I'M LIKE, "REALLY? YOU WERE HOMESCHOOLED?" QUOTATIVE VARIATION BY HIGH SCHOOL TYPE AND LINGUISTIC STYLE

NOLA STEPHENS
Covenant College

LAUREN HALL-LEW
University of Edinburgh

VICKIE SHAMP ELLIS
Oklahoma Baptist University

ABSTRACT: Despite an emphasis on the high school environment in explaining the linguistic choices of young people, little is known about the sociolinguistic effects of nontraditional schooling, such as homeschooling. This study examines the use of quotative *be like* in interviews with undergraduates from different high school backgrounds (homeschool, private, public). Because of possibly having reduced experience with the social orders that structure conventional school communities, homeschooled students could show a distinct sociolinguistic profile. This study also considers other potential predictors of quotative use, including the speaker's use of a "nerd" persona style. Overall, the results indicate that homeschooled students developed a quotative system very similar to that of their peers. Schooling type did not strongly predict *be like* use, although it appears to be related to persona style, which was a significant predictor. Qualitative evidence also points to peer-group differences among homeschooled students as a possible predictor. These findings call for more attention to school experience when studying the development and use of socially marked variables. The results also highlight the relevance of persona-based factors in a thorough account of linguistic variation, and they provide evidence that quotative *be like*, while pervasive in the speech of young adults, still carries social meaning.

KEYWORDS: quotative verbs, education, persona style, gender, language change

PREVIOUS WORK IN VARIATIONIST SOCIOLINGUISTICS has shown that high school is a rich environment for the construction of social and linguistic styles (e.g., Eckert 1989; Wagner 2007; Bucholtz 2011; Drager 2015). However, little work has directly compared the speech of students who attend different kinds of high schools (e.g., public school versus private school), except in cases where that difference was taken as an index of socioeconomic status (e.g., Lawson, Scobbie, and Stuart-Smith 2011; Carmichael 2014). Might

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there be meaningful stylistic differences between schooling types that index meanings other than social class? We know that students within a single high school typically participate in different communities of practice and that these often correlate with different linguistic styles (e.g., Eckert 2000; Drager 2015). We have also seen linguistic differences between high school communities of practice persevere into college (Wagner 2014), and we have seen linguistic differences between types of high schooling that persevere into later life, at least within a single geographical region (e.g., Moore and Carter 2015; Dickson and Hall-Lew 2017). But are linguistic differences reflected more broadly among students from different kinds of schools, even across regions? In other words, is there something particular to the social landscape of one kind of high school that results in stylistic differences between that type and another type? Our work seeks to address this question by taking a regionally diverse speaker sample of roughly similar socioeconomic standing and considering how the type of high school one attends might correlate with the use of linguistic innovations. In particular, we ask whether college students' high school backgrounds influence their use of quotative verbs.

There are several reasons for thinking that high school type might affect linguistic style. The practice of taking school type to be an indicator of socioeconomic status is an informative starting point. Parent income and student ability are, at least in some contexts, significantly higher for private school students than for public school students (Epple, Figlio, and Romano 2004), such that there are some contexts in which attending a private school is taken as a direct indicator of wealth. Decades of work have shown a relationship between socioeconomic status and linguistic style, in terms of both classic (Labov 1966; Trudgill 1972; Macaulay 2001) and agentive notions of style (Eckert 2000; Coupland 2007; Becker 2014) and in terms of a range of representations of socioeconomic status. Given that the broader character of a school or a school type might be shaped by the socioeconomic status it is associated with, there is reason to hypothesize that acts of stylization (e.g., Coupland 2007) may be constrained in different ways across schools or school types. This might be visible in, and perhaps even attained by, differences in language use, both qualitative and quantitative.

Beyond associations with class, another reason to explore the influence of high school type on linguistic innovation is that students who are socialized in unconventional high schools, such as different types of homeschools, may find themselves in a markedly different linguistic environment during the school day than their more conventionally educated peers, and there's every reason to think that this might have stylistic effects as well. In a survey of homeschoolers and public schoolers ages 12–18, Chatham-Carpenter (1994, 19) found that "the home schoolers reported more older [contacts]

than peer contacts, demonstrating that the home schooling process does have the potential to restructure a child's social world, in providing the home schooler more mixed-age than same-age interaction and socialization opportunities." A few studies also indicate that some homeschooled students feel disconnected from fashion trends and are less influenced by their peers than traditionally schooled students (see Medlin 2000). If homeschoolers find themselves cut off from fashion trends, for example, then it is conceivable that they might also be relatively isolated from the linguistic styles that characterize their generation.

Despite the careful attention that sociolinguists have given to adolescence and the high school experience, little is known about the way sociolinguistic variables are acquired and evaluated by young people who have unconventional high school experiences (but see Starr et al. 2017). We know of no previous variationist analysis specifically comparing the speech of homeschooled students with students with more traditional schooling backgrounds, but there are a number of reasons why we might expect homeschooled students to be sociolinguistically interesting. If homeschooled students take their parents as their primary models for linguistic choices, then they should exhibit a more conservative linguistic system than their peers from public and private schools. However, homeschoolers' experiences encompass much richer social networks than just their parents and siblings, and the nature of these networks varies widely (as it does for students in public and private schools). Homeschooled students vary widely in the number of siblings they have (from zero to eight in our sample), and many spend time in nonsibling peer groups (e.g., homeschool cooperative classes, sports teams, social clubs, and church youth groups). Is participation in a more conventional high school context necessary for the adoption of linguistic innovations, or can homeschool experiences foster the same level of participation in an ongoing change in progress?

In social contexts where the experience of having been homeschooled is common enough to reach a community's level of awareness, having been homeschooled is also a social characteristic that can take on social meaning. This again has potential linguistic implications in terms of the imagined style of the homeschooler. Some of the participants who were interviewed in the current study volunteered observations about stylistic differences among students from different educational backgrounds:

1. Homeschoolers and private schoolers like they always seem like, you know, they're always very, like they're looking proper, like they talk properly, like which is all great but like, public schoolers are a little more, "Oh I don't need to have everything." So there's definitely a little more, a casualness in

how they talk. Don't sound like they always need to be, you know, presenting themselves perfectly. [P08, homeschool]

2. I think people from, people who've been public-schooled definitely seem a lot more kind of pop culture savvy. A little more mainstream maybe. [P50, private school]

When asked specifically whether participants noticed any differences in how students from different high school types talked, responses varied. Those who claimed to notice a difference were generally unable to pinpoint specific features, with the exception of cussing:[1]

3. INTERVIEWER: In terms of language differences, would you point to anything specifically?
   P08: I mean public schoolers obviously cuss more than the other–
   INTERVIEWER: I didn't know that.
   P08: Definitely. They definitely do.

Any difference in the use of other specific linguistic variables either lies below the level of awareness or is at least not salient enough to be spontaneously offered in an interview context. While there might be a recognized homeschooler persona or homeschooler style, any linguistic correlates of such a style have not been specified.

In comparing the speech of college students from different high school backgrounds, we chose to focus our analysis on the use of verbs that introduce quotations. Quotative verbs have come into focus in the sociolinguistic literature since new quotative verbs were first noted in the early 1980s (Butters 1980, 1982). The rise in the use of the quotative *be like* (4a) is particularly remarkable, and it appears to have largely won out against other innovative quotatives like *go* (4b) and *all* (4c and 4d) (see Buchstaller et al. 2010). In fact, the rise of *be like* across the English-speaking world has been regarded as "possibly the most vigorous and widespread change in the history of human language" (Tagliamonte 2012, 248).

4. Innovative English Quotative Verbs
   a. BE LIKE: It was just one day I woke up and I WAS LIKE, "Okay, I can go there now." [P66, homeschool]
   b. GO: But if I saw a name I didn't know, I would tell my parents and they'd GO, "Oh yeah, we're not sending you there, not a good– not a good school." [P10, homeschool]
   c. BE ALL: She'S ALL "What do you mean, gum?" [Rickford et al. 2007, 14]
   d. BE ALL LIKE: And she'S ALL LIKE, "Well you HAVE to. Are you allergic to them?" [Rickford et al. 2007, 21]

The quotative system is an especially good candidate to test the idea that high school type might influence linguistic style, since "the time for acquiring the relevant *social* constraints on *be like* is during the high-school years" (Tagliamonte and D'Arcy 2004, 506).

Quotative *be like* is also an attractive choice for our study because recent work in sociolinguistics has extensively documented its use and development. For example, we know that *be like* occurs in the speech of English speakers from different regional, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds (e.g., Buchstaller and D'Arcy 2009; Cukor-Avila 2002; Drager 2015; Macaulay 2001). Moreover, many studies indicate that women and girls lead men and boys in the use of quotative *be like* (e.g., Romaine and Lange 1991; Macaulay 2001; Tagliamonte and D'Arcy 2004; Barbieri 2009; Bucholtz 2011), though others show the reverse or no difference (see Blyth, Recktenwald, and Wang 1990; Ferrara and Bell 1995; Dailey-O'Cain 2000; Singler 2001; Barbieri 2007; Buchstaller and D'Arcy 2009).

Research on quotative verbs has also carefully considered more local, situated social factors like community of practice and style. The results are remarkably similar despite being based in disparate locations across the English-speaking world. In her interviews in the mid-1990s, Bucholtz (2011) found that stylistic orientation (toward the styles labeled "alternative," "hip hop," "nerd," "normal," and "preppy") influenced how students in a public high school in Northern California used quotative verbs. "Nerds" and "preppy" students used *be like* less often than average, though it was still their most frequent quotative, followed by *say* for "nerds" (54.9% *be like* vs. 25.6% *say*) and *be all* for "preppy" students (53.5% *be like* vs. 23.6% *be all*). Interestingly, the two participants with "the nerdiest styles" never used *be like* (Bucholtz 2011, 104). Similarly, Buchstaller's (2015, 477–78) interview data from the northeast of England demonstrated that "some younger speakers shun the robust trend towards quotative *be like* when indexing stances of intellectuality, nerdness, professionalism, or eruditeness." Of the 11 communities of practice identified in Drager's (2015) ethnography of a girls' high school in New Zealand, the most comparable to these "nerdy" groups is "The Geeks," the group who was "expected to try hard in school" (45), although the ethnographic details suggest that they were not embodying nerdy styles to the same degree as in Bucholtz's and Buchstaller's studies. The key predictive factor in Drager's study was a binary split between the girls who socialized in the school's common room ("CR girls") and those who did not ("NCR girls"). The Geeks were one of the NCR groups, and their name had been given to them by the CR girls. Drager's study found that quotative *be like* was slightly more common among the CR girls than the NCR girls and that the phonetic realization of *be like* was robustly predicted

by whether the speaker was a CR girl or an NCR girl.

Sociolinguistic research on quotatives also indicates robust age effects. Although an individual's use of *be like* has been shown to peak during their midteens, use remains relatively high into young adulthood (Cukor-Avila 2002; Tagliamonte and D'Arcy 2007). Key to the possible homeschooler experience, however, is the fact that all of the parents of the college students analyzed here either entered adolescence before *be like* became dominant in the 1990s or were among the first generation of *be like* users (see Buchstaller 2015; Tagliamonte, D'Arcy, and Louro 2016). In either case, this parental generation is unlikely to use *be like* as much as the young adults who comprise our participant sample. This prediction is also supported by evidence of age-grading with *be like*. Buchstaller (2015, 468) found that speakers over 30 "seem to be turning their back on the vigorous change" (see also Tagliamonte and D'Arcy 2004), although others have demonstrated some evidence for life-span change rather than age-grading (e.g., Barbieri 2009). For our purposes, the important observation is that while current college students are likely to maintain high rates of *be like* use, it is extremely unlikely that their parents (if they acquired *be like* at all) use it with the same frequency or in the same way as the members of their peer group. Thus, this variable is very likely to distinguish the speech of young adults from the speech of their parents, making it a useful linguistic variable for comparing homeschooled students to students from more traditional schooling backgrounds.

The present study analyzes the use of quotative *be like* among American college students based on a sample of students who came from different types of high schools but were all studying at the same college in the southeastern United States in 2015, when the interviews were conducted. We compare participants who were homeschooled for all four years of high school to those who were educated in private or mainstream public schools throughout high school to see whether homeschooled students orient to linguistic styles in the same way as their peers from public and private schools. Specifically, do young adults who were homeschooled use *be like* with the same frequency and in the same way as the young adults who represent more typical participants in sociolinguistic studies? Though homeschool situations vary widely and specific predictions about these students' quotative system are not entirely straightforward, we hypothesized that homeschoolers might show a distinct sociolinguistic profile in comparison to both groups, possibly as a result of having reduced access or exposure to peers and the social orders that structure school communities (see Chatham-Carpenter 1994; Medlin 2000).

The results show that the homeschooled students have a quotative system that is actually very similar to that of their peers, rather than to the rates we would predict for their parents. Even relatively limited exposure to peer-

based linguistic norms seems to lead to the robust adoption of this linguistic change. The data further suggest that among homeschoolers the amount of exposure to peers in a school setting may influence the acquisition of social constraints. Furthermore, we find that, while variation is not predicted by schooling type, it is predicted by the speaker's stylistic orientation toward or away from an "academic" or "nerd"' linguistic style and that this style may be more typical of private-school educated students as compared to public-schooled and homeschooled students. We consider how high school experience is reflected in the linguistic styles students employ during their college years, regardless of whether or not they were homeschooled.

METHODS

The data for this study were extracted from a set of one-on-one interviews that were part of a larger study (Ellis 2016, 2017) investigating how homeschooled students at three different Christian colleges and universities chose an institution for their higher education. The interviews used in the current study were carried out in the autumn of 2015 at a small Christian liberal arts college in the southeastern United States. This particular college was chosen for the larger study because of its relatively high proportion of students who were homeschooled prior to attending college. According to the college's website, approximately 25% of the student body in 2015 had been homeschooled, whereas homeschoolers make up an estimated 3% of the United States' K–12 population (Redford et al. 2016).[2] Of the three, only this particular institution was used for the current linguistic analysis because the interviews at the other two institutions had already been conducted by the time IRB approval was granted for the linguistic portion of this study.

Participants were recruited from undergraduate courses in composition, linguistics, and psychology and were given extra credit for participating.[3] Of the 66 undergraduate students interviewed, we analyze only the 57 participants who were raised in the United States and attended only one type of schooling (private, public, or home) throughout all of high school. We further excluded the data from the two participants who did not identify as racially white, since quantitative comparisons of race or ethnic identity were not possible, and race and ethnicity have been previously found to pattern with quotative use (e.g., Singler 2001; Cukor-Avila 2002; D'Arcy 2010).[4] Finally, one participant (a private-schooled man from the South) did not contribute to the sample because he did not produce any instances of quoted speech; we will return to him when discussing the results from the other speakers. The final data set consisted of 54 interviews (36 women,

18 men; mean age = 19.6), each of which supplied 1–39 tokens of quoted speech (mean = 13.2 tokens; see table 1). Half (27) of the participants were homeschooled for high school, 14 attended private high schools, and 13 attended public high schools.[5]

The interviewer was the third author (Ellis), a white, female professor in her 50s who was born and raised in rural north Texas, and the interviews were conducted individually in a quiet space in the campus library. After providing written consent, participants completed a written demographic questionnaire, which included questions about the type of schooling they received for each grade level. Homeschooled students were also asked to specify the components of their homeschool education, which included, for example, parent-taught courses, homeschool cooperative classes, college classes, and online classes.

The interview questions centered around how participants chose which college or university to attend. Each interview began with a general question about the participants' K–12 experiences and then moved to more specific questions about the factors (family, friends, campus visits, etc.) that influenced their college choice. These questions, while designed with the larger project in mind, were particularly successful at eliciting narrative sequences that often favor the use of *be like* over other quotatives (see Buchstaller 2015, 474). On average, the interviews lasted around 17 minutes (range = 9–26 minutes).[6] The interviews were recorded on an iPad using Voice Recorder by TapMedia Ltd and transcribed by two trained undergraduate research assistants using ELAN (Brugman and Russel 2004).[7] The extraction and coding of quotative verbs was carried out by one of the research assistants and checked by the first author (Stephens).

All tokens of quotative verbs were initially included in the analysis except for those that occurred with the dummy subject *it* ($n = 63$). Previous work has argued that quotatives with nonreferential subjects require the choice of *be like* for the quotative verb (see Singler 2001; Tagliamonte and D'Arcy

TABLE 1
Number of Participants (and Tokens) by Participants' Schooling, Gender, and Persona Style

	Men		*Women*		TOTAL
	"Nerd"	*Other*	*"Nerd"*	*Other*	
Public	1 (3)	3 (29)	3 (25)	6 (74)	13 (131)
Private	3 (22)	2 (29)	5 (101)	4 (30)	14 (182)
Homeschool	7 (24)	2 (11)	8 (62)	10 (117)	27 (214)
TOTAL	11 (49)	7 (69)	16 (188)	20 (221)	54 (527)

2004; Tagliamonte, D'Arcy, and Louro 2016) and therefore lie outside of the envelope of variation. Of the 63 quotative tokens with dummy subjects in our data, 56 occurred with *be like* (as in 5a), five with *be* and not *like* (5b), and two with highly infrequent quotative verbs followed by *like* (5c and 5d).

5. Example tokens with dummy subjects
   a. That was really when it was like, "Hey, it's possible for me to go there, and that's where I wanna go." [P61, homeschool]
   b. For my dad it was mostly just, "What kind of education will you be getting?" [P51, public school]
   c. But there was not much hesitation or doubt when it came to like, "Alright it what– this is where I need to be." [P65, homeschool]
   d. And then it really felt like, "Yes, I am– I feel welcome here at college." [P02, homeschool]

Because of the skew in the data toward first- and third-person subjects, we also excluded all tokens where the grammatical subject was second person (n = 20) or ambiguous (n = 2). We then combined all first-person forms together (n = 262) and all third-person forms together (n = 328), making PERSON a binary factor encompassing both singular and plural forms.

We also excluded 110 quotative tokens that fell into one of the following frames where it was not possible to code for grammatical person or verb tense (6 and 7):

6. Function words (n = 81): The quotative followed a function word such as a conjunction, determiner, preposition, or complementizer. Tokens in this category sometimes included modifiers or discourse markers between the function word and the quotative.
   a. Most of my visits were just family business, and "may as well walk around the college while we're up there." [P39, private school]
   b. When you talk to people and it comes up that you were homeschooled, there's kind of the, "Oh, you were homeschooled, that's, like was that real school? Like is this hard?" [P65, homeschool]
   c. Yeah, cuz it was just like from, "I'm not going here," to like "I'm going here." [P66, public school]
7. Other *like* (n = 29): The quotative followed *like* without a copula or other function word such that it was not possible to determine if the *like* was a discourse marker, a discourse particle, or a quotative.
   a. I don't think. No, I don't think I notice it, but I think that's just cuz I haven't really been like paying attention, like, "Are you homeschooled? Are you not?" [P58, homeschool]
   b. It was just kind of like, you know, part of the name, like you know, "We're a Christian college and we've got this stuff if you're into that, but if you're not, you know, it's okay." [P50, private school]

In keeping with previous work (e.g., Tagliamonte and D'Arcy 2004), we included quotative tokens when there was no overt quotative verb as long as it was still possible to code for the grammatical person and verb tense. This included cases like (8a), where the subject was overt and the verb tense could be inferred ("no verb," $n = 6$) and cases like (8b), where both the subject and tense were absent but inferable ("zero," $n = 10$).

8. Examples tokens with no overt quotative verb
   a. And um I went, just of a spur of the moment thing, cuz they were wanting, they [third person, past progressive], "Oh we have one more spot; who wants to go to [college name]?" [P30, private school]
   b. It had a circle around some equation, and a note on it. ø [third person, simple past] "My professor won a Nobel Prize for this." [P67, homeschool]

In contrast to some previous studies (e.g., Cukor-Avila 2002; Tagliamonte and D'Arcy 2004), but in line with others (e.g., Bakht 2010), zero forms were relatively rare in this data set. In the results that follow, we include these 16 tokens, all of which are coded as "other" and grouped together with all other quotatives that are not *be like* (e.g., *say*, *think*, *know*).

Previous studies have often also included a factor representing whether or not a quotative was accompanied by mimetic reenactment, and in some cases, it has been found to be the strongest predictor of *be like* usage (Buchstaller and D'Arcy 2009; D'Arcy 2010). Despite the likely importance of this factor in studies of *be like* more generally, we were unable to code for mimesis in the current data set, due to the lack of information about gestures and facial expressions. While we initially attempted coding for mimesis only in terms of voicing effects, as in previous work, occurrences were so rare that it seemed unlikely that we would obtain the statistical power necessary for an analysis of the variable, which was thus left for future work.

Finally, we recoded all verb tenses other than simple past and historical present as "other." This group included modals ($n = 50$), gerunds ($n = 24$), and fewer than 12 tokens each for future, nonfinite, past passive, past perfect, past progressive, present perfect, and present progressive tenses (see the appendix). There were no tokens of simple present, which is unsurprising given that the interview questions focused on participants' past experiences with choosing a college. The resulting factor of verb TENSE has three levels, as shown in table 2.

Our social factors included participants' outward presentation of social GENDER (binary) and their stated history of SCHOOLING type (public, private, home). We further categorized the schooling type of homeschoolers as either homeschooling that occurred WITH PEERS (i.e., in face-to-face cooperative classes and/or college classes; $n = 16$, with 146 quotative tokens) or HOME

TABLE 2
Token Frequencies for Grammatical person and Verb tense

	Simple Past	*Historical Past*	*Other*	TOTAL
First person	157	56	49	262
Third person	130	67	68	265
TOTAL	287	123	117	527

ONLY (n = 11, with 68 quotative tokens). This difference between types of homeschooling experiences is examined at a descriptive level only, due to a lack of statistical power. A third social factor, PERSONA STYLE, was included based on previous research indicating its significance as a predictor of quotative use. Previous studies on the use of *be like* among high school students have typically focused on variation among students attending the same high school. In these cases, the stylistic orientation of the speaker was a robust predictor of *be like* use. In particular, high school students who were seen to orient toward an "intellectual elite" persona (Bakht 2010), "nerd" persona (Bucholtz 2011), or "erudite" persona (Buchstaller 2015) used *be like* significantly less than peers who oriented to the stylistic practices of other personae. We take these three particular personae to be roughly comparable, at least to the extent that they motivate the inclusion of an additional binary predictor in our statistical analysis: PERSONA STYLE ("nerd," non-"nerd"). We adopt the term *nerd* here because it is an established term from the literature and was used in one of the interviews analyzed; none of the other terms from the literature, nor any other relevant terms, appeared in the data. We use the term PERSONA STYLE to distinguish this factor from the style factor more common in traditional sociolinguistics (e.g., spontaneous speech vs. read speech).

The nature of our speaker sample further motivated the inclusion of PERSONA STYLE as a factor. Although these data were collected among college students (rather than high school students, as is common in previous work) and although we were unable to draw on ethnographic evidence of stylistic practice, the interviews themselves were ideal for operationalizing persona style. Because each speaker was being interviewed about how they chose their college by an interviewer who is an academic, the data represent speech obtained in a discursive context that is maximally constructed to elicit stances toward or away from academic topics. Speakers were directly positioned to present themselves as more or less academically oriented, contributing to the construction of something more or less akin to a "nerd" dpersona. This type of persona construction was evidenced not only in what they said in answer to the interview questions, but also in how they said it.

With respect to the former, when asked to give reasons for their choice of college, participants often gave academic reasons (e.g., coursework, professors, academic programs), though nonacademic ones (e.g., community, location, sports, social networks) were common as well.

Some students gave both types of reasons, and the primacy of one over the other was not always clear, or even relevant. Therefore, we operationalize persona style here with reference to the linguistic choices participants made during the interview. In particular, participants were coded for their use of a "nerd" persona style based exclusively on their use of another linguistic feature often tied to the construction of this style: "latinate and learned lexis" (Buchstaller 2015, 476; see Benor 2001; Bucholtz 2011). We measured the degree to which each participant used "latinate and learned lexis" by calculating each speaker's frequency of use of academically oriented words, which included all and only the following lexical items used in relation to academic topics: *academic(s)*, *academically*, *challenge(s)*, *challenged*, *challenging*, *course(s)*, *honor(s)*, *institution(s)*, *liberal arts*, *professor(s)*, *rigor*, *rigorous(ly)*, and *scholarship(s)*. We included all tokens of these words that were used in an academically oriented way. For example, we only included uses of *challenge(s)* when discussing academic challenges, and excluded any tokens referring to personal or physical ones. Because the interview content focused on how participants chose a college, most (though not necessarily all) uses of the uses of these academic words were made when discussing their decision-making process.

We then divided participants into two PERSONA STYLE groups based on their use of these "academic" words. For each participant, the proportion of academic words was calculated over all words they uttered in the interview. The sample was then split in half, with the 27 participants who used the highest proportions of academic words labeled as "nerds" and the remaining 27 as non-"nerds." By categorizing participants as such, we are in no way claiming that they would self-identify as or be ethnographically classified as belonging to the assigned groups. Rather, this method was chosen as a practical first pass at incorporating insights from other ethnographic studies into a small corpus analysis. We sought to operationalize persona based on linguistic criteria (lexis) in order to approximate the more nuanced and multifaceted linguistic styles described in previous work. Note that, while SCHOOLING and PERSONA STYLE are not the same factor by any means, they are correlated: private-schooled participants used the highest proportion of academic lexis, followed by homeschooled participants, followed by public-schooled ones, who used the least. The two factors are, however, different enough that their strength as model predictors can be directly compared.

Table 1 presents the number of participants and number of quotative tokens by high school background, gender, and persona style.[8] There are differences between groups in terms of the overall amount of quotative speech produced, and these provide a necessary context for interpreting the results for type of quotative that will be explored in the next section. Note that since we are most interested in the quotative type, the quotative token numbers have not been normalized by length of interview and should not be taken to reflect the proportion of quotative speech produced by members of that group. While proportion of quotation could very well be a marker of linguistic style itself (and recall that one private-school educated man who produced no quotation at all), these token counts should only be taken to represent the amount of data available for analysis for each group. The most well-represented group in terms of both numbers of speakers and numbers of tokens is that of the non-"nerd," homeschooled women, while the least-represented group is that of the "nerd," public-schooled man. These differences reflect imbalanced representation at each factor level: there is more data from "nerds" than non-"nerds," more data from homeschooled students than from private-schooled students than from public-schooled students, and more than three times as much data from women as men. Preliminary model testing indicated that the results for the subsample of women (the demographic subsample with the largest number of tokens) were comparable to results for the sample as a whole, while results for the subsample of men were not. It therefore seems unwise to present models of any data subsets. The results in the following section are modeled only on the full dataset, and effects concerning any of the underrepresented factor levels should be treated with some caution. The final, best-fit model includes a random intercept of speaker, in an attempt to control for the effect of individual speakers.

RESULTS

Overall, the interviews yielded 527 tokens of analyzable quotative verbs. Our results confirm that *be like* is the most favored quotative verb, in this case in the speech of American college students recorded at a Southern, Christian liberal arts college in 2015. *Be like* was by far the most frequent quotative (73%), followed distantly by *say* (11%). The most frequent verbs are listed in table 3, along with the null forms (i.e., "zero" and "no verb"). The remaining verbs (e.g., *answer*, *decide*, *hear*, *realize*, *shout*, *teach*) were only represented by 1–3 tokens each (24 tokens total).

TABLE 3
Token Frequencies of the Most Frequent Quotative

Verb	*N*	%	*Example from Interviews*
be like	383	73%	I can walk by one and be like, "I know that's a homeschooler." [P62, homeschool]
say	59	11%	And I saw him and I said, "I'm gonna marry him." [P62, homeschool]
think	12	2%	Academically, I was thinking, "Well these colleges just…" [P20, private]
Zero	10	2%	And that was it. Ø "Pay us fifty bucks. What's your name?" [P41, public]
ask	9	2%	You need to ask, "Well, where did that come from?" [P30, private]
tell	9	2%	She of course was telling me, "Expect classes to be hard." [P22, homeschool]
be	8	2%	… it was, "We go to this school now." [P60, homeschool]
go	7	1%	And he goes, "Really? I'm on the– the board of admission." [P48, private]
No verb	6	1%	And then they'll, "Yeah I was." [P61, homeschool]

Besides *be like*, the only other innovative quotative represented in the data was *go* (see 9), but this verb was very rare (1%).[9] There were no tokens of quotative *all*.

9. Example tokens of quotative *go*
   a. But my sister's been running through the same thing, and she says that all the colleges emailing her go, "Last chance for early registration. Last chance for registration. Last chance for really late registration. Last chance for really really really late registration." [P10, homeschool]
   b. I can look back on that now, and go, "I can take whatever this semester has for me." [P19, homeschool]
   c. And then one of the professors made an allusion to my dad and I was sitting in the back going, "Oh no, people are going to look at me." [P11, private school]

Figures 1 and 2 plot the distribution of *be like* versus all other quotatives according to the social factors coded for in our data. Based on these plots, we might expect to see significant differences in a statistical model for all three social factors, with *be like* expected to be favored by women (86% *be like*), public-school educated students (90% *be like*), and non-"nerds" (87% *be like*). At a glance, the homeschooled students (81% *be like*) appear roughly the same in their overall and gender-specific usage patterns as the private-school educated students (71% *be like*).

FIGURE 1
Distribution of *be like* by High School Background and Gender

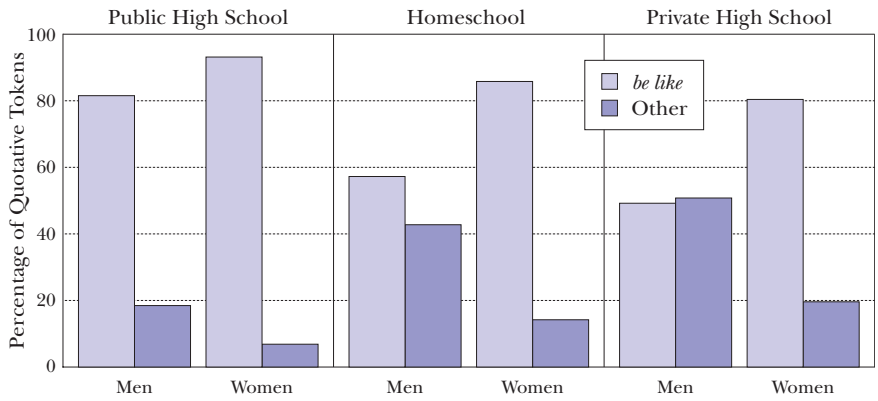
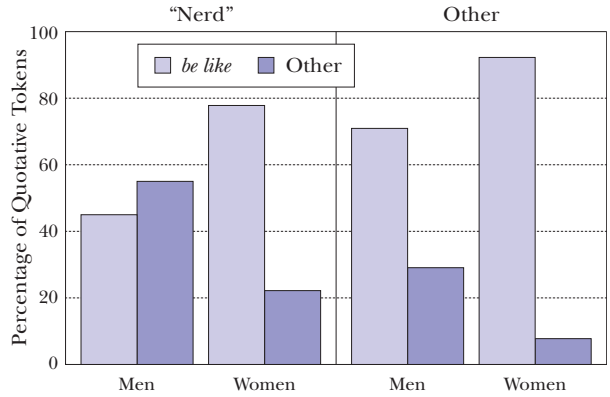


FIGURE 2
Distribution of *be like* by Persona Style and Gender



To analyze the predictors of quotative use in this data set, we built a binary logistic mixed-effects regression model predicting the use of *be like* versus other quotative verbs with grammatical PERSON, verb TENSE, speaker GENDER, speaker SCHOOLING, speaker PERSONA STYLE, speaker AGE, and speaker number of SIBLINGS as fixed effects, and SPEAKER as random intercept. We performed manual, drop-one model comparison with the lme4 library in R (Bates et al. 2015). We attempted to model interaction effects between the three social factors, but none of these emerged as a significant improvement to the best-fit model, perhaps due to lack of statistical power (a possibility we return to below). Lastly, we attempted a by-speaker random

slope with grammatical PERSON, but the model did not converge so this was removed. The final best-fit model is presented in table 4.

Based on the patterns shown in figures 1 and 2, we might have expected to see an effect of schooling type on quotative use. However, while this factor emerges as significant in a model without PERSONA STYLE, including PERSONA STYLE results in the elimination of SCHOOLING from the best-fit model. Speaker AGE and number of SIBLINGS are not found to be significant predictors in this overall model either.[10]

The significant predictors of quotative *be like* in this sample are grammatical subject (PERSON), verb TENSE, speaker GENDER, and speaker PERSONA STYLE. For grammatical subject, we see *be like* occurring more often with first-person subjects (88%) than with third-person subjects (72%). This pattern is consistent across high school background, gender, and persona style. For verb tense, we found no difference between simple past and historic present, but *be like* was significantly more likely to occur with past tense verbs (84%) than with verbs that have less frequent tense/aspect features (65%; see the appendix). In other words, when using relatively rare verb tenses, our participants also tended to use relatively rare quotative verbs. For speaker gender, women (86%) were significantly more likely to use *be like* than men (60%). As seen in figure 1, this difference is much clearer among the private-schooled and homeschooled students than among the public-schooled students, though the same pattern of women leading *be like* use is found within each school type.[11] The smaller difference in the public-schooled group may simply be due to the fact that there were so few men (and also so few tokens) representing that category (see table 1);

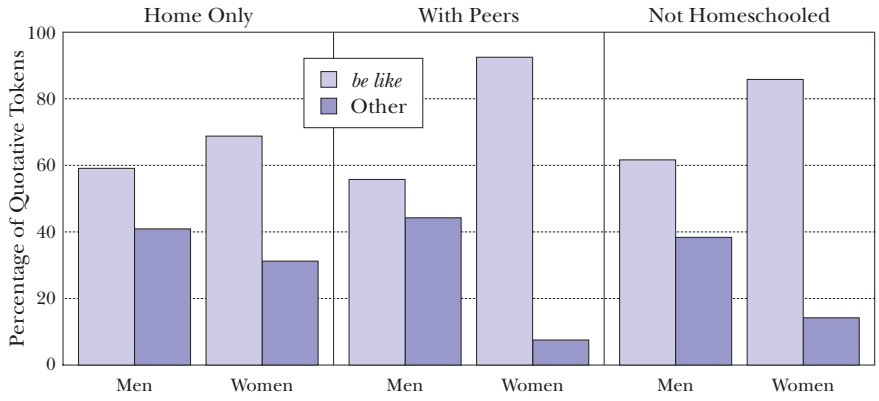
TABLE 4
Best-Fit Binary Fixed-Effect Regression Model: *Be like* vs. Other Verbs
(speakers as random intercept; nonsignificant factors excluded)

Factor		*n*	*Estimate*	*StdError*	*z-Value*	*p-Value*
(Intercept)		527	2.462	0.457	5.392	<.001
Person	first	262		*(reference level)*		
	third	265	–0.989	0.288	–3.436	<.001
Tense	past	287		*(reference level)*		
	historical present	123	0.152	0.349	0.664	n.s.
	other	117	–1.136	0.316	–3.598	<.001
Sex	female	409		*(reference level)*		
	male	118	–1.663	0.502	–3.313	<.001
Persona	"nerd"	237		*(reference level)*		
	other	290	1.113	0.470	2.367	.018

an interaction effect between SCHOOLING and GENDER class did not reach significance in the best-fit model. Lastly, like the "nerds" and "intellectual" students described in previous studies, the students we categorized as "nerds" here were significantly less likely (71%) than non-"nerds" (87%) to use *be like* (see figure 2). Persona style, as measured by the use of academic lexis, serves as a stronger overall predictor of quotative choice than high school background (table 4). In summary, quotative *be like* appears to be favored by women and non-"nerds," regardless of schooling background.

The main takeaway from these results is that, overall, college students who were homeschooled pattern just like their more conventionally educated peers in their use of quotative *be like*. One possible reason for this might be the fact that homeschooled participants had highly diverse experiences of what it meant to be homeschooled. Of the 27 homeschooled students, 16 (11 women, 5 men) were educated, at least partly, with in-person peer groups that extended beyond their nuclear family ("with peers"). For example, they took courses at local colleges/universities or enrolled in private classes organized for groups of homeschooled students, generally referred to "homeschool co-op classes." The remaining 11 homeschooled students (7 women, 4 men) were educated exclusively at home, sometimes participating in online classes, but not attending classes that involved face-to-face interaction with peers, aside from any siblings ("home only"). Figure 3 shows the distribution of *be like* among these participants. Although the data here are sparse, the gender effect seen in the main model is clearly evidenced in the "with peers" group, but not at all in the "home only" group. In fact, the proportion of *be like* use among women who were homeschooled with peers

FIGURE 3
Distribution of *be like* among Homeschoolers by Homeschooling Type and Gender



(92%) is essentially identical to that of the public-schooled women (93%). In contrast, the proportion of *be like* use among men who were homeschooled with peers (56%) is more similar to the private-schooled men (49%). Here, for the first time, we see a potential effect of the homeschooler experience that fits with our initial predictions: women who were homeschooled, but only those who were homeschooled with limited interaction with peers outside of their family structure, show a relatively conservative rate of *be like* production (69%) as compared to all the other women in the sample (with private-schooled women at 80% *be like*).

In summary, the significant predictors of quotative production among this sample of 54 mostly Southern, Christian, college students are grammatical subject, verb tense, participant gender, and participant persona style. Women overwhelmingly favor the use of quotative *be like* as compared to men in this sample. With respect to persona, we have found that a rough, binary division between those participants who use more academically oriented lexis versus those who use less shows that the latter group (the non-"nerds") is more likely to use quotative *be like* than the former group (the "nerds"). However, this difference is more apparent among the women in this sample. And while we find no significant difference based on schooling for the sample as a whole, among the 18 men there is a more salient difference between public-school educated on the one hand, who are more likely to use quotative *be like*, and private-school educated men on the other hand, who are more likely than the other participants to use conservative verbs like *say*, with homeschooled men falling in the middle (figure 1).

DISCUSSION

Overall, quotative *be like* accounts for 73% of the quotatives in this data set. While lower than the overall rates observed for speakers of a similar age and birth cohort seen in some studies (e.g., the data from Victoria, British Columbia, in Tagliamonte, D'Arcy, and Louro 2016), it is higher than the rates seen in others (e.g., the Longman Corpus analyzed in Barbieri 2007; Biber et al. 1999). Our 73% is also generally comparable to other recent studies based on similar-sized corpora. For example, Rickford et al. (2007) found that *be like* accounted for 69% of quotatives ($n = 544$) in a 2005 corpus of sociolinguistic interviews with Californians between ages 15 and 25. Buchstaller (2015) found that *be like* accounted for only 55% of quotatives ($n = 249$) from a 2011–13 corpus of interviews with Tyneside, U.K., speakers between ages 15 and 19. Drager (2015) found *be like* accounted for 88% of quotatives ($n = 890$) in a 2006 corpus of ethnographic speech with Canter-

bury, New Zealand, speakers at an all-girls' high school (as compared to the women in the current study with a rate of 77% *be like*). Despite the relatively limited amount of data analyzed here, the overall rate seems comparable to that documented for speakers of a similar age or birth cohort in other parts of the United States and the English-speaking world.

However, it is worth considering that the rates documented here may nonetheless underestimate the speakers' rates in other, more casual and less monitored, social contexts (cf. Buchstaller 2015, 472–73). The stigma previously associated with quotative *be like* (see Buchstaller 2006, 2015; Dailey-O'Cain 2000) suggests that underestimation might be especially likely for these data, given that the speech analyzed was obtained from one-on-one interviews in the college library with an unfamiliar college professor in her mid-fifties. Unfortunately, potential effects of the addressee have not been systematically accounted for in the previous literature on quotatives, so it is difficult to judge the extent to which our participants may have decreased their use of *be like* when speaking to our interviewer. However, the rates shown here are not far off from those in Barbieri's (2009) study of the Longman Corpus, which was comprised of casual interactions between friends and family. Furthermore, the relatively robust rates of *be like* use in the current study may reflect a lack or reduction of the stigma previously reported for this variant. If so, we might have found comparable results for interviews or even casual conversations with peers.

Although *be like* is strongly favored by both men and women in the data presented here, we still find a strong effect of speaker gender; women favor *be like* over other quotatives at a higher rate than men, in line with most previous work. The difference between men and women is weakest among the public-schooled students, which may be a socially meaningful difference across schooling types, or may just be due to the small number of men in the public-schooled participant pool. Indeed, there was no significant statistical interaction between gender and educational background. It is worth noting again that we did not control for the gender of the interlocutor, so we may have obtained different results had a male professor (or peer) conducted the interviews. Again, we recognize that participants may have suppressed their use of *be like* because the interlocutor was a middle-aged professor who does not use *be like*, and this suppression by the participants could have been especially pronounced among the men since the professor was female. However, given that the interviewer and interview context were held constant across all interviews, we are unable to characterize the kind of influence that the interlocutor may have had on participants' use of quotative verbs. It could be that students from different schooling backgrounds also show different strategies of accommodation, but this possibility is left for future work.

In terms of linguistic factors, the present data also show agreement with previous work. As in other studies (e.g., Tagliamonte and D'Arcy 2004; Buchstaller and D'Arcy 2009; Tagliamonte, D'Arcy, and Louro 2016; but see Cukor-Avila 2002), *be like* is favored with first-person subjects more than third-person ones (though *be like* is certainly still common with third-person subjects; see Blyth, Recktenwald, and Wang 1990). As for verb tense, we found no difference between historical present and simple past, which contrasts with previous research that found *be like* to be significantly more likely with historical present than past tense (e.g., Blyth, Recktenwald, and Wang 1990; Singler 2001; Buchstaller and D'Arcy 2009; Tagliamonte, D'Arcy, and Louro 2016). This result may provide evidence that the *be like* is becoming grammaticalized to some extent in that its use may be extending into other tenses (cf. Ferrara and Bell 1995; Tagliamonte and D'Arcy 2004). Nevertheless, the significant difference between past tense verbs and the set of verbs with less frequent tense/aspect features indicates that grammaticalization is not complete with regard to tense.

After controlling for a factor of persona style, operationalized as "nerd" versus non-"nerd," high school background was not a significant predictor of *be like* use in the overall model. But, while schooling can be thought of in terms of social networks and contacts with peers, it can also be thought of in terms of persona and social meaning. Indeed, the participants in the current study framed schooling background in terms of persona (see quotes in 1–3). Rather than comparing two distinct factors (SCHOOLING and PERSONA), we have perhaps been comparing two aspects of a single intersectional factor. For example, constructing (or avoiding) a nerd persona style may be more relevant to public-school and homeschool educated students than those from private schools. If the unmarked persona style for a private school student is already a bit more "nerdy," then the use of academic lexis might be more stylistically normative, and therefore less stylistically powerful, in private school contexts. This also suggests that private-school educated students should be seen to pattern more like the nerds from the other types of schools, and indeed our results support this: private-schooled students used more academic lexis overall than public-schooled and homeschooled students, and both "nerds" and private-school educated students have a *be like* rate of exactly 71%. Although our participant population is not socioeconomically diverse, the indexical similarities between nerdiness and private schooling may be class related. Carmichael (2014) notes that private schools are associated with higher academic and social class prestige, and Bucholtz (2011, 162) notes that "nerdiness [is] ideologically associated with the middle class," even if "individual nerdy students were [themselves] not necessarily in the higher socioeconomic strata."

This persona style is necessarily gendered, as well. Bucholtz (1999, 211; 2011) notes how, at least in a public school context, "[n]erdiness is an especially valuable resource for girls," in that it provides the linguistic and other stylistic resources for simultaneously resisting dominant gender norms and dominant public school social norms. Despite the lack of an interaction effect in the regression model, social analysis suggests that the effect of a speaker's academic orientation does depend on that speaker's gender presentation. Although the ethnographic work remains to be done, we suggest that this also holds for personae based on schooling. The descriptive patterns of quotative use seen here seem to point to two oppositional persona: the nerdy, privately educated man and the not-nerdy, publically educated woman. From this perspective, academic orientation, schooling, and gender may all be dimensions of *be like*'s indexical field (Eckert 2008). We suggest that, despite the lack of a statistically significant three-way interaction effect in our model, quotative use may possibly index these intersectional social meanings more than just the "nerd"/non-"nerd" meaning. The data in this study lacked the statistical power to test for this, and we suggest it as an avenue of future work.

Since high school background was not directly predicative of quotative use and homeschooled participants demonstrated vigorous adoption of this relatively recent linguistic change, we are left with the question of how homeschooled students acquired a trendy quotative system like their peers. As discussed above, we expected this group to be the least likely to adopt high rates of quotative *be like*, given that the parents of these participants are unlikely to use *be like* frequently, if at all, and homeschooled students will have interacted with their parents and others of their parents' generation much more, on average, than students who attended conventional schools. We found that homeschooled students have nonetheless adopted *be like* as their primary quotative verb, that their rate of *be like* use is similar to that of their peers, and that they observe the same linguistic constraints as their peers. This is true even among the subset of homeschooled participants who did not regularly attend classes with in-person peer groups, that is, those whose schooling was truly primarily in the home. And while homeschooled students were raised with differing numbers of siblings (who might be a source for the exposure to peer group linguistic norms), the number siblings a participant had was not found to correlate with their use of *be like*.

If the social constraints on *be like* use are acquired during the high school years or earlier (Tagliamonte and D'Arcy 2004; cf. Barbieri 2009, 80), it is reasonable to assume that this variable has been learned from face-to-face interaction with peers, since previous research has demonstrated that the contribution of media, including social media, to linguistic change is argu-

ably minor (see Bell and Sharma 2014; Sayers 2014; Tagliamonte, D'Arcy, and Louro 2016). Although our homeschooled participants did not interact with peers in a conventional high school environment, they were far from socially isolated. In their interviews, they were quick to point out involvement in peer-based extracurricular activities, such as church youth groups, sports teams, and youth orchestras. In fact, over half of the homeschooled participants attended some classes with peers either in homeschool cooperatives or at local colleges. While both homeschooled students who were educated only at home and those educated in person in classes with peers produced high levels of *be like* quotatives, only those who had regular face-to-face interaction with peers as part of their high school experience seem to have acquired the primary social constraint on *be like* use: that women favor this variant more than men. These findings suggest that limited exposure to peer groups through extracurricular activities may be sufficient for the acquisition of linguistic innovations, but that more extensive interaction may be needed for the development of the relevant social constraints. We recommend this as a promising line of inquiry for future research.

In addition to considering and including participants with a background in homeschooling, the present study is novel in focusing on students at a religiously conservative, Protestant Christian liberal arts college. Christianity is an important part of life for the participants in the study, in a way that is not often seen in studies in variationist sociolinguistics. However, it is not clear, based on this particular sample, what role Christian identity might play in speakers' quotative use, if any. Yaeger-Dror (2015) notes how religion is an understudied social factor, and that studies that do consider it show that it can be a significant predictor of patterns of linguistic variation. While this literature has so far largely focused on members of religious groups as compared to community members outside of those groups (Keiser 2015; Rosen and Skriver 2015), Baker-Smemoe and Bowie (2015) also compare active and nonactive members of the same religious group (Mormons in Utah), finding further linguistic differences. Such research points the way for further comparisons with our work. For example, how similar would the speech patterns we found be to those of non-Christian students attending secular liberal arts colleges?

In our study we have used high school information to model college speech production patterns, which might be concerning if we anticipate significant linguistic shifts from high school to college. Wagner (2014) showed a change in the use of sociolinguistic variables from high school to college, but only for those variables that indexed social meanings that were less relevant to the college social order than the high school social order; variables indexing social meanings that remained salient across this transition

remained or increased their signaling potential into college. Since *be like* has become the most frequent quotative in most varieties of English, it is not likely to carry a particular indexical value—or field of values (Eckert 2008)—that is more or less relevant in college than in high school. We therefore have no reason to believe that the participants in this study changed their quotative system markedly between high school and college; specifically, we have no reason to believe that the homeschooled students increased their use of *be like* from high school to college. Of the 27 homeschooled participants, 11 (6 women) were in their first semester of college at the time of their interview and actually favored *be like* slightly more than remaining 16 (12 women), who had been in college over a year already (79% *be like* vs. 77% *be like*). While we cannot say whether the patterns seen here would have been replicated with longitudinal data from when the participants were high school students, we expect that they would have. Similarly, there is little evidence to suggest that students from private and public high schools only begin to distinguish themselves from each other stylistically once they start college. Though students at this college are generally aware that other students come from different types of high schools, this characteristic does not seem to be key factor in the organization of social groups or communities of practice at the college. Instead, it seems more likely that stylistic differences between these students were acquired in high school and then maintained, at least to some degree, during the college years.

CONCLUSION

To our knowledge, this research represents the first variationist study of the speech of young adults who were educated in nontraditional schools. As such, it represents an important first step in gaining a fuller understanding of the mechanisms by which socially marked variables are acquired during adolescence. While it is reasonable to assume that the linguistic and social constraints of linguistic innovations can be learned outside of the conventional school environment, the lion's share of face-to-face peer interactions for most adolescents who have participated in sociolinguistic studies occurred during school and school-related activities, so it is not clear whether these innovations are actually learned outside of school-based experiences. Our results indicate that the distinct social environment of homeschoolers is indeed sufficient for the acquisition of *be like*, since homeschooled participants showed patterns of *be like* use that were statistically indistinguishable from their peers who attended public and private schools. Nevertheless, we have reason to believe that the homeschool environment can, in some cases, limit

the extent to which the social constraints on new variables are adopted. Even though homeschooled participants who were schooled exclusively at home demonstrated high rates of *be like* use, they were the only subgroup to show no difference between women's and men's rates of use, with particularly low rates of use among the women. This result raises the possibility that more extensive face-to-face interaction with peers, such as is provided in school, might be necessary for the full development of the social constraints governing the use of innovative variants.

School environment also appears to play some role in determining the linguistic style that speakers adopt later in life, or at least during their college years, in the sense that private-schooled students in this study avoid *be like* relative to their public-schooled and homeschooled peers. We suggest that this schooling difference might be best explained from the perspective of persona management, in that the private-schooled students in this sample may have been more likely than the other students to orient toward the "nerd" persona described in previous literature. If so, then their avoidance of the *be like* quotative can be understood as part of a larger effort to construct a scholarly or intellectual speech style.

Taken together, our findings not only support the growing body of evidence that persona-based factors are crucial for a thorough account of stylistic variation, but also point out that factors, like type of schooling, that fall between traditional micro-level factors, like stance and persona, and macro-level factors, like gender and ethnicity, may also be important for understanding the adoption of linguistic innovations. Finally, our results provide fresh evidence that although *be like* appears to be replacing other quotative verbs, it still serves, in some contexts, as a useful tool in the construction of linguistic style.

APPENDIX

Frequency of Tense/Aspect Features of Quotatives

Tense/Aspect	*n (be like)*	*n (total)*	*Example from Interviews*
Simple past	234	287	I was like, "That's really far away from home." [P42, public]
Historical present	99	123	And then I would say [college name] and they're like, "Oh, [college name]. Okay, yeah, I've heard of that. You could go there." [P06, private]
Modal	30	50	I mean you might be like, "They dress like a homeschooler." [P21, private]

Tense/Aspect	*n (be like)*	*n (total)*	*Example from Interviews*
Gerund	10	24	Cuz I remember having to learn that in sixth grade, being like, "No." [P11, private]
Future	3	7	I don't know, when you're walking past them, they'll be like, "Oh hi, how are you?" [P36, public]
Nonfinite	3	11	But I wouldn't necessarily be able to be like, "That person was private schooled, and that person was public schooled," or anything like that. [P35, public]
Past perfect	2	2	Well I would never even applied to the scholarships if [name] hadn't like called me that night and been like, "[Name], you need to apply for this." [P06, private]
Present perfect	2	7	I don't really think anyone's been like, "Oh, you were homeschooled?" [P37, homeschool]
Past progressive	0	11	I was saying, "My parents are homeschooling 'cause we don't like the system." [P19, homeschool]
Present progressive	0	4	So we came and visited, and I'm thinking, "Well, it's beautiful, but I can't afford this," you know. [P47, homeschool]
Past passive	0	1	When I was told like, "Oh it's about like how–how you kinda came to come to [college name]…" [P48, private]
TOTAL	383	527	

NOTES

1. None of the participants in this study produced any examples of profanity in these interviews with an older, female professor, but this observation might be tested in less formal social environments.
2. Some research suggests that homeschoolers attend college at higher rates than the national average (Ray 2004), but it is difficult to determine the average number of homeschooled students now attending college. Colleges and universities rarely publish this statistic, and even when they do, institutions differ in how they define homeschooled students (e.g., a certain number of years in K–12 homeschooling, a homeschool transcript, etc.). Also, many homeschoolers are not classified as such because they simultaneously attend some traditional high school or college classes and use transcripts from those institutions. An informal survey of admissions directors at four other Christian colleges revealed a range of 6–73% of the student body who were homeschooled. The institution with 73% is clearly an outlier, and our sense is that 25% is also unusually high.

3. Students from these courses represent a wide variety of disciplines at this college. This is because the composition course is a requirement for all students at the college, and the introductory-level linguistics and psychology courses fulfill general distribution requirements for students in different majors.
4. One of these participants self-identified as Asian and the other as biracial (both women, both private-schooled).
5. Most participants were Southern ($n = 38$); others were from the West ($n = 8$), the Midlands ($n = 6$), and the North ($n = 2$). Given this stark imbalance in representation, our analysis does not control for regional background, but preliminary analysis indicates identical or nearly identical rates of *be like* across the regions, except for the speakers from the West, where rates are (interestingly!) slightly lower than for the other regions (68% *be like* as compared to 80–82% for the other regions).
6. Although the brevity of these recordings is a disadvantage in terms of overall token frequency of quotatives, the interviews were kept short so that the results would be comparable to the brief interviews conducted as part of the larger research project mentioned above. Given Buchstaller's (2015, 472) finding that speakers under 35 either produced higher or approximately the same rates of *be like* in the first half of the interview, we doubt that the length of the interviews contributed to an underrepresentation of the proportion of *be like* in the speech of our participants.
7. Thanks to Lindsi Skinner for transcription work and to Rachel Krumenacker for transcription, extraction, and coding of quotative verbs. ELAN is open source transcription software from the Language Archive of the Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics in Nijmegen, Netherlands (http://tla.mpi.nl/tools/tla-tools/elan/).
8. Each subgroup (each cell in table 1) is also fairly balanced for age; there are speakers both at the start of and the end of college in most of the subgroups. Despite the narrowness of the age range, we initially included age as a continuous factor in the analysis in case speakers' quotative systems shift over the course of their college experience (which we did not find). The sample is also balanced, as well as possible, for number of siblings per participant. In most subgroups, there were participants who had 1–3 siblings, and half of the subgroups included participants with 5–8 siblings. While a speaker's number of siblings is not a predictor in previous studies of quotative *be like*, it may be particularly relevant for understanding patterns among homeschooled participants, so we include siblings as a continuous factor in our models.
9. Of the 7 tokens of quotative *go*, 5 were produced by 4 female "nerds" (either private-schooled or homeschooled), and the remaining 2 were produced by the same male, private-schooled non-"nerd."
10. Because all participants were college students at the time of data collection, age variation is minimal, but the lack of an age effect suggests that quotative systems are relatively stable throughout college. While there was no significant main effect of number of siblings in the full model, descriptively we see that speakers

with no siblings use the least amount of *be like* (61%), followed by those with one sibling (68%), those with two siblings (80%), and those with three or more siblings (85%). While the current data set does not have the statistical power to properly test this variable, this pattern fits with the descriptive pattern seen for type of homeschooling environment, where more exposure to peers influences quotative use.

11. There was more variation among the 9 public-schooled women (50–100% *be like*) than among the 4 public-schooled men in terms of *be like* use (67–100% *be like*). In each group, there was only one participant who used *be like* as his/her only quotative. The data are too sparse to draw conclusions from these observations.

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NOLA STEPHENS is associate professor of linguistics at Covenant College in Lookout Mountain, Georgia. Her primary research interests are in first language acquisition, argument structure, sociolinguistics, and language and religion. E-mail: nola.stephens@covenant.edu.

LAUREN HALL-LEW is a reader in linguistics and English language in the School of Philosophy, Psychology, and Language Sciences at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland. She is a sociolinguist interested in variation and change in varieties of English. She mainly studies phonetic variation, specifically the potential impact of social meaning on the trajectory of sound changes in progress. E-mail: lauren.hall-lew@ed.ac.uk.

VICKIE SHAMP ELLIS is professor of communication studies and serves as the chair for the Division of Communication Arts at Oklahoma Baptist University. She teaches communication research, organizational communication, and communication theory. Currently her main research interest is in persuasive acts related to recruitment and retention. E-mail: vickie.ellis@okbu.edu.