function.

“Ah yes / um I think it / it sometimes falls on a- as I said there was a sort of a close group of people that [that do it] and there’s sort of / there are there is a slight hierarchy to the number of like how much people how much time people put in” (L218).

Columbo is identifying an imbalance in time contributed by volunteers. She is making a bid, marked by “as I said”, referring to a previous mention of a “core group” (L50A). Karis overlaps during this utterance to backchannel and show alignment (“[mm]”, L224).

Ludovic makes an utterance containing several bids, she says “I find it very comfortable” (L225). She evaluates FNB’s structure (“it”) as “comfortable”, boosted by “very”, she then uses the reporting space to exemplify her experience with volunteering herself for the roles she was comfortable with. Within the utterance she makes a contrasting stance to the prior evaluation of convenience:

“But to some degree you also / that organisation and very very much depends on whether people have it in them / to put some structure in place / because the structure is not the same as hierarchy right?” (L227)

There are false starts within this utterance, but the grammatical structure is still clear, the stance object (“that organisation”, which she previously cited as beneficial for her personal involvement) is evaluated as depending on people’s ability or motivation to structure the group pro-actively. She finishes the utterance with a bid that evaluates “structure” as “not the same as hierarchy”, this includes a tag question (“right?”) requesting confirmation from the group (Keisanen, 2007). Columbo aligns (“no yeah”, L231). Ludovic continues:

“For example we could **definitely** do with a more robust um / kind of structure for organising who's coming who's coming when? just so so much work doesn't fall on the shoulders of the same people over and over again” (L232)

Ludovic takes an epistemically strong assertion that more structured organisation is “definitely” needed. Columbo makes a strongly aligning bid (“definitely”, L235). Ludovic makes a contrasting bid concerning “non-hierarchical” (L236) solutions, said with emphasis: “But we are talking about it” (L236). Columbo aligns to this (“Yeah”, L238) and mentions concern for people’s work balance, she expresses affect through reporting “I see some people cooking a lot and I I go oh” (L238). She continues:

“I **normally** try and check and say **look you don't have to if it's too much** and people **normally** say **oh yeah no it's okay I'm I'm happy to I've I've got the spare time and and kitchen**” (L239)

A dialogue is created between Columbo and another hypothetical volunteer who is at risk of being overworked. This is marked and modified with the adverb “normally”, which identifies the report as a generalisation, but also gives it solid epistemic grounding by presenting it as a recurring phenomenon. Columbo attributes a self-evaluating stance to the volunteer: “I’m happy to” (cook). The reporting spaces are marked with conversational particles, they also contain direct address and use of first-person pronouns. Including a report of first-hand conversational experience gives Columbo K+ status in this context. This utterance continues, within it Columbo says “we should try and fix this and make it as [...] spread out as possible” (L242). She cites peoples time and mental energy as reasons for this. This bid is not explicitly marked but has clear modality (“should”) demonstrating Columbo is epistemically certain that this a correct course of action.

Ludovic makes a bid:

“Yeah, there is a difference between thinking oh I want to do this” (L247)

“Versus thinking oh I've got to do this because otherwise it's not going to be anyone to do this” (L249)

Between and after these two bids, Columbo backchannels (“Mm”, L248, “Yeah”, L251”). A conversational particle at the beginning of the first stance both shows alignment with Columbo and marks the bid, a report of a hypothetical thought (marked with particle “oh” in both cases) illustrates the divide between feelings of obligation versus desire to contribute. Ludovic continues after Columbo’s backchannel:

“And the latter you lean too heavily on the latter and at some point you burn out” (L252)

Columbo aligns with an adverb and a conversational particle, marking the beginning of a set of bids:

“Definitely yeah / and I think that's the thing I worry about but it's I suppose that's a slightly different hierarchy”

Columbo is agreeing with the stance that obligation can cause burnout, using high epistemic certainty (“definitely”). She cognitively marks a bid (“I think”) that evaluates burnout and imbalanced workload as a thing she worries about. She then evaluates this imbalance and its negative effects: “that’s a slightly different hierarchy. Columbo perceives a hierarchy in workload.

Ludovic makes a disaligning bid:

“I wouldn't say it's hierarchical because ultimately it doesn't mean that say for example you are there a lot right? Both of you” (L257)

Columbo confirms this tag question: “Mm” (L258), Ludovic continues:

“It does not mean that / there isn't a feeling that you have more of the say over things because of that” (L259)

Columbo makes an aligning bid: “Yeah that’s true” (L261). Simultaneously Karis makes bid, providing examples to construct a stance in alignment with Ludovic:

“Like if anyone else wanted to be there more anyone would stop them” (L262)

“Anyone” here seems to be an idiolect feature, in fact meaning ‘no one would stop them’. Columbo backchannels, aligning with conversational particles: “No yeah”. Karis extends this example: “Or if we wanted to be there less anyone would stop us” (L264). Columbo aligns, but with a cognitive verb “suppose” that connotes potential reticence or uncertainty: “I suppose so yeah” (L265).

After this discussion I add a prompt concerning obligation, the conversation is largely reiterations of previous stances, humour surrounding censoring the transcript unfolds and the interview closes out.

Macro Analysis

Ludovic and Columbo use the reporting space to position themselves relative to concerns of work balance. A discourse of care and mental health is oriented to, concepts such as ‘burnout’ and ‘mental energy’ are deployed. This portrays the group as conscious of members’ needs. Conversation begins with Columbo identifying a central group who are reported to do more of the work, a theme she has alluded to before. However, despite this supposed imbalance, the idea that anyone is obliged to participate is unanimously disavowed as conversation continues. Housekeeping features are adhered to within this section of talk, disalignment happens but new ideas are routinely aligned to, suggesting that participants do not want to further a disagreement, that they change their minds, or that multiple perceptions can be viewed as equally true (a core group *does* take up a bulk of the work *but* the feeling of obligation is not a driving force, *and* relief exists to pick up excess labour). Columbo connects the imbalance of labour to a potential hierarchy, she does not inherently connect the amount of labour done with a higher status or vice versa, but Ludovic seems to interpret it as such and makes the assertion that hierarchy is not a result of a work imbalance. This section of talk shows participants making efforts to largely disavow the existence of any potential hierarchy amongst members of FNB, however this does seem to be a point of tension that is to a degree obscured by avoidance of face-threatening acts.

7.0 Discussion and Conclusions

7.1 Group Political Identity

This project has investigated the research question: What does a linguistic analysis of stance reveal about co-constructed group political identity in the Food Not Bombs group? A semi structured focus group interview which incorporated my own membership of FNB facilitated rich and naturalistic conversation. Participants discuss a wide array of topics, not exclusive to the prompts provided. A sustained cross-theoretical stance analysis of the entire interview reveals participants' diverse stances enact a dynamic production of group identity, displaying desires to change material and ideological conditions whilst consolidating the social and ideological cohesion of the group. This is achieved by co-operative stancetaking, often making simultaneous claims and positionings to build a discursive performance. Participants emphasize characteristics such as the radical nature of the work, informality, dissolution of power structures amongst people, and empathy. Participants often juxtapose the group's political identity with the public, corporate and state-based institutions and outsider political groups. Irony, reporting and co-operative turntaking through management of epistemics and politeness all form a dynamic image of the FNB identity.

Primacy and subordination can reinforce or diminish the power of a stance, and participants usually upgrade or downgrade this (often with adverbs) to create an equilibrium amongst themselves when desirable. Housekeeping is maintained through participants' management of epistemic certainty and domains, backchannelling and other generalised politeness acts, such as apology for interruption. Irony is used in several forms to enact many precise subdomains of stancetaking: positioning speakers, evaluating objects and enacting politeness or modification of epistemic status. Analysis also shows that the reporting space has many uses and often overlaps with irony. The space allows participants to evaluate concepts and people, as well as evaluate or position themselves and the group. Irony and reporting are deployed often for humorous purposes that reinforce the positive relationship of the members present and the cohesion of FNB's political identity.

These formal means of enacting stance negotiate and imply several discursive themes that constitute political identity. Mutual aid is broadly viewed as central to the FNB's function and identity. There is a perceived imbalance of work, the majority contributed by a 'core group' of volunteers, but there is no obligation to do so. The group is inclusive, friendly, and follows most of the values the global organisation is known for, such as anti-capitalism, anti-war and anti-discrimination. A hierarchy of power is shown (mostly unanimously) to be non-existent. The group has improvisational optics, some hints at disorganisation and some more explicit mentions of divergent individual ideologies. Participants want FNB to be more explicitly political. Participants position FNB in oppositions and alliances with others.

Much like Dubois' (2007) application of the stance triangle, my analysis is not rigid in classification of stance and relating it strictly to a function. Rather the analysis shows that stance is highly multifaceted both in its markers and effects. I apply large variety of analytical perspectives within stance analysis, such as identifying stance through multiple markers, acknowledging unmarked stances and relating stance to conversation's structural and politeness features. In doing so I argue that a stance should be read as having relative probabilities for what the stancetaker intends and what interpreters glean from it. It is impossible to be certain, but neither are the interpretations I offer entirely ephemeral. The grey area surrounding 'what counts' as a stance marker means all markers should be treated as potential indicators. They all can mark stance, but the degree to which they fulfil this role varies based on the speaker's intention and a listener's interpretation. For example, how much of the usage of 'a bit' is specifically deployed to modify epistemic certainty of evaluations? As opposed to asking: how much of the usage is habitual and idiosyncratic? The habitual use will still have the effect of modification and create the emergent stance. However, there is an indeterminate degree of intention from the speaker. This study is mostly restricted to representing what happens within this interview, and social dynamic of the scenario. Ideological and political functions appear but extending them to the whole FNB group has limited potential. All the participants of the study appear to have a strong understanding and awareness of the ideological and political world. They readily reflect on the values of FNB, mention prior activism and discuss concepts from socio-political

theory. This may not be representative of the whole group, however participants within the study project the political identity of FNB as intentional and self-reflective.

Since ideology guides political action and expression, highlighting that of FNB through several of van Dijk's (2024) organisational categories is beneficial in contextualising my conclusion. FNB's ideology arises with relative clarity:

What do we want?

- To be more politically active

What is good for us?

- A healthy balance of work for volunteers, discarding hierarchy

Who are our allies and opponents?

- Opponents: Police, corporations, capitalist ideology, ignorance, liberalism, conservatism, right wing ideology
- Allies: Homeless community, members of FNB, other radical protests

Identity may be the hardest to summarise from a diaspora of conclusions and alignments amongst the participants. Varying evaluations describe an identity status or political baseline:

- "Anarchist" (L181A, L34C)
- "Left politically" (213A)
- "Non-sexist [...] non-racist [...] non-hierarchical" (L194A)
- "People are chill" (L217C)
- "Wanting to break down the political structure" (L185A)
- "Friendly" (L127A)

This variety of perceptions confirms van Dijk's (2024) argument that any ideology will include clusters of varying subdomains of the ideology in question. An overall legible political identity can arise from a divergent conglomerate of clusters and idiosyncratic viewpoints; political identity and action is guided by this (in FNB's context) with enough consistency to function in accordance with its goals. A large source of unification for the group is opposition to 'other' groups (van Dijk, 2024). Participants pose evaluations of

such groups with near-unanimous alignment for every instance. To summarise, the group's identity is divergent along the lines of personal understandings, but not to such a degree that it is rendered unusable as a driving ideology and political identity. It is neither 'fixed' nor fractured, but discursive similarities in portrayal of the group and similarities in stance, such as converging to a reporting space, likely strengthens a perceived group authority (Zents, 2020) and political identity.

Irony is a marker that can establish highly complex and multifaceted stances. Through ironic utterance a speaker can show degrees of both alignment and disalignment with present participants and more generalised hypothetical positions or concepts. Irony can also indicate humour, affect, modify epistemic status, enact housekeeping and most principally: evaluate objects of stance. The analysis shows that participants construct group identity through these effects, positioning themselves and others to build a fluid profile of FNB. Irony tends to overlap with, and function similarly to the reporting space in how it often encourages co-operative talk. Participants will join others in ironic stance, following thematically and tonally. This tendency is also identified by Gibbs (2000) in a quantitative study of irony among friends, where ironic utterances were responded to with irony between 21% and 33% of the time ranging across five classifications of irony. This attests to a high degree of familiarity amongst participants. Much irony in the analysis falls into several classifications simultaneously and does not necessarily use an oppositional function to undermine an opposing position as suggested by Myers (2010). Irony is often used to make stances humorously but with partial or fully authentic belief.

Epistemic upgrades and downgrades to one's own status plays many roles in constructing group identity through stance. It facilitates housekeeping amongst participants as they maintain positive relationships, increases certainty and strength of assertions that participants see as important, and weakens stances to show uncertainty or make 'space' for others to pose diverging stances. Participants will not commit persistently to the epistemic certainty of most of their stances. If an epistemically strong stance is used to make an assertion about the group, but another speaker disaligns, often the epistemic certainty of the original stance is diminished. This has many potential reasons, a change of mind, avoiding a face threatening act or

avoiding having one's face threatened and therefore converging to the challenging viewpoint. This makes group identity (and its construction) unfixed and dynamic. Contradictions are allowed to remain in conversation as acknowledged facets of FNB without compromising relationships or activist goals.

I do not separate epistemics, affect and evaluative stance as starkly as some studies, as the cohesive overlap of them is what results in the identity construction, and the ratios of which are not consistently pertinent. However, there is a large amount of affective expression (whether explicit or implicit) amongst participants. This is shown in the friendly tone they adopt, humour, politeness and an ability to break politeness conventions without effecting the flow of conversation and mood. This suggests, like Delli and Dumanig (2022), that affect in stancetaking indicates and maintains positive social relations.

Participants vary in identification with the generalised values of FNB. They do not necessarily agree that they are of equal relevance (for example vegetarianism) or even view them as being enacted by the group (mutual aid and disalignment on whether the group enacts it). Members show variance in how they perceive the group's politics, variance in how they define the politics and how unified they perceive the members to be in viewpoints. The efficacy of the protest is called into question, with members unanimously expressing interest in making more explicit political statements. However, the majority of stances are met with alignment, or disalignment resolves in displays of alignment.

All disalignment in conversation surrounds stances on matters within FNB, stances about concepts, groups or people outside are otherwise generally aligned with. Despite a discourse of inclusivity, other groups allow for ideological squaring which forms some of the most prominent facets of the FNB group identity, such opposing outgroups include:

- An ignorant or critical public
- Police
- Liberalism, conservatism, labour
- Dogmatic anti-vegetarians (Joe Rogan) *

- Past selves (portrayed as centrist, naïve, or unaware politically)
- Censorship within the group *
- Corporate entities (Tesco + pride sponsorship, Raytheon, Amazon)

*Not unanimously aligned with amongst participants

7.2 Future Research

Should this research be extended, using a narrower focus on a larger percentage of an activist group would be beneficial. The irony and reporting in the data alone could provide rich insight whose apt analysis would outgrow the scope of a master's research project. Each usage of irony and reporting has multiple simultaneous functions for positioning subjects. Irony and reporting are highly prevalent within this data set. Like any stance, reporting and irony rely on anaphora, implication, grammatical markers, non-grammatical markers, evaluation and positioning to be encoded and decoded. But further still, they involve characterisation of others who are not necessarily identified, as well as multi-turn prosodic indicators which blur the boundary between report and irony. They demonstrate that successful stance analysis, or the pursuit of it, lies in a highly situational and descriptive cross-theoretical approach. A similar study could benefit from using Kieslings approach to stance as it streamlines processes such as reporting and irony, as well as dissolving some of the rigidity present in the stance triangle and diagraph approach. A more representational study for FNB would give a clearer picture of the linguistic means of building group identity, with possibilities to continue a grounding in epistemics – further building on literature to investigate epistemics in relation to group political identity. Such a study could investigate where irony and reporting are most prominent, and whether they are inherent to communication in a group context or bound to specific relationships within groups. The relationships and identity of participants was obscured for this study, however having access to more information on participants could benefit future research as it would contextualise stance analysis further. Humour, laughter and the stancework that initiates such interactions play a large role in punctuating stances and maintaining relationships in the data. A more thorough investigation into affective stancetaking would benefit a follow-up study to this, as the analysis places disproportionate focus on

epistemic stancework. For example, using instances of laughter as stance markers in analysis could bolster the focus on affective stance. Treating affective practices as isolated markers or events would not suffice to demonstrate the extent of affect's role in stance however, affect underpins the majority of interaction in the data - flowing between and across utterances much like the dialogical appearance of stance. Humour for example often carries across multiple utterances and varies in theme and focus depending on alignment, subject of talk and relationship dynamic of participants.

FNB is a previously unexamined and uniquely structured activist group. The reflexive approach to using a semi-structured focus group interview provided rich and naturalistic conversational data, to which I have consistently and systematically applied micro and macro-analytical scrutiny. This study contributes to the limited understanding of stance in relation to group political identity and presents further opportunity to do so should similar studies follow.

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Appendices

Transcript Notation and Highlight Key

Notation:

<i>*talk*</i>	Noticeably quieter talk
{bang}	Environmental sound
~voice quality~	Noticeably different voice quality
<i>laughter</i>	Non-verbal expression
?	Question intended to be answered by others or made to appear so (such as quoting) which has the grammatical form of question and/or a discernible rising tone.
/	Pauses are not timed unless they have potential relevance to stance (i.e., hesitance in response to a question).
[overlapping]	Overlaps are recorded only when significant to producing/decoding stance, for
[utterances]	example an interruption to disagree.
[[same]]	Simultaneous speech is recorded likewise to overlaps.
[[time]]	
<u>emphasis</u>	Extra stress/emphasis placed on lexical item(s)

interruption=
immediately
=without pause

Interruption where the interrupting speaker begins turn

Stance Marker Highlight Key:

Cognitive verbs

Adverbs

Reporting (Standard)

Reporting (Ironic)

Irony/Sarcasm

Conversation Particles

Transcript A

1	Interviewer:	Okay / thank you for joining me everyone / um / as I've mentioned within the / consent forms / if you want to stop recording for any reason at any point / that's completely fine / there's no / obligation to [/ discuss anything / you don't want to]
2		((bang)) {pen falls on table}
3	Karis:	[oh shit / sorry]
4	Interviewer:	And I'll begin with some of the / simpler small prompts / So the first word / is /
5		mutual aid / [first two words]
6	Karis:	[mutual aid] /
7	Interviewer:	Mm / what do you think about it / um / how would you define it? / things like that /
8	Karis:	So we just discuss now?
9	Interviewer:	Yeah / [yeah] feel free
10	Columbo:	[Yeah] / When I / hear mutual aid / I'm / thinking about / the definition / that I sort of
11		know of / which is / just helping each other really / I think quite sort of / yeah / very
12		informal way / I don't know
13	Karis:	*Yeah* I think it's an important concept I think it's something a lot of people can
14		agree on/ It's like uh / It's kind of a core concept in anarchist political philosophy
15		probably but it's also something I think that will be in common with kind of other
16		schools of leftist thought as well / um / and you can think about it on kind of a
17		regular scale like we do things as you know like just / basically people helping one
18		another / uh or as kind of / on a larger scale/ it can probably refer to like a different
19		organisation of society / where kind of the means of production and stuff are
20		organised around mutual aid instead of / hierarchy where you know / that's how
21		most of society could be organised / as you know / with the personal level stuff as a
22		model maybe / you have like mutual aid funds too / where people will pay into it and
23		then if you n-specifically need money for anything like if you can't make rent or
24		something then you can make it / I got a bit of / money from the mutual aid fund /
25		the other the other month / mm
26	Ludovic:	I think of mutual aid as / a way to / put something into a community / [and] / take
27		something out not necessarily at the same time or its it doesn't have to be two
28		people / in an exchange / um / which is kind of what we do in general in a society
29		but I think of mutual aid as existing outside of / uh institutions / outside of um / that
30		kind of / institutional societal structure / it it's / it steps in where / the / the
31		institutions fail /
32	Columbo:	[*Yeah*]
33	Interviewer:	Mm
34	Karis:	Yeah / for the audio recording I'm nodding /
35	All:	Chuckles
36	Karis:	But also I'm a poser because I haven't actually finished reading any Kropotkin and I
37		don't know what I'm talking about / um / mutual aid to me is um / it's when I go and
38		help serve coffees but also I can have some of the garlic bread / and then when we
39		wash up the cutlery then I'm short on forks and I can steal one of the forks [/ for
40		myself] and that's mutual aid /
41	All:	[chuckles]
42	Ludovic:	Well / at least you started Kropotkin /
43	All:	[[Chuckles]]
44	Columbo:	[[Laughter]]

45	Ludovic	I downloaded [and then deleted] it ~laughing voice~ <i>laughter</i> /
46	Karis:	<i>Laughter</i>
47	Columbo:	[[I think I've still got it]] in my / room at *ho[me*]
48	Karis:	[[I got like halfway through]] / [you own a copy] /
49	Columbo:	I think I do / um / but its low down the reading list / um / I think in the context of food
50		not bombs / it it comes across with / when we have / the-there's a core group of
51		people that do food not bombs / and a lot of us are / um / and-and we we you know
52		we'll eat some of the food as well / um / but I think it it's / I see it more when
53		people will / sort of just help and join in even if they're not / maybe in the / WhatsApp
54		group or / when they sort of / aren't / regulars / um / that's when I / I guess I kind of
55		see / it a bit more / um /
56	Karis:	Like when someone will just show up with a bike full of like / too good to go
57		/pastries in it /
58	Columbo:	Exact[ly]
59	Ludovic:	[[Oh yeah]]
60	Karis	[[And also those]] / *um* / um
61	Ludovic:	Oh w-when people come up and just say/ oh how can we help?
62	Karis:	[[Yeah]]
63	Columbo:	[[mm]]
64	Ludovic:	And it's quite
65	Karis:	[How can we help?] / ~mock-authoritative voice~
66	Columbo:	<i>Chuckles</i>
67	Ludovic:	They well they seem it's quite=
68	Karis:	=For the transcript that's an impression of / King Arkinian in / CDI Zelda /
69	All:	<i>Chuckles</i>
70	Columbo:	Wonderful [Go on]
71	Ludovic:	[It's] it's / [it's] quite interesting when they / feel a bit confused? They're like oh / so
72		are you at church? / are you a charity? [/] and once they realise that what we do is /a
73		lot more informal
74	Karis:	[Sorry]
75	Columbo:	[<i>Chuckles</i>]
76	Ludovic:	They feel a little / l-lost sometimes
77	Karis:	Yeah
78	Columbo:	Mm
79	Karis:	There isn't a point of reference of it people expect you to have an organisational
80		structure / or like a registered charity / and of course when people ask what
81		organisational structure we have then I just quote / Monty Python The Holy Grail at
82		them and I say we're an autonomous collective
83	All:	<i>Chuckles</i> /
84	Ludovic:	Which is true
85	Karis:	Yeah
86	Ludovic:	It is accurate
87	Karis:	But then I don't know the rest of that spiel from that sketch so I can't keep making
88		the reference I just know the one line
89	Interviewer:	Mm
90	Columbo:	I then tell them about / um / that they should stop basing their system of
91		government on / old ladies hand-handing out swords from bogs
92	Karis:	Yeah that's right / that's right

93	Columbo:	Um
94	Karis:	I think in some way / I mean / what food not bombs does is uh / it's kind of /
95		informed by mutual aid but because of the structure of the society we're in and a lot
96		of people d-contributing will be people in a position of privilege with like you know
97		free time / or / uh you know a job that they can live on [properly] / yeah and exactly
98		that they can contribute and then people / that / receive the food and come and get
99		servings of it will be like you know homeless people or people who don't have very
100		much at all so it's kind of more one directional just because we're / we're we're kind
101		of trying to / look towards what we want with mutual aid as a model and kind of
102		providing that
103	Columbo:	[Employment]
104	Interviewer:	Mm
105	Ludovic:	[[It it]]
106	Karis:	[[More than that being the way things already are]] /
107	Interviewer:	[[Yeah]] / that makes sense
108	Ludovic:	[[it]]
109	Ludovic:	It is important to me that we do couch it in terms of mutual aid / even if sometimes
110		things don't / sometimes things don't come back to you in [[the]] same direction
111		that you / put things in / I guess because it distinguishes what we do from say
112		charity
113	Columbo:	[[Mm]]
114	Karis:	Mhm [[yeah]]
115	Ludovic:	It's it's not / charity [[it's]] I've got some / you need some / it's it's sort of more
116		couched in terms of ex-exchange? I guess? / gifting?
117	Karis:	[[Yeah]]
118	Columbo:	I liked it how Amy put it when we were discussing a while back about like um / if uh /
119		you know the rozzers [[showed up or whatever]] and uh had a problem with us we
120		would just sort of say / well / we're just having a picnic with our friends / [[because]]
121		that's what we're doing in a way really it's a bit more / you know /
122	Karis:	[[Chuckles]] [[yeah]]
123	Columbo:	Not many picnics have group names and uh uh a fold out table they keep uh at a
124		[[pub]] um /
125	Interviewer:	[[Chuckles]]
126	Columbo:	Um there's still that sort of aspect of um / It's just that we like to do and it's
127		friendly and there's not really any / there's no pressure on it really other than that
128		we want to try and do it consistently / um / and on the aspect um / of of that of
129		mutual aid a bit and of what you were saying um
130	Karis:	She's pointing at me for the transcripts
131	Columbo:	Laughter / and can the transcript know as well that I'm looking absolutely fabulous
132		today
133	Karis:	Oh [[same]] here
134	Ludovic:	[[Laughter]]
135	Karis:	Can the transcript reflect that I had a haircut
136	Columbo:	Laughter
137	Interviewer:	Let it be known
138	Columbo:	I think one of the one of my favourite / I guess memories of food not bombs and / or
139		something along those lines was um we were doing it and then I think one of the
140		homeless people that we were help- or that we were giving some food to said oh /
141		can I help give out some food as well /

142	Karis:	[[Mhm]]
143	Interviewer:	[[Mm]]
144	Columbo:	[And] that felt a bit more like that that mutual laid thing [and] a bit about like that
145		breaking down the / um / the / um / I suppose barriers *that's a bit a bit liberal
146		speaking* breaking down the barriers [between / laughter] between social class I
147		don't know no but you know breaking down that idea of it being in a socie-like the
148		standard social structure
149	Ludovic:	[[Mm]]
150	Karis:	[No liberalism here] ~louder, mock-angry voice~
151	Karis:	In a way it is already kind of / definitely mutual aid in the way it's carried out just
152		because you know I mean / I'm contributing labour but also I just enjoy being there
153		and kind of talking to people and [anyone] who does come and get stuff or just
154		passes by and everything which is kind of mutual aid in an exchange of less what
155		you might think of in you know in existing capitalist society is like exchanging goods
156		and services but you know like just / uh
157	Interviewer:	[Mm]
158	Karis:	I mean what I'm getting back is not necessarily material I guess /
159	Columbo:	Definitely yeah / no / good conversations / well worth /
160	Interviewer:	Hm / okay well / on / on those kind of themes it made me think of this point / which
161		is / what is anarchism as you understand it? [um]
162	Karis:	[What about] this prompt? / think of a place / an occupation um [chuckles]
163	Columbo:	[Laughter]
164	Interviewer:	Um / yeah it it made / it made me want to ask because you said/ I think you
165		mentioned
166	Karis:	I think I said it was a concept in anarchist political philosophy
167	Interviewer:	Yeah / and um it's interesting because / the food not bombs website doesn't
168		describe itself as [anarchist] explicitly but it does link to anarchist resources so
169	Karis:	[Mhm]
170	Ludovic:	And it is based on um whilst there's no requirement for anyone to be anarchist /
171		there is / you kind of have to um / behave within certain anarchist principles [of]=
172	All:	=[[Mm]]
173	Karis:	=[[Well]] obviously you can only call yourself an anarchist group if you're an elected
174		paying member of the Anarchist International ~sarcastic, authoritative tone~
175	All:	Laughter
176	Ludovic:	You need to bring your membership card
177	Karis:	Yeah I have my anarchist membership card and it's got the correct anarchist logo
178		on it ~sarcastic, authoritative tone~
179	All:	Chuckles
180	Karis:	Not one of those unsanctioned ones
181	Columbo:	I I think as well within the group there is sort of an assumed anarchist
182	Karis:	Mm
183	Columbo:	Um / ideology in like in like within our WhatsApp group / forgetting about the wider
184		food not bombs but just our local one / when I talk to someone in there I'm I go into
185		a conversation assuming yes no / you probably want to break down the political
186		structure et cetera uh=
187	Ludovic:	=See I don't ~surprised, energetic, higher tone of voice~
188	Columbo:	You don't? ~surprised, higher, questioning tone~
189	Ludovic:	No I under it's a very loose / especially because I don't know a lot of people in that
190		group

191	Columbo:	[[Mm]]
192	Interviewer:	[[Mm]]
193	Ludovic:	I assume that people come from all sorts of that the only sort of um / the only ideas
194		that kind of connect them that you know it's non-sexist um non-racist uh non-
195		hierarchical um / group so that those anarchist principles are underpinning but I
196		don't assume everyone there necessarily um uh wants to dismantle the state and
197		that kind of thing
198	Columbo:	Mm interesting
199	Karis:	I think I kind of have a similar kind of thinking on it to <u>participant 3</u> wherein um
200	All:	<i>Laughter</i>
201	Karis:	Wherein like I think there is a kind of assumed consensus politics that I have at
202		least like uh when we stopped off at one person's house um was it yours? The first
203		session I came to when we we stopped at someone's house and *I don't remember
204		who that was* we stopped at someone's house and like they we had some of it
205		there in their kitchen before we carried out with the pot=
206	Columbo:	=that was um Anthea
207	Karis:	Yeah
208	Columbo:	And you know / anonymized person
209	Karis:	We yeah / that was anonymised member of collective um and you know I mean we
210		were talking about like when if we'd been participating recently or like when people
211		got started in food not bombs and someone was like yeah I've like been in
212		anarchism for a while and like / I think I basically assume if someone isn't directly
213		anarchist they're at least like left politically
214	Interviewer:	Mm
215	Karis:	And we basically have the same kind of thinking and goals and not someone is
216		going to be like / I don't expect anyone at least like kind of a core participant in the
217		group because obviously we have a strict in group and out group ~smiling voice~
218	Columbo:	<i>Laughter</i>
219	Karis:	I don't expect someone to be like you know a [tory voter] or someone who's
220		completely clueless about politics I at least expect kind of a shared like / level of
221		understanding of reality
222	Ludovic:	[<i>Chuckles</i>]
223	Columbo:	Mm
224	Interviewer:	Oh sorry just to butt in for a second feel free to use each other's names because it's
225		very=
226	Karis:	=mhm find and replace
227	Interviewer:	Perhaps even easier because then I know who is referring to who
228	Karis:	Yeah but if we constantly call each other different nicknames then it's much harder
229		for us to use find and replace
230	Interviewer:	<i>Laughter</i> / oh sorry Ludovic I cut you off
231	Ludovic:	Oh no no don't worry um I was going to say that even within <u>anarchism</u> there are so
232		many different and [sometimes] very conflicting views say even revolutionary
233		anarchism versus evolutionary anarchism / it's miles apart that
234	Karis:	[Yeah]
235	Karis:	And we love to use it as a prefix yeah I'm an anarcho-syndicalist I can't get along
236		with those anarcho-collectivists
237	All:	<i>Laughter</i>
238	Karis:	But the anarcho-communists They're on thin fuckin ice
239	All:	[[<i>Chuckles</i>]]

240	Karis:	[[Yeah]]
241	Karis:	I mean to get directly back to the prompt I think anarchism even just etymologically
242		just means like the abolition of hierarchy <u>hierarchy</u> / where archy you know / <u>an</u>
243		<u>no</u> <u>an</u> is none and then <u>archy</u> is hierarchy / as opposed to like you know <u>monarchy</u>
244		which is <u>mono</u> is single and then archy authority / so I think it's mostly / the
245		abolition the goal being the of unjust hierarchy would be like the dictionary
246		definition I guess / which I can basically agree with
247	Columbo:	Always feel like I need to do more reading on it but my definition of anarchy
248		probably stems from like the one or two books of um / oh who's the popular one?
249		not the Chomsky
250	Karis:	David Graeber? oh yeah
251	Columbo:	The one or two Chomsky books I've read / which I mean it's kind of vague on what
252		he particularly like in those books he's kind of vague on what he's believes in
253	Karis:	I think he mainly describes himself as a libertarian socialist I mean
254	Columbo:	Yeah but the classical libertarian / the European libertarian / not those sneaky
255		American ones
256	Karis:	Chuckles
257	Columbo:	No anarcho-capitalism for me
258	Karis	I think he said like a socialist in the sense that I don't really believe in the value of
259		this state is how he described it yeah
260	Columbo:	And I think I'm somewhere around there / um although I have different opinions on
261		certain things / I'm not gonna get cancelled like Chomsky
262	Karis:	My favourite bit of Noam Chomsky's writing was when he said me give berries you
263		give me eat give berry smell ~smiling voice~
264	All:	Laughter
265	Karis:	Oh no that was the other guy with the same name
266	Columbo:	Ah damn ~mock-exasperation~
267	Interviewer:	I'm gonna just pause there because we're reaching the 15-minute mark
268	Karis:	Computer delete that entire personal log

Transcript B

1	Interviewer:	Okay / we are we are live once again / um / I think maybe I'll introduce some of the
2		values which I found on the food not bombs global website / which the main
3		espoused values are / vegetarianism / food as a human right / anticapitalism /
4		antiwar / mutual aid / and I basically wanted to ask where did you learn about any of
5		those values? or where were you first exposed to them?
6	Columbo:	Um vegetarianism / I think / I knew it existed and I'm not actually vegetarian myself
7		at the moment / but I guess I-just more and more I've met more and more people
8		that went *yes* it's good to be vegetarian and I heard more and more things that are
9		telling me quite how bad the meat industry is and / um / yeah / I don't / I'm just
10		saying / words / that I'm because I'm avoiding the ability to think
11	Interviewer:	Chuckles
12	Ludovic:	I don't remember how but / I'm not vegetarian now but / but I turned vegetarian
13		when I was fourteen / I think I was just going to some punk gigs and a lot of those
14		other values and all that stuff you know / you'd go to a gig and if it was very DIY
15		people would be bringing some vegetarian food to / or vegan food to give out / um /
16		and a lot of that came from there / so I think it's first just like school subculture type
17		of / thing / and when I was thirteen I think I found / I found peta online and [um] /
18	Columbo:	[[Oh]] ~joke disappointed tone, tone lowers towards end of utterance~
19	Karis:	[[Laughter]]
20	Ludovic:	and [immediately ordered all the stickers and shouting at my mother]
21	Karis:	[[Laughter]]
22	Columbo:	[[Laughter]]
23	Ludovic:	That was / that was why ~said whilst laughing~
24	Karis:	We have to go and put down some stray dogs now I got these stickers
25	All:	Laughter
26	Columbo:	I think I didn't really consider vegetarianism as a thing that I would do until I got to
27		university / because my parents / not being vegetarian / we you know we could eat
28		meals that weren't meat based but they weren't *as good* um /
29	Ludovic:	Chuckles
30	Columbo:	And then I met people that were vegetarian that actually cooked nice food / not to
31		say my parents cooking's bad it's good but but *they they have a reliance on it* /
32		and so like now / I mean like I'm much more vegetarian than I was um and I think it's
33		more possible because I've encountered that actually you can just make nice
34		curries / *that's the thing you can do and you can make them vegetarian or even
35		vegan*
36	Karis:	I think I mean where I first heard of vegetarianism / it's kind of a very you know it's a
37		wide it's a mainstream concept at this point easily so / I would have had it at some
38		point you know when I was my younger I think my mum said she was kind of early
39		into vegetarianism when she was at uni when she was like in the 70s or something /
40		when it was less widespread and there were just like / um specific vegetarian cafes
41		in like Edinburgh which she went to / but then it's become much more mainstream
42		obviously and you know uh/ lots of people will be vegetarian I'm not really a
43		vegetarian either / I think the way I think about is kind of / that there's two
44		motivations to vegetarianism which is like a personal preference where you might
45		kind of feel disgusted at meat / or just like a dietary thing where you don't
46		particularly like eating it and like like you know you want to eat other stuff and then

47		also the political motivations which are obviously very real where like / mass over
48		consumption of meat is kind of / ecologically catastrophic because you know / it's
49		so much less efficient to feed uh animals with crops than just to eat crops directly /
50		and you know like all of that stuff is kind of / meat production is very subsidised by
51		the government which is why it's kind of massively / it's massively over eaten at
52		least in kind of Anglo American society / where in the past it might have been
53		considered luxury and maybe eaten as I don't know like 10% of the diet which is
54		much more appropriate or less / but um / and then also there's specifically in the
55		current way we produce meat where it's very cruel to animals but then also I'd
56		consider like you know with the whole like no ethical consumption under capitalism
57		slogan / which people like and you know / I mean it's not necessarily a form of
58		successful activism to just stop eating meat as an individual / uh / where the same
59		way that you know it might not be a successful form of action to just like you know /
60		I mean not buy from Amazon or something cus I mean they're everywhere there's
61		nothing much you can do about it just by voting with your wallet / but then also you
62		know people who are just not eating meat as a kind of preference thing will also
63		agree with the political ideas and use that as a / as a reason / as well um / I think
64		with how it relates to food not bombs is like / I mean the global organisation has a
65		professed vegetarianism like you said but also um / as an organisation I don't think
66		we're that ideologically like vegan / but I think pretty much all of the foods that we
67		serve will be / which is also just partly for like you know dietary reasons cus it's
68		easier / it's easier to do stuff without allergens in it when you look at vegan recipes
69		and also because you know / like meat will be more expensive as too / so if you're
70		like volunteering to kind of / of buy ingredients and purchase food like just as a
71		member of a collective then it's easier that way
72	Interviewer:	Mm
73	Ludovic:	It's also because then we can share with everyone / [whilst] there will be people
74		who say I eat only [meat / I don't]
75	Karis:	[[Yeah]]
76	Columbo:	[[Mm]]
77	All:	[Laughter]
78	Ludovic:	No there [are] uh / and we do have sandwiches for those people [sometimes]
79	Karis:	[You know like] if [Joe Rogan] came along to our store then we wouldn't be able to
80		cater to him / but everyone else it's kind of a common denominator kind of thing
81	All:	[Laughter]
82	Ludovic:	But we could make him a cup of coffee [and] give him a sandwich <i>laughter</i>
83	Karis:	[[Yeah]]
84	Interviewer:	[[Chuckles]]
85	Karis:	You ever tried DMT? ~Joe Rogan impression~
86	All:	<i>Laughter</i>
87	Columbo:	Um / pull that up ~Joe Rogan impression~
88	Karis:	Oh yeah we should do Joe Rogan bits right now
89	Ludovic:	No but yes [we we're not running] we're not running a canteen [we can't] offer multi
90		/ a lot of options of different hot dishes
91	Karis:	[Interviewer pull that up]
92	Columbo:	[[Mm]]
93	Karis:	[[Yeah]]
94	Karis:	I mean there were also like three at least three other values you mentioned and
95		we've just been talking about vegetarianism=

96	Columbo:	=Anticapitalism / that was one of them
97	Karis:	Yeah
98	Columbo:	I don't know where I learned about anticapitalism / um / I think I was vaguely left
99		wing for a very like as soon as I became politically aware / conscious I was in the
100		[Labour supporting camp] early on / listening to that radio four tutting at those
101		conservatives ~joking voice~
102	Karis:	[Developed consciousness]
103	All:	Chuckles
104	Karis:	Listening to radio four and shaking my head so people know I don't agree ~loud,
105		laughing voice~
106	Columbo:	Well really it falls relatively low / uh / well *it's liberal* um / but I think / I don't know
107		where I learnt about like going further than the left than the you know Labour Party
108		because I just kind of assumed that they were / sort of left wing and then that was
109		good and I didn't really do much more thinking than that / maybe it was when
110		Corbyn was around and I heard what he said and thought oh that's kind of
111		reasonable and then Labour decided that that was not so reasonable / and I went
112		oh maybe these guys aren't as left wing as I thought
113	All:	Chuckles
114	Karis:	I think when I was younger there was kind of a very pervasive / anticapitalism or like
115		casual / kind of communism as a joke like in meme culture and like in secondary
116		you know like people would be like like I'm playing the anthem of the USSR at max
117		volume in the school bus as a joke it's it's the loud version it's funny / and I actually
118		did like you know I memorised some of the some of the that national anthem so I
119		could sing it as a joke whereas you know now I guess I developed it to a point where
120		I memorised the the national anthem because I actually believe in it / but like yeah
121		there was definitely a kind of pervasive sense of like oh communism is funny or like
122		it's good I don't really know what it means but like yeah I love Communism and the
123		hammer and sickle and Marx / but then like also at the same time as that then there
124		was actual leftism where like my form tutor was very good and kind of like you know
125		he ran like the debate society and in like / like in form time as well then he'd kind of
126		talk about political issues and we'd have a discussion about like uh / what was
127		going on in electoral politics as well cos like Columbo said that when uh / that was
128		when Corbyn was leader of the Labour Party / in like you know / it was probably you
129		know 2017 / you know before the 2017 election or just after that when we were
130		talking about it in form times um / and then also I have a very specific memory /
131		which is probably my first memory of thinking anything about politics when I must
132		have been like I don't know / probably still in primary when uh when I was just
133		probably on the way back to my grandma's with my family and uh we were like in a
134		pub getting a meal and I I specifically just thought oh yeah I've thought of I've heard
135		about left and right wing stuff I wonder what that means and I asked my mum like
136		what does left and right wing mean? / And that was like my my first ever
137		engagement with political ideas I guess um / but then I don't know / I don't know if
138		I'm being a bit long winded here / but then actually when I developed political
139		thought was also probably when I came to uni or like earlier than that when /
140		when I mean when lockdown happened definitely I started thinking about it a lot
141		more because I was just you know / spending all my time on the computer reading
142		Wikipedia and stuff / and also earlier than that I probably was thinking about anti
143		capitalism just because I probably developed in a way like where I liked wasting my
144		time looking at Reddit / and you know I'd just I'd be looking at like R slash facepalm
145		or something and I just like laughing at people being wrong / and obviously all of the

146		people being wrong are like conservatives because [you know] I wasn't stupid so I
147		wasn't like watching Ben Shapiro and actually believing that like oh blue haired
148		people are wrong or whatever so you know I'd laugh at like someone saying
149		something stupid about that and then you know / develop into like looking at stuff
150		about how oh no this bad thing has happened / because capitalism like this bad
151		thing has happened because of private healthcare and the USA or whatever / and
152		then you know / when lockdown happened I was reading a lot more about that / and
153		specifically I remember when I came to uni / then the first time I started taking
154		anarchism seriously / whereas before I'd kind of thought of it in a bit of a centrist
155		way where like oh no obviously I don't like authoritarianism but anarchism is just an
156		unserious idea because you need to have some kind of organisation / you know you
157		can't just be running around in the streets or whatever / was when like / I was at uh /
158		I was eating lunch with / like / the Computer Science Society and someone was
159		talking about mutual aid / and just like talking about what mutual aid stuff there is
160		going on in CITY and what they could participate in / and you know / because like
161		they were people I kind of uh trusted and were friends with and I thought oh maybe
162		there's I'll I don't know what mutual aid is so I'll read about that and look at that
163		more and that was kind of how I read about those concepts
164		
165	Ludovic:	[Chuckles]
166	Interviewer:	Mm / so it's a bit like / I guess the usual impacts like school family internet?
167	Karis:	Well family was more where I got like social conservatism from
168	Interviewer:	Mm
169	Karis:	And some kind of somewhat neutrally explanation of like what left and right is / and
170		then also I guess you could say that I developed uh / leftist political ideology as like
171		an opposition to my family
172	Columbo:	I I was the opposite of that
173	Karis:	Yeah
174	Columbo:	My parents Labour voters / apart from mum and mum / voted for Thatcher [but she
175		regrets that]
176	All:	[[<i>Laughter</i>]]
177	Karis:	[[What?]] I need you to tell me more about that at some point ~louder / laughing
178		voice~ if [not now]
179	Columbo:	I don't know much more other than that she says she feels bad about it
180	Karis:	<i>Laughter</i>
181	Ludovic:	You'll have to leave [food not bombs your lineage is not pure] ~laughing voice~
182	All:	[[<i>Laughter</i>]]
183	Karis:	Sorry you're not ideologically pure enough we have to get rid of you / we're gonna
184		have another round of purges I think
185	All:	<i>Laughter</i>
186	Karis:	In the group soon so
187	Columbo:	That you um you mentioned about uh the the Internet and looking at like uh / face
188		palm and whatnot and I I think I I remember
189	Karis:	Murdered by words
190	Columbo:	I remember early on in / when I was younger I was interested in like watching that
191		sort of similar sort of content of people being stupid and then me laughing at them
192		because I was cleverer than them
193	Karis:	Exactly <i>laughter</i>
194	Columbo:	And it started out with like I think / PC versus console debates

195	Karis:	<i>Laughter</i>
196	Columbo:	Um but then I then like / those same people
197	Karis:	It's idiot Nintendo fans ~mock tone of superiority~ / okay now you're a socialist
198		congrats
199	Columbo:	<i>Laughter</i> / and then then it switched over to like / um atheism and that was my era
200		of just being *the most insufferable* I wasn't insufferable about it / I wasn't like
201		Ricky Gervais
202	All:	<i>Chuckles</i>
203	Columbo:	But I you know I I consumed some of that / and then those like those people that
204		were anti religion / pro atheism they on YouTube switched to being [anti woke] like
205		right wingers and it was roughly at that [point I] think like like I caught a little bit of it
206		and was like I'll watch some of this and then I found it rather disturbing and un like
207		uninteresting / so I stopped and then
208	Karis:	[Yeah] ~rising, intrigued tone~
209	Karis:	[The cultural Christianity pipeline]
210	Columbo:	For whatever reason found some criticisms of those people and I think I was
211		interested in it because I'd / come from the other side / and saw that and then that
212		was the you know what was formerly known as bread Tube the the left wing side of
213		YouTube / that sort of I saw some of that and went oh / some of these things are
214		quite interesting and actually / um like I think they talked about subjects where I
215		started questioning yeah some other things that I thought were pretty standard
216	Karis:	I think in an interesting way social conservatism from my family / and also like being
217		like I don't know like a horribly repressed and introverted autistic person kind of
218		informs the development of like leftist uh thought for me because / all of the kind of
219		anti-woke like Ben Shapiro and 4chan stuff it's just like constantly being vulgar and
220		like you know I I didn't I would be looking at like a 4 Chan meme sub / and it was like
221		you know horribly / like they're swearing constantly and they're talking about sex it's
222		[horrible] / but then you know if I looked at more kind of other spaces like I don't
223		know a boring regular meme subreddit or like Tumblr then they would be much
224		more kind of actually like normal people ~'normal' in laughing voice~ but also
225		because you know there's more leftist ideas in that space then I kind of got in to that
226		more / and then I mean my brother was also kind of a Corbyn guy so he was like /
227		arguing with my mum about it when that was kind of uh an active issue / and I would
228		really not know what they were talking about mostly / even though we'd like had
229		discussions a bit about it in like uh / our form in secondary and then kind of after
230		that then you know I became more politically radical and my brother was like the
231		medium voter the median voter / just kind of like you know became like a Bitcoin
232		guy / and he worked at a bank also contradictorally / but then you know like he kind
233		of just agrees with my mum now cos he's like integrated with that but I still kind of
234		like / am in opposition to that I guess
235	Ludovic:	[Chuckles]

Transcript C

1	Karis:	So why did your mum vote with Thatcher? tell us
2	All:	<i>Laughter</i>
3	Columbo:	She hated the norther the north and those bloody coal mines ~mock-angry
4		voice~
5	All:	<i>Chuckles</i>
6	Interviewer:	Um / I wanted / I was thinking we've talked a lot about like / I suppose / your
7		political leanings and how they relate to the group / a question I had planned
8		that kind of weaves in is / how do you think the group is perceived by the
9		public? and are there any misconceptions?
10	Karis:	Hm / well the question we always get immediately is why is it called food not
11		bombs? / and we just kind of mumble about oh well we're serving food but we
12		don't have bombs and we don't like war
13	Columbo:	I think yeah we we go for the joke about / you know we give out food not bombs
14	Karis:	We don't we're not giving out any bombs
15	Columbo:	Yeah
16	Karis:	*If you're looking for bombs you've come to the wrong place*
17	Columbo:	But um / I don't know I I remember talking to one of your / um uh [neighbours
18		once] / because we were picking up food from your house and he commented
19		on the fact that we were we were doing it on a Friday night / and so=
20	Ludovic:	[Oh yeah]
21	Karis:	=She should be at the club
22	Ludovic:	He said oh you'll be feeding all the drunks
23	Columbo:	Yeah / all the drunks / and I thought=
24	Karis:	=Good
25	Columbo:	Yeah I thought why are you so? like it sounded quite=
26	Ludovic:	=Dismissive
27	Columbo:	Dismissive / yeah and I thought why is that so bad? Like / they need food
28	Karis:	Well you know they're morally inferior and they don't [deserve to live]
29	Columbo:	[[No it's true]] / that is true / Yeah whereas me / when I go back to my house
30		and I drink / *that's when it's good*
31	Ludovic:	[[Chuckles]]
32		I just assume people think/ it is a sort of like a crusty project <i>laughter</i>
33	Interviewer:	<i>Chuckles</i>
34	Ludovic:	Because that's what usually is / the the way people see other anarchist
35		projects that I've been involved in / you know / a bunch of fairly homeless
36		looking people / turning up to do something / and you know, especially
37		because we have like a [trailer] with us dragging behind ~laughing voice~
38	All:	<i>Laughter</i>
39	Columbo:	A little raggedy
40	Ludovic:	Although now we look very professional we have a marquee and everything so
41		maybe maybe we'll have that=
42	Karis:	Maybe the perception will change
43	Ludovic:	We'll get the respect we deserve [<i>laughter</i>]

44	Karis:	[Laughter] I kind of would have assumed people saw us as like just like some
45		kind of charity or something / like people from a food bank maybe? I haven't
46		really examined that assumption very much though
47	Ludovic:	They I have been asked a few times if we were a [church] or a charity
48	Karis:	[Yeah]
49	Ludovic:	So that's what people assume first
50	Columbo:	I don't yeah I don't think we sell our anarchist / ideologies very / explicitly
51	Karis:	I think like maybe only once or twice has someone talked to me about like oh
52		it's bad how we're sending weapons to all of these conflicts and Gaza and
53		[stuff] and I've been like yeah agreeing with them and discussing that / most of
54		the time politics doesn't doesn't come up at all / I did I learnt why we're called
55		food not bombs so now I can explain that to people / and talk about how
56		weapons is bad / but um
57	Interviewer:	[Mm]
58	Ludovic:	I think we also / like comparing to another food not bombs group I used to be
59		in we're very deliberately toning down / maybe because it's City it's more it's
60		m- sorry I identified laughter
61	Interviewer:	Oh no=
62	Ludovic:	=You can cut that out
63	Karis:	Maybe cos its beep ~quotes Ludovic, imitates censor beep~
64	Ludovic:	Beep yeah / it's it's so maybe it's because it's a small place / but for example
65		when I was doing the posters for it and there were some comments / um some
66		people said oh you don't want to use that word that's a little bit / don't use the
67		[word protest] or don't use a word you know it's a little bit too inflammatory? /
68		which to me / it seems like very im / like I don't / that doesn't even seem as
69		very / sharp?
70	Columbo:	[[Yeah yeah]]
71	Karis:	[[Mm]]
72	Karis:	I wouldn't have thought that / I didn't realise it was an intentional toning down
73		/ I do know we say that one of our main things is like / we're distributing food
74		as a form of protest
75	Columbo:	Yeah
76	Karis:	Like the government isn't doing it properly
77	Ludovic:	Maybe it wasn't the word um / yeah I don't know what was the word was but it
78		wasn't a very uh=
79	Karis:	Can you quote Lucy Parsons on it by accident?
80	Columbo:	What?
81	Interviewer:	Honestly / no idea who that was
82	Ludovic:	Chuckles so yeah / we don't do things very explicit uh very politically / we
83		could
84	Columbo:	[[We could have some big signs and give out]]
85	Karis:	[[I would be in favour of that]] / this is just a committee discussion now we're
86		just going to decide the future of the group here
87	Columbo:	No yeah I don't=
88	Karis:	I dropped my anarchy symbol ~nasal joke voice~
89	Columbo:	Chuckles I don't think we / yeah I don't know much we sort of hide our/ hide is
90		a bit of a strong word for it but
91	Karis:	Hiding our power levels

92	Columbo:	<i>Chuckles</i> hide our political ideologies / but yeah we don't wear them too
93		openly on our sleeve / I suppose
94	Ludovic:	I mean there's a balance say I don't know if we / put up this big um / you know /
95		pro [Palestine posters] for example right next to a stall I think that would make
96		some people not come up
97	Columbo:	[Mm] Yeah =
98	Karis:	[Cos] they'd assume it was a political thing so they wouldn't want to get the
99		food
100	Ludovic:	[But]
101	Ludovic:	Yeah / and we'd get the people who want to rant coming up <i>laughter</i>
102	Karis:	Yeah / which I wouldn't complain at I like arguing with people ~laughing voice~
103	Ludovic:	But yeah we're putting definitely putting the food forward / [it's not] necessarily
104		wrong.
105	Karis:	[Yeah]
106	Karis:	In big words food *not bombs* <i>chuckles</i>
107	Ludovic:	<i>Laughter</i>
108	Columbo:	Yeah no I think I think when I think about it and and side aspects like that I do /
109		try and balance in my mind how much I want to like be a protest and and be
110		openly a protest and how much I want to focus on getting food to people that
111		need food
112	Karis:	I'm just here to hang out with you and I don't believe in anything ~joking voice~
113	Ludovic:	we're like uh like pride / next time maybe we'll be sponsored by Tesco <i>laughter</i>
114	All:	Laughter
115	Karis:	We're now sponsored by Raytheon <i>laughter</i>
116	Columbo:	But I I don't think they're always in direct conflict but I I do see that there is a
117		possibility that they could / and so I think / I do think about like how we / sell
118		ourselves I suppose or how we how we explain ourselves to people I think that
119		something I think about a bit but / um yeah / I don't know what to say /
120	Interviewer:	I / it's interesting / I didn't think of / the divide between / you know giving out
121		food as an objective / and making a statement about the way food is
122		distributed and the way we want to criticise things and / they you could say
123		clash / in terms of meeting meeting one cancels out the other sometimes um /
124	Karis:	Yeah / I'm nodding lightly
125	Interviewer:	Do you think we should be weighing on one more than the other? / cus like you
126		said Ludovic the last group you were part of was maybe more forward about
127	Ludovic:	But it was in a very big city and it=
128	Karis:	=Where was it? So Interviewer has more work to do=
129	Ludovic:	= <i>Laughter</i> it was / in one of the world's capital cities ~laughing voice~
130	Karis:	Was it in London?
131	Ludovic:	No it was in New York / that's not even a capital city <i>laughter</i> ~laughing voice~
132	Karis:	[[It's the capital of the state]]
133	Ludovic:	[[It was not]] / it was not London ~laughing voice~
134	Columbo:	What if we say every city it wasn't / and then you might have to anonymize all
135		of them because
136	Karis:	<i>Laughter</i> yeah
137	Interviewer:	[[Well]]
138	Columbo:	[[if you don't anonymise them then you / process of elimination
139	Interviewer:	We're free to refer to places that aren't here / that's not a problem

140	Karis:	Okay
141	Columbo:	Okay
142	Karis:	You can just say it was New York
143	Columbo:	Milan
144	Ludovic:	I think we make um=
145	Columbo:	=Barbados *sorry*
146	Ludovic:	Our statement when people come and / =
147	Karis:	=Swansea
148	Ludovic:	And they when they find out that it's free / [and] when they find out that we are
149		not funded / when we have those conversations / um / and when people are
150		like oh are you a charity? and we say we're not we don't get receive funding
151		from anywhere we're just people doing something and that / kind of brings a
152		whole mutual aid thing into focus / we are just people doing a thing
153	Columbo:	[Mm]
154	Columbo:	In in some ways I'd like it to be more political
155	Karis:	Yeah agreed
156	Columbo:	Because / I I do another food thing and that one is so so sort of just / [middling
157		labour] / like sort of vibes
158	Karis:	[Mm chuckles] Mhm
159	Columbo:	They're all lovely but they're just very
160	Karis:	Person I was serving pastries with told me about how she doesn't agree with
161		economic migrants
162	Columbo:	There you go
163	Ludovic:	Ouch
164	Columbo:	Yeah / they / they sort of /
165	Karis:	They have a bit on the banner about community building / which is / good
166		~mild sarcastic tone~
167	Columbo:	Um / but yeah so they're like / in some ways, just for my own personal like / I
168		guess / expression of my political opinions I'd like it to be more more explicitly
169		political um / but I I don't know how how I'd go about that without sort of just
170		putting up a big sign that says down with capitalism etc
171	Ludovic:	Chuckles
172	Karis:	Down with this sort of thing ~mock disapproving tone~
173	Columbo:	Laughter um and and sort of waving that round whilst we give out some food /
174		at which point I'd say maybe I just want to go and walk around and tell people
175		that we're giving out food / because that would be more useful
176	Ludovic:	Well we could have some kind of flyers and [stuff] available on the table
177		without it being a mandatory / massive [fuck off sign]
178	Columbo:	[Mm] [we'd need a second table] at this rate
179	Ludovic:	Hm?
180	Columbo:	We'd need a second table at this rate
181	Ludovic:	Tuts ~in acknowledgement of the issue~
182	Columbo:	*We've got a very busy table*
183	Ludovic:	[[We need to expand]]
184		[[What if we had a]] a place that you could go that was indoors and it was open
185		maybe throughout the working day and maybe we could actually ask for a little
186		bit of money and and uh ah
187	Karis:	Yeah

188	Ludovic:	But you know what
189	Columbo:	Damn it we've made another cafe ~mock frustration~
190	Ludovic:	If we had the bandwidth / we could also express our political identity more by
191		pairing up with actual protests [and] being like okay you want to do this like
192		little protest thing? We're going to bring food
193	Columbo:	[Mm] ~excited tone~ [[that would]] be really good actually I'd be interested in
194		doing that definitely
195	Karis:	[Mm mm]
196	Ludovic:	We don't have massive massive protest encampments here but it does
197		happen sometimes
198	Columbo:	Yeah / there was one recently
199	Karis:	Did food not bombs provide / food for the uh the encampment on campus at
200		all? [last year] cus I wasn't involved with food not=
201	Columbo:	[I think] =but it was not organised / I know a couple members did
202	Karis:	Mhm
203	Columbo:	But I don't know how / but it wasn't like a / us named will work with you sort of
204		thing / um /
205	Interviewer:	Maybe / maybe a sort of closing topic on this
206	Karis:	E-mails
207	Interviewer:	This discussion / um I also wanted to ask about how people felt about the
208		group structuring / I suppose in principle like we've already talked about the
209		the lack of hierarchy but then also in practice like / how how do you feel about
210		the experience of being part of that structure?
211	Karis:	I think it's basically good
212	All:	Chuckles
213	Karis:	I do have to condemn food not bombs for reaction / because having admins in
214		the WhatsApp group is a form of hierarchy
215	All:	Chuckles
216	Columbo:	That is true / [[yeah but I enjoy it because I'm one of the admins]]
217	Karis:	[[I think it basically works and people are chill]] ah
218	Columbo:	Ah yes / um I think it / it sometimes falls on a- as I said there was a sort of a
219		close group of people that [that do it] and there's sort of / there are there is a
220		slight hierarchy to the number of like how much people how much time
221		people put in / um and sometimes that can like we I think we've we've
222		explicitly tried to avoid it in a lot of ways / by saying don't overwork yourself to
223		people / me included / um at times / which is good and important /
224	Karis:	[Mm]
225	Ludovic:	I find it very comfortable because I could just / when I came in I was like oh
226		shall I do this? / and people were like yeah [so I] could just [choose] how much
227		or how little I wanted to do / and that was comfortable / but to some degree
228		you also / that organisation and very very much depends on whether people
229		have it in them / to put some structure in place / because the structure is not
230		the same as hierarchy right? ~"yeah" in a nonchalant tone~
231	Columbo:	[Mm] no yeah
232	Ludovic:	For example we could definitely do with a more robust um / kind of structure
233		for organising who's coming who's coming when? just so so much work
234		doesn't fall on the shoulders of the same people over and over again
235	Columbo:	Definitely

236 237	Ludovic:	But we are talking about it it's we are developing a <i>chuckles</i> non hierarchical solution to /
238 239 240 241 242 243 244 245 246	Columbo:	Yeah I think I I see some people cooking a lot and I I go oh I think / it like / when people do I normally try and check and say look you don't have to if it's too much and people normally say oh yeah no it's okay I'm I'm happy to I've I've got the spare time and kitchen and whatnot um but I do / always think about it or we should try and fix this and make it as as u-I guess not uniform but as as spread out as possible not only for the for the sake of um / just sort of saving people's mental energy a bit and and giving people more time because it can take up a fair bit of time out of your day to cook up a whole thing
247	Ludovic:	Yeah, there is a difference between thinking oh I want to do this
248	Columbo:	Mm
249 250	Ludovic:	Versus thinking oh I've got to do this because otherwise it's not going to be anyone to do this
251	Columbo:	Yeah
252	Ludovic:	And the latter you lean too heavily on the latter and at some point you burn out
253 254 255	Columbo:	Definitely yeah / and I think that's the thing I worry about but it's I suppose that's a slightly different hierarchy but it does kind of interact and mingle with it a bit and structure yeah
256 257	Ludovic:	I wouldn't say it's hierarchical because ultimately it doesn't mean that say for example you are there a lot right? Both of you
258	Columbo:	Mm
259 260	Ludovic:	It does not mean that / there isn't a feeling that you have more of the say over things because of that
261	Columbo:	[[Yeah that's true]]
262	Karis:	[[Like if anyone else wanted to be there more anyone would stop them]]
263	Columbo:	No yeah
264	Karis:	Or if we wanted to be there less anyone would stop us
265	Columbo:	I suppose so yeah
266	Interviewer:	Yeah, I think something to pick up on there is the feeling of obligation versus
267	Karis:	Mm
268 269 270 271 272	Interviewer:	But like you said like someone has to pick up slack or someone volunteers to do it / yeah I think a theme there was like to what degree is it I feel I have to do this versus I want to / which maybe isn't an important binary to focus on but it interests me
273	Ludovic:	We will follow the commitment
274	Columbo:	Yeah
275	Ludovic:	But yeah but balance has to be right
276 277 278 279	Karis:	I think for me it's very much I want to / because I mean I can't cook at all so I don't really contribute in that way / and there are always other people there so I don't feel like it would really be like inoperable without me but I do / I go cus I want to do that yeah
280	Interviewer:	Mm
281 282	Columbo:	No yeah I think it would continue on without me but I do I do feel a certain obligation to like I've been doing it since we restarted in [the city] I=
283	All:	[Chuckles]
284	Ludovic:	=[[Moscow]]

285	Karis:	=[[In CITY]] you can say CITY now it'll be censored
286	Columbo:	So yeah no but I do I do think that um / there's a certain like level of
287		commitment that because I've been at it since we've restarted / I feel like I
288		kind of like to go when I whenever I can I have missed a couple of the recent
289		ones / but I had good reasons um <i>chuckles</i> um uh I don't I don't feel <u>obligated</u>
290		obligated in the sort of sense of I can go and do other things if I need / if I want
291		to do them or need to do them / but there's a certain amount of I'd like to go
292	each week because it means that I can do some of the things that that need to	
293	be done um / like we have access to a [shed] so it means that we can store	
294	things and we have a dishwasher so we can wash the dishes which we tend to	
295	do a fair bit which is quite good	
296	Karis:	[Yeah] and the padlock code to the shed is this and the address of the shed is
297		this

Consent Form and Participant Information Sheet

Title of Project	What does stance analysis reveal about co-constructed group identity in Food Not Bombs
Researcher/Department name and contact details	Isaac Woolf
University contact details	York St John University, Lord Mayors Walk, York YO31 7EX. Tel: 01904 624624

Part 1: Project Details	
Introduction	As both a student and a member of Food Not Bombs (FNB), I am interested in how the group reaches a consensus on identity (a political/ideological identity).
What is the purpose of the project?	The purpose of this project is to find out how group identity works in the context of the FNB activism. What exactly is FNB political identity? And do FNB members reach an agreement on what it is? If so, how?
What can I expect?	You will be invited to participate in an informal focus group interview in a chosen location (e.g. a local café in York). I will be recording an informal conversation about a few topics relating to the volunteer work and FNB group. Participants can talk as much or as little as they want, changing topic if they feel like doing so. The whole process can be expected to be between 60 and 90 minutes approximately.
Why have I been asked to take part?	You have been asked to take part based on your expressed interest and membership of FNB. As a member of the group, you will have the insight into the groups' work that this project is focusing on.
Is taking part voluntary?	Choosing to take part is completely voluntary, choosing not to participate, or withdrawing from the study will not affect how you are treated. You may withdraw at any time. If you do not wish to disclose information, or discuss certain topics, you are under no obligation to do so.
Are there any risks?	No risks
What information will be collected?	The interview will be recorded, recording may be paused for convenience throughout the session. All participants will be anonymised, as well as the location and identifying details of this FNB branch. Any identifying information relating to people or specific locations within the recording will be redacted.
Who will have access to the information?	All data will be accessible only by myself. All personal identifying information will be anonymised. Data will be treated with complete confidentiality, with the only exception being if any persons express harmful intent towards another.
Where will the information be stored?	Data will be stored as an audio recording. Data will be stored on the secure York St John University OneDrive system under password protection. A transcription of the conversation will also be produced, with the same anonymisation, this will be stored in the same location as the audio recording. The transcription will be included in the final written project. The

	final project will be stored on my personal computer, under password protection.
How long will the information be retained?	Audio recordings will be kept until transcription has finished (up to 01/08/2025). Transcription of conversation will be kept for up to 10 years under password protection on my personal computer.
Ethical information	
What happens next?	Communication concerning the study will be made either through the WhatsApp group chat dedicated to organisation of the focus group, or via WhatsApp direct on request of the participant should they want to discuss an issue confidential to the group. The study will run from January 2025 until August 2025. Participants will be invited to meet for a concluding overview of the study's findings, as well as a presentation of the study held on the York St John campus.

Part 2: Privacy Notice	
All personal information gathered and held by York St John University (detailed in Part 1 of this Participant Information Sheet) is treated with the care and confidentiality required by the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. For the purposes of processing your personal information, the data controller is York St John University. The University's Data Protection Officer is the University Secretary and Registrar.	
Legal basis for processing your information	
Additional condition for processing special category data	
Additional condition for processing criminal conviction/offence data	
Your rights in relation to personal data	Under the GDPR, you have a right to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be kept informed as to how we use your data; • request a copy of the data we hold about you via a Subject Access Request; • update, amend or rectify the data we hold about you; • change your communication preferences; • ask us to remove your data from our records; • object to or restrict the processing of your information • raise a concern or complaint about the way in which your information is being used.
Any questions or concerns?	If you have any questions or concerns about the way we are collecting and using your personal data we request that you contact the University by emailing: gov.compliance@yorksja.ac.uk . You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) about the way in which we process your personal data. Details can be found at: https://ico.org.uk .

Part 3: Participant Consent		Yes	No
(3a) I have read and understood the project details and have been able to ask questions about the project and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction.			
(3b) I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this project and understand that I can refuse to answer questions and I can withdraw from the project at any time, without having to give a reason.			
(3c) I understand what the information I provide will be used for, how it will be stored and how long it will be retained.			
(3d) I give my permission for the information specified in (3e) to be retained by the University after the project has ended so that it can be used for future research and learning.			
(3e) Information to be retained	The university will not retain data past the dates which I will be holding it.		
Name of Participant			
Signature			
Date			

If you have any concerns, or a complaint regarding this research, please contact our independent chair Sharon Jagger at York St John University. E-mail: s.jagger@yorks.ac.uk

If you have any questions or concerns about the way we are collecting and using your personal data, please contact the University by emailing: gov.compliance@yorks.ac.uk