



Studies of the Routine Grounds of Everyday Activities
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sources, the traps of the post civilization period. 3) We must accept with equanimity the varied roles of teacher, researcher, consultant, administrator, and others yet to emerge, utilizing all of these opportunities to advance the growth of the discipline, its work system, and its professional collectivities, and to promote a more just society as well. Finally, we must recognize that norm inconsistencies are peculiar to all social systems. Ambivalence and ambiguity for the sociologist will continue to increase in intensity as the discipline moves along its uneven course in becoming a profession and as it attempts to use wisely its new power and to meet its concomitant obligations and expectations. The new-found power will confound, confuse, and mislead some of us. There are two old sayings: that one can swell with power or grow with power, and that a dying fish begins to swell in the head. I believe that sociologists will choose to grow with power.

STUDIES OF THE ROUTINE GROUNDS OF EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES

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THE PROBLEM

For Kant the moral order "within" was an awesome mystery; for sociologists the moral order "without" is a technical mystery. From the point of view of sociological theory the moral order consists of the rule governed activities of everyday life. A society's members encounter and know the moral order as perceivedly normal courses of action—familiar scenes of everyday affairs, the world of daily life known in common with others and with others taken for granted.

They refer to this world as the "natural facts of life" which, for members, are through and through moral facts of life. For members not only are matters so about familiar scenes, but they are so because it is morally right or wrong that they are so. Familiar scenes of everyday activities, treated by members as the "natural facts of life," are massive facts of the members' daily existence both *as* a real world and as the product of activities *in* a real world. They furnish the "fix," the "this is it" to which the waking state returns one, and are the points of departure and return for every modification of the world of daily life that is achieved in play, dreaming, trance, theatre, scientific theorizing, or high ceremony.

In every discipline, humanistic or scientific, the familiar common sense world of everyday life is a matter of abiding interest. In the social sciences, and in sociology particularly, it is a matter of essential preoccupation. It makes up sociology's problematic subject matter, enters the very constitution of the sociological attitude, and exercises an odd and obstinate sovereignty over sociologists' claims to adequate explanation.

Despite the topic's centrality, an immense literature contains little data and few methods with which the essential features of socially recognized

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"familiar scenes" may be detected and related to dimensions of social organization. Although sociologists take socially structured scenes of everyday life as a point of departure they rarely see[1] as a task of sociological inquiry in its own right the general question of how any such common sense world is possible. Instead, the possibility of the everyday world is either settled by theoretical representation or merely assumed. As a topic and methodological ground for sociological inquiries, the definition of the common sense world of everyday life, though it is appropriately a project of sociological inquiry, has been neglected. My purposes in this paper are to demonstrate the essential relevance to the program of sociological inquires of a concern for common sense activities as a topic of inquiry in its own right and, by reporting a series of studies, to urge its "rediscovery."

MAKING COMMONPLACE SCENES VISIBLE

In accounting for the stable features of everyday activities sociologists commonly select familiar settings such as familial households or work places and ask for the variables that contribute to their stable features. Just as commonly, one set of considerations are unexamined: the socially standardized and standardizing, "seen but unnoticed", expected, background features of everyday scenes. The member of the society uses background expectancies as a scheme of interpretation. In their terms, actual appearances are for him recognizable and intelligible as the appearances of familiar events. Demonstrably he is responsive to this background. At the same time he is at a loss to tell us what specifically the expectancies consist of. When we ask him about them he has little or nothing to say.

For these background expectancies to come into view one must either be a stranger to the "life as usual" character of everyday scenes, or become estranged from them. As Alfred Schutz pointed out, a "special motive" is required to make them problematic. In the sociologist's case this "special motive" consists in the programmatic task of treating a societal member's practical circumstances, which include from the member's point of view the morally necessary character of many of its background features, as matters of theoretic interest. The seen but unnoticed backgrounds of everyday activities are made visible and are described from a perspective in which persons live out the lives they do, have the children they do, feel the feelings, think the thoughts, enter the relationships they do, all in order to permit the sociologist to solve his theoretical problems.

Almost alone among sociological theorists, the late Alfred Schutz, in a series of classical studies[2] of the con-

[1] The work of Alfred Schutz, cited in footnote 2, is a magnificent exception. Readers who are acquainted with his writings will recognize how heavily this paper is indebted to him.

[2] Schutz, Alfred, *Der Sinnhafte Aufbau Der Sozialen Welt,* Wein: Verlag von Julius Springer, 19[illegible] "The Problem of Rationality in the Social World," *Economica,* 10 (May, 1943), pp. 130-149; "Some Leading Concepts in Phenomenology," *Social Research,* 12 (1945), pp. 77-9[illegible] "On Multiple Realities," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research,* 4 (June, 1945), pp. 533-57[illegible] "Choosing Among Projects of Action," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research,* 12 (December, 1951), pp. 161-1[illegible] "Common Sense and Scientific Interpretation of Human Action," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research,* 14 (September, 1953), pp.1-[illegible] "Concept and Theory Formation in the Social Sciences," *American Journal of Philosophy,* 51 (April, 1954), pp. 257-274; "Symbol, Reality and Society," *Symbols and Society,* Fourteenth Symposium of the Conference on Science, Philosophy, and Religion, edited by Lyman Bryson and others, New York: Harper and Brothers, 1955, pp. 135-202; *Collected Papers: I. The Problem of Social Reality,* edited by Maurice Natanson, The Hague; Martinus Nijhoff, 1962.

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stitutive phenomenology of the world of everyday life, described many of these seen but unnoticed background expectancies. He called them the "attitude of daily life." He referred to their scenic attributions as the "world known in common and taken for granted." Schutz' fundamental work makes it possible to pursue further the tasks of clarifying their nature and operation, of relating them to the processes of concerted actions, and assigning them their place in an empirically imaginable society.

The studies reported in this paper attempt to detect some expectancies that lend commonplace scenes their familiar, life-as-usual character, and to relate these to the stable social structures of everyday activities. Procedurally it is my preference to start with familiar scenes and ask what can be done to make trouble. The operations that one would have to perform in order to multiply the senseless features of perceived environments; to produce and sustain bewilderment, consternation, and confusion; to produce the socially structured affects of anxiety, shame, guilt, and indignation; and to produce disorganized interaction should tell us something about how the structures of everyday activities are ordinarily and routinely produced and maintained.[3]

A word of reservation. Despite their procedural emphasis, my studies are not properly speaking experimental. They are demonstrations, designed, in Herbert Spiegelberg's phrase, as "aids to a sluggish imagination." I have found that they produce reflections through which the strangeness of an obstinately familiar world can be detected.

Some Essential Features of Common Understandings

Various considerations dictate that common understandings cannot possibly consist of a measured amount of shared agreement among persons on certain topics. Even if the topics are limited in number or scope and every practical difficulty of assessment is forgiven, the notion that we are dealing with an amount of shared agreement remains essentially incorrect. This may be demonstrated as follows.

Students were asked to report common conversations by writing on the left side of a sheet what the parties actually said and on the right side what they and their partners understood that they were talking about. A student reported the following colloquy between himself and his wife.

Husband:	Dana succeeded in putting a penny in a parking meter today without being picked up.	This afternoon as I was bringing Dana, our four year old son, home from the nursery school, he succeeded in reaching high enough to put a penny in a parking meter when we parked in a meter parking zone, whereas before he has always had to be picked up to reach that high.
Wife:	Did you take him to the record store?	Since he put a penny in a meter that means that you stopped while he was with you. I know that you stopped at the record store either on the way to get him or on the way back. Was it on the way back, so that he was with you or did you stop there on the way to get him and somewhere else on the way back?

[3] Obversely, a knowledge of how the structures of everyday activities are routinely produced should permit us to tell how we might proceed for the effective production of desired disturbances.

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Husband:	No, to the shoe repair shop.	No, I stopped at the record store on the way to get him and stopped at the shoe repair shop on the way home when he was with me.
Wife:	What for?	I know of one reason why you might have stopped at the shoe repair shop. Why did you in fact?
Husband:	I got some new shoe laces for my shoes.	As you will remember I broke a shoe lace on one of my brown oxfords the other day so I stopped to get some new laces.
Wife:	Your loafers need new heels badly.	Something else you could have gotten that I was thinking of. You could have taken in your black loafers which need heels badly. You'd better get them taken care of pretty soon.

An examination of the colloquy reveals the following. (a) There were many matters that the partners understood they were talking about that they did not mention. (b) Many matters that the partners understood were understood on the basis not only of what was actually said but what was left unspoken. (c) Many matters were understood through a process of attend- to the temporal series of utterances as documentary evidences of a developing conversation rather than as a string of terms. (d) Matters that the two understood in common were understood only in and through a course of understanding work that consisted of treating an actual linguistic event as "the document of," as "pointing to," as standing on behalf of an underlying pattern of matters that each already supposed to be the matters that the person, by his speaking, could be telling the other about. The underlying pattern was not only derived from a course of individual documentary evidences but the documentary evidences in their turn were interpreted on the basis of "what was known" and anticipatorily knowable about the underlying patterns.[4] Each was used to elaborate the other. (e) In attending to the utterances as events-in-the-conversation each party made reference to the biography and prospects of the present interaction which each used and attributed to the other as a common scheme of interpretation and expression. (f) Each waited for something more to be said in order to hear what had previously been talked about, and each seemed willing to wait.

Common understandings would consist of a measured amount of shared agreement if the common understandings consisted of events coordinated with the successive positions of the hands of the clock, i.e., of events in standard time. The foregoing results, because they deal with the exchanges of the colloquy as events-in-a-conversation, urge that one more time parameter, at least, is required: the role of time as it is constitutive of "the matter talked about" as a developing and developed event over the course of action that produced it, as both the process and product were known *from within* this development by both

[4] Karl Mannheim, in his essay "On the Interpretation of Weltanschauung," *Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge,* translated and edited by Paul Kecskemeti, New York: Oxford University Press, 1952, pp. 33-83, referred to this work as the "documentary method of interpretation." Its features are detailed in my article, "Common Sense Knowledge of Social Structures: the Documentary Method of Interpretation," in *Towards a Definition of Mind,* edited by Jordan M. Scher, Glencoe: The Free Press, 1962, pp. 689-712.

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parties, each for himself as well as on behalf of the other.

The colloquy reveals additional features. (1) Many of its expressions are such that their sense cannot be decided by an auditor unless he knows or assumes something about the biography and the purposes of the speaker, the circumstances of the utterance, the previous course of the conversation, or the particular relationship of actual or potential interaction that exists between user and auditor. The expressions do not have a sense that remains identical through the changing occasions of their use. (2) The events that were talked about were specifically vague. Not only do they not frame a clearly restricted set of possible determinations but the depicted events include as their essentially intended and sanctioned features an accompanying "fringe" of determinations that are open with respect to internal relationships, relationships to other events, and relationships to retrospective and prospective possibilities. (3) For the sensible character of an expression, upon its occurrence each of the conversationalists as auditor of his own as well as the other's productions had to assume as of any present accomplished point in the exchange that by waiting for what he or the other person might have said at a later time the present significance of what had already been said would have been clarified. Thus many expressions had the property of being progressively realized and realizable through the further course of the conversation. (4) It hardly needs to be pointed out that the sense of the expressions depended upon where the expression occurred in serial order, the expressive character of the terms that comprised it, and the importance to the conversationalists of the events depicted.

These properties of common understandings stand in contrast to the features they would have if we disregarded their temporally constituted character and treated them instead as precoded entries on a memory drum, to be consulted as a definite set of alternative meanings from among which one was to select, under pre-decided conditions that specified in which of some set of alternative ways one was to understand the situation upon the occasion that the necessity for a decision arose. The latter properties are those of strict rational discourse as these are idealized in the rules that define an adequate logical proof.

For the purposes of *conducting their everyday affairs* persons refuse to permit each other to understand "what they are really talking about" in this way. The anticipation that persons *will* understand, the occasionality of expressions, the specific vagueness of references, the retrospective-prospective sense of a present occurrence, waiting for something later in order to see what was meant before, are sanctioned properties of common discourse. They furnish a background of seen but unnoticed features of common discourse whereby actual utterances are recognized as events of common, reasonable, understandable, plain talk. Persons require these properties of discourse as conditions under which they are themselves entitled and entitle others to claim that they know what they are talking about, and that what they are saying is understandable and ought to be understood. In short, their seen but unnoticed presence is used to entitle persons to conduct their common conversational affairs without interference. Departures from such usages call forth immediate attempts to restore a right state of affairs.

The sanctioned character of these properties is demonstrable as follows. Students were instructed to engage an acquaintance or a friend in an ordinary conversation and, without indicating that what the expermenter was asking was in any way unusual,

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to insist that the person clarify the sense of his commonplace remarks. Twenty-three students reported twenty-five instances of such encounters. The following are typical excerpts from their accounts.

Case 1.

(S) Hi, Ray. How is your girl friend feeling?
(E) What do you mean, how is she feeling? Do you mean physical or mental?
(S) I mean how is she feeling? What's the matter with you? (He looked peeved.)
(E) Nothing. Just explain a little clearer what do you mean?
(S) Skip it. How are your Med School applications coming?
(E) What do you mean, 'How are they?'
(S) You know what I mean.
(E) I really don't.
(S) What's the matter with you? Are you sick?

Case 2.

On Friday night my husband and I were watching television. My husband remarked that he was tired. I asked, "How are you tired? Physically, mentally, or just bored?
(S) I don't know, I guess physically, mainly.
(E) You mean that your muscles ache, or your bones?
(S) I guess so. Don't be so technical. (After more watching)
(S) All these old movies have the same kind of old iron bedstead in them.
(E) What do you mean? Do you mean all old movies, or some of them, or just the ones you have seen?
(S) What's the matter with you? You know what I mean.
(E) I wish you would be more specific.
(S) You know what I mean! Drop dead!

BACKGROUND UNDERSTANDINGS AND "ADEQUATE" RECOGNITION OF COMMONPLACE EVENTS

What kinds of expectancies make up a "seen but unnoticed" background of common understandings, and how are they related to persons' recognition of and stable courses of interpersonal transactions? Some information can be obtained if we first ask how a person will look at an ordinary and familiar scene and what will he see in it if we require of him that he do no more than look at it as something that for him it "obviously" and "really" is not.

Undergraduate students were assigned the task of spending from fifteen minutes to an hour in their homes viewing its activities while assuming that they were boarders in the household. They were instructed not to act out the assumption. Thirty-three students reported their experiences.

In their written reports students "behaviorized" the household scenes. Here is an excerpt from one account to illustrate my meaning.

> A short, stout man entered the house, kissed me on the cheek and asked, "How was school?" I answered politely. He walked into the kitchen, kissed the younger of two women, and said hello to the other. The younger woman asked me "What do you want for dinner, honey?" I answered, "Nothing." She shrugged her shoulders and said no more. The older woman shuffled around the kitchen muttering. The man washed his hands, sat down at the table, and picked up the paper. He read until the two women had finished putting the food on the table. The three sat down. They exchanged idle chatter about the day's events. The older woman said something in a foreign language which made the others laugh.

Persons, relationships, and activities were described without respect for their history, for the place of the scene in a set of developing life circumstances, or for the scenes as texture of relevant events for the parties themselves. References to motives, propriety, subjectivity generally, and the socially standardized character of the events were omitted. Descriptions might be thought of as those of a keyhole observer who puts aside much of what he knows in common with subjects about the scenes he is looking at, as if the writer had witnessed the scenes under a mild amnesia for common sense knowledge of social structures.

Students were surprised to see the

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ways in which members' treatments of each other were personal. The business of one was treated as the business of the others. A person being criticized was unable to stand on dignity and was prevented by the others from taking offense. One student reported her surprise at how freely she had the run of the house. Displays of conduct and feeling occurred without apparent concern for the management of impressions. Table manners were bad, and family members showed each other little politeness. An early casualty in the scene was the family news of the day which turned into trivial talk.

Students reported that this way of looking was difficult to sustain. Familiar objects—persons obviously, but furniture and room arrangements as well—resisted students' efforts to think of themselves as strangers. Many became uncomfortably aware of how habitual movements were being made: of *how* one was handling the silverware, or *how* one opened a door or greeted another member. Many reported that the attitude was difficult to sustain because with it quarreling, bickering, and hostile motivations became discomfitingly visible. Frequently an account that recited newly visible troubles was accompanied by the student's assertion that his account of family problems was not a "true" picture; the family was *really* a very happy one. Several students reported a mildly oppressive feeling of "conforming to a part." Several students attempted to formulate the "real me" as activities governed by rules of conduct but gave it up as a bad job. They found it more convincing to think of themselves in "usual" circumstances as "being one's real self." Nevertheless one student was intrigued with how deliberately and successfully he could predict the others' responses to his actions. He was not troubled by this feeling.

Many accounts reported a variation on the theme: "I was glad when the hour was up and I could return to the real me."

Students were convinced that the view from the boarder's attitude was not their real home environment. The boarder's attitude produced appearances which they discounted as interesting incongruities of little and misleading practical import. How had the familiar ways of looking at their home environments been altered? How did their looking differ from usual?

Several contrasts to the "usual" and "required" way of looking are detectable from their accounts. (1) In looking at their home scenes as boarders they replaced the mutually recognized texture of events with a rule of interpretation which required that this mutual texture be *temporarily* disregarded. (2) The mutually recognized texture was brought under the jurisdiction of the new attitude as a definition of the essential structures of this texture. (3) This was done by engaging in interaction with others with an attitude whose nature and purpose only the user knew about, that remained undisclosed, that could be either adopted or put aside at a time of the user's own choosing, and was a matter of willful election. (4) The attitude as an intention was sustained as a matter of personal and willed compliance with an explicit and single rule, (5) in which, like a game, the goal of the intention was identical with looking at things under the auspices of the single rule itself. (6) Above all, looking was not bound by any necessity for gearing one's interests within the attitude to the actions of others. These were the matters that students found strange.

When students used these background expectancies not only as ways of looking at familial scenes but as grounds for acting in them, the scenes exploded with the bewilderment and anger of family members.

Students were required to spend from fifteen minutes to an hour in

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their homes imagining that they were boarders and acting out this assumption. They were instructed to conduct themselves in a circumspect and polite fashion. They were to avoid getting personal, to use formal address, to speak only when spoken to.

In nine of forty-nine cases students either refused to do the assignment (five cases) or the try was "unsuccessful" (four cases). Four of the "no try" students said they were afraid to do it; a fifth said she preferred to avoid the risk of exciting her mother who had a heart condition. In two of the "unsuccessful" cases the family treated it as a joke from the beginning and refused despite the continuing actions of the student to change. A third family took the view that something undisclosed was the matter, but what it might be was of no concern to them. In the fourth family the father and mother remarked that the daughter was being "extra nice" and undoubtedly wanted something that she would shortly reveal.

In the remaining four-fifths of the cases family members were stupified. They vigorously sought to make the strange actions intelligible and to restore the situation to normal appearances. Reports were filled with accounts of astonishment, bewilderment, shock, anxiety, embarrassment, and anger and with charges by various family members that the student was mean, inconsiderate, selfish, nasty, or impolite. Family members demanded explanations: What's the matter? What's gotten into you? Did you get fired? Are you sick? What are you being so superior about? Why are you mad? Are you out of your mind or are you just stupid? One student acutely embarrassed his mother in front of her friends by asking if she minded if he had a snack from the refrigerator. "Mind if you have a little snack? You've been eating little snacks around here for years without asking me. What's gotten into you?" One mother, infuriated when her daughter spoke to her only when she was spoken to, began to shriek in angry denunciation of the daughter for her disrespect and insubordination and refused to be calmed by the student's sister. A father berated his daughter for being insufficiently concerned for the welfare of others and of acting like a spoiled child.

Occasionally family members would first treat the student's action as a cue for a joint comedy routine which was soon replaced by irritation and exasperated anger at the student for not knowing when enough was enough. Family members mocked the "politeness" of the students—"Certainly, Mr. Herzberg!"—or charged the student with acting like a wise guy and generally reproved the "politeness" with sarcasm.

Explanations were sought in previous, understandable motives of the student: the student was working too hard in school; the student was ill; there had been "another fight" with a fiancee. When offered explanations by family members went unacknowledged, there followed withdrawal by the offended member, attempted isolation of the culprit, retaliation, and denunciation. "Don't bother with him, he's in one of his moods again"; "Pay no attention but just wait until he asks me for something"; "You're cutting me, okay I'll cut you and then some"; "Why must you always create friction in our family harmony?" Many accounts reported versions of the following confrontation. A father followed his son into the bedroom. "Your mother is right. You don't look well and you're not talking sense. You had better get another job that doesn't require such late hours." To this the student replied that he appreciated the consideration, but that he felt fine and only wanted a little privacy. The father responded in a high rage, "I don't want any more

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of *that* out of *you* and if you can't treat your mother decently you'd better move out!"

There were no cases in which the situation was not restorable upon the student's explanation. Nevertheless, for the most part family members were not amused and only rarely did they find the experience instructive as the student argued that it was supposed to have been. After hearing the explanation a sister replied coldly on behalf of a family of four, "Please, no more of these experiments. We're not rats, you know." Occasionally an explanation was accepted but still it added offense. In several cases students reported that the explanation left them, their families, or both wondering how much of what the student had said was "in character" and how much the student "really meant."

Students found the assignment difficult to complete. But in contrast with on-lookers' accounts students were likely to report that difficulties consisted in not being treated as if they were in the role that they were attempting to play, and of being confronted with situations but not knowing how a boarder would respond.

There were several entirely unexpected findings. (1) Although many students reported extensive rehearsals in imagination, very few mentioned anticipatory fears or embarrassment. (2) On the other hand, although unanticipated and nasty developments frequently occurred, in only one case did a student report serious regrets. (3) Very few students reported heartfelt relief when the hour was over. They were much more likely to report partial relief. They frequently reported that in response to the anger of others they became angry in return and slipped easily into subjectively recognizable feelings and actions.

In contrast to the reports of the on-looking "boarders" very few reports "behaviorized" the scene.

Background Understandings and Social Affects

Despite the interest in social affects that prevails in the social sciences, and despite the extensive concern that clinical psychiatry pays them, surprisingly little has been written on the socially structured conditions for their production, while the role that a background of common understandings plays in their production, control, and recognition is almost *terra incognita.* This lack of attention from experimental investigators is all the more remarkable if one considers that it is precisely this relationship that persons are concerned with in their common sense portrayals of how to conduct one's daily affairs so as to solicit enthusiasm and friendliness or avoid anxiety, guilt, shame, or boredom. The relationship between the common understandings and social affects may be illustrated by thinking of the acting out student-boarders' procedure as one that involved the production of bewilderment and anger by treating an important state of affairs as something that it "obviously," "naturally," and "really" is not.

The existence of a definite and strong relationship between common understandings and social affects can be demonstrated and some of its features explored by the deliberate display of distrust, a procedure that for us produced highly standardized effects. The rationale was as follows.

One of the background expectancies Schutz described concerns the sanctioned use of doubt as a constituent feature of a world that is being understood in common. Schutz proposed that for the *conduct of his everyday affairs* the person assumes, assumes the other person assumes as well, and assumes that as he assumes it of the other person the other person assumes it of him that a relationship of undoubted correspondence is the sanctioned relationship between the actual

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appearances of an object and the intended object that appears in a particular way. For the person conducting his everyday affairs, objects, for him as he expects for others, are as they appear to be. To treat this relationship under a *rule* of doubt requires that the necessity and motivation for such a rule be justified.

We anticipated that because of the differing relationship of an exhibited rule of doubt (distrust)[5] that the other person was as he appeared to be to the legitimate texture of common expectancies, there should be different affective states for the doubter and the doubted. On the part of the person distrusted there should be the demand for justification and when it was not forthcoming, as "anyone could see" it could not be, anger. For the experimenter we expected embarrassment to result from the disparity that the distrusting procedure would create between the lesser thing that the experimenter's challenges of "what anyone could see" made him out to be under the gaze of his victim, and the competent person he with others knew himself "after all" to be but which the procedure required that he could not claim.

Like Santayana's clock, this formulation was neither right nor wrong. Although the procedure produced what we anticipated, it also furnished us and the experimenters with more than we had bargained for.

Students were instructed to engage someone in conversation and to imagine and act on the assumption that what the other person was saying was directed by hidden motives which were his real ones. They were to assume that the other person was trying to trick them or mislead them.

In only two of thirty-five accounts did students attempt the assignment with strangers. Most students were afraid that such a situation would get out of hand so they selected friends, roommates, siblings, and family members. Even so they reported considerable rehearsal in imagination, much review of possible consequences, and deliberate selections among eligible persons.

The attitude was difficult to sustain and carry through. Students reported acute awareness of being "in an artificial game," of being unable "to live the part," and of frequently being "at a loss as to what to do next." In the course of listening to the other person experimenters would lose sight of the assignment. One student spoke for several when she said she was unable to get any results because so much of her effort was directed to maintaining an attitude of distrust that she was unable to follow the conversation. She said she was unable to imagine how her fellow conversationalists might be deceiving her because they were talking about such inconsequential matters.

With many students the assumption that the other person was not what he appeared to be and was to be distrusted was the same as the attribution that the other person was angry with them and hated them. On the other hand many victims, although they complained that

[5] The concepts of "trust" and "distrust" are elaborated in my paper, "A Conception of and Experiments with 'Trust' as a Condition of Stable Concerted Actions," in *Motivation and Social Interaction,* edited by O. J. Harvey, New York: The Ronald Press, 1963, pp. 187-238. The term "trust" is used there to refer to a person's compliance with the expectancies of the attitude of daily life as a morality. Acting in accordance with a rule of doubt directed to the correspondence between appearances and the objects that appearances are appearances of is only one way of specifying "distrust." Modifications of each of the other expectancies that make up the attitude of everyday life, as well as their various sub-sets, furnish variations on the central theme of treating a world that one is required to know in common and take for granted as a problematic matter. See footnote 2 for references to Schutz' discussions of the attitude of daily life. The attitude's constituent expectancies are briefly enumerated below, pp. 237-238.

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the student had no reason to be angry with them, offered unsolicited attempts at explanation and conciliation. When this was of no avail there followed frank displays of anger and "disgust."

Anticipated and acute embarrassment swiftly materialized for the two students who attempted the procedure with strangers. After badgering a bus driver for assurances that the bus would pass the street that she wanted and receiving several assurances in return that indeed the bus did pass the street, the exasperated bus driver shouted so that all passengers overheard, "Look lady, I told you once, didn't I? How many times do I have to tell you!" She reported, "I shrank to the back of the bus to sink as low as I could in the seat. I had gotten a good case of cold feet, a flaming face, and a strong dislike for my assignment."

There were very few reports of shame or embarrassment from students who tried it with friends and family. Instead they were surprised, and so were we, to find as one student reported that "once I started acting the role of a hated person I actually came to feel somewhat hated and by the time I left the table I was quite angry." Even more surprising to us, many reported that they found the procedure enjoyable and this included the real anger not only of others but their own.

Although students' explanations easily restored most situations, some episodes "turned serious" and left a residue of disturbance for one or both parties that offered explanation did not resolve. This can be illustrated in the report of a student housewife who at the conclusion of dinner, and with some trepidation, questioned her husband about his having worked late the night before and raised a question about his actually having played poker as he claimed on an evening of the week before. Without asking him what he had actually done she indicated an explanation was called for. He replied sarcastically, "You seem to be uneasy about something. Do you know what it might be? This conversation would no doubt make more sense if *I* knew too." She accused him of deliberately avoiding the subject, although the subject had not been mentioned. He insisted that *she* tell *him* what the *subject* was. When she did not say, he asked directly, "Okay, what's the joke?" Instead of replying "I gave him a long hurt look." He became visibly upset, became very solicitous, gentle, and persuasive. In response she acknowledged the experiment. He stalked off obviously unhappy and for the remainder of the evening was sullen and suspicious. She, in the meanwhile, remained at the table piqued and unsettled about the remarks that her statements had drawn forth about his not being bored at work "with all the insinuations it might or could mean," particularly the insinuation that he was not bored at work but he *was* bored with her and at home. She wrote, "I was actually bothered by his remarks . . . I felt more upset and worried than he did throughout the experiment . . . about how imperturbable he seemed to be." Neither one attempted nor wanted to discuss the matter further. The following day the husband confessed that he had been considerably disturbed and had the following reactions in this order: determination to remain calm; shock at his wife's "suspicious nature"; surprise to find that cheating on her was liable to be hard; a determination to make her figure out her own answers to her questions without any denial or help from him; extreme relief when the encounter was revealed to have been experimentally contrived; but finally a residue of uneasy feelings which he characterized as "his shaken ideas of my (the wife's) nature which remained for the rest of the evening."

Background Understandings and Bewilderment

Earlier the argument was made that

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the possibility of common understanding does not consist in demonstrated measures of shared knowledge of social structure but consists instead and entirely in the enforceable character of actions in compliance with the expectancies of everyday life as a morality. Common sense knowledge of the facts of social life for the members of the society is institutionalized knowledge of the real world. Not only does common sense knowledge portray a real society for members but in the manner of a self fulfilling prophecy the features of the real society are produced by persons' motivated compliance with these background expectancies. Hence the stability of concerted actions that occur under the auspices of this compliance as well as the extent and severity of disturbances in concerted actions should vary directly with whatsoever are the real conditions of social organization that guarantee persons' motivated compliance with this background texture of relevances as a legitimate order of beliefs about life in society seen "from within" the society. Seen from the person's point of view, his commitments to motivated compliance consist of his grasp of and subscription to the "natural facts of life in society."

Such considerations suggest that the firmer a societal member's grasp of What Anyone Like Us Necessarily Knows, the more severe should be his disturbance when "natural facts of life" are impugned for him as a depiction of his real circumstances. To test this suggestion a procedure would need to modify the *objective* structure of the familiar, known-in-common environment by rendering the background expectancies inoperative. Specifically, this modification would consist of subjecting a person to a breach of the background expectancies of everyday life while (a) making it difficult for the person to interpret his situation as a game, an experiment, a deception, a play, i.e., as something other than the one known according to the attitude of everyday life as a matter of enforceable morality and action, (b) making it necessary that he reconstruct the "natural facts" but giving him insufficient time to manage the reconstruction with respect to required mastery of practical circumstances for which he must call upon his knowledge of the "natural facts," and (c) requiring that he manage the reconstruction of the natural facts by himself and without consensual validation.

Presumably he should have no alternative but to try to normalize the resultant incongruities within the order of events of everyday life. Under the developing effort itself, events should lose their perceivedly normal character. The member should be unable to recognize an event's status as typical. Judgments of likelihood should fail him. He should be unable to assign present occurrences to similar orders of events he has known in the past. He should be unable to assign, let alone to "see at a glance," the conditions under which the events can be reproduced. He should be unable to order these events to means-ends relationships. The conviction should be undermined that the moral authority of the familiar society compels their occurrence. Stable and "realistic" matchings of intentions and objects should dissolve, by which I mean that the ways, otherwise familiar to him, in which the objective perceived environment serves as both the motivating grounds of feelings and is motivated by feelings directed to it, should become obscure. In short, the members' real perceived environment on losing its known in common background should become "specifically senseless."[6] Ideally speaking, behaviors directed to such a senseless environment should be those of bewilderment, uncertainty, internal conflict, psychosocial isolation, acute and nameless

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anxiety along with various symptoms of acute depersonalization. Structures of interaction should be correspondingly disorganized.

This is expecting quite a lot of a breach of the background expectancies. Obviously we would settle for less if the results of a procedure for their breach was at all encouraging about this formulation. As it happens, the procedure produced convincing and easily detected bewilderment and anxiety.

To begin with, it is necessary to specify just what expectancies we are dealing with. Schutz reported that the feature of a scene, "known in common with others," was compound and consisted of several constituents. Because they have been discussed elsewhere[7] I shall restrict discussion to brief enumeration.

According to Schutz, the person assumes, assumes that the other person assumes as well, and assumes that as he assumes it of the other person the other person assumes the same for him:

1. That the determinations assigned to an event by the witness are required matters that hold on grounds that specifically disregard personal opinion or socially structured circumstances of particular witnesses, i.e., that the determinations are required as matters of "objective necessity" or "facts of nature."

2. That a relationship of undoubted correspondence is the sanctioned relationship between the-presented-appearance-of-the-object and the-intended-object-that-presents-itself-in-the-perspective-of-the-particular-appearance.

3. That the event that is known in the manner that it is known can actually and potentially affect the witness and can be affected by his action.

4. That the meanings of events are products of a socially standardized process of naming, reification, and idealization of the user's stream of experience, i.e., are the products of a language.

5. That present determinations of an event, whatsoever these may be, are determinations that were intended on previous occasions and that may be again intended in identical fashion on an indefinite number of future occasions.

6. That the intended event is retained as the temporally identical event throughout the stream of experience.

7. That the event has as its context of interpretation: (a) a commonly entertained scheme of interpretation consisting of a standardized system of signals and coding rules, and (b) "What anyone knows," i.e., a preestablished corpus of socially warranted knowledge.

8. That the actual determinations that the event exhibits for the witness are the potential determinations that it would exhibit for the other person were they to exchange positions.

9. That to each event there corresponds its determinations that originate in the witness's and in the other person's particular biography. From the witness's point of view such determinations are irrelevant for the purposes at hand of either and both he and the other have selected and interpreted the actual and potential determinations of events in an impirically identical manner that is sufficient for all their practical purposes.

10. That there is a characteristic disparity between the publicly acknowl-

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[6] The term is borrowed from Max Weber's essay, "The Social Psychology of the World Religions," in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology,* translated by H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, New York: Oxford University Press, 1946, pp. 267-301. I have adapted its meaning.

[7] *Op. cit.,* Schutz, "On Multiple Realities," and "Common Sense and Scientific Interpretation of Human Action." *Op. cit.,* Garfinkel, "A Conception of and Experiments with 'Trust' . . . " and "Common Sense Knowledge of Social Structures," *Transactions of the Fourth World Congress of Sociology,* Milan, 1959, Vol. 4, pp. 51-65.

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edged determinations and the personal, withheld determinations of events, and this private knowledge is held in reserve, i.e., that the event means for both the witness and the other more than the witness can say.

11. That alterations of this characteristic disparity remain within the witness' autonomous control.

It is *not* the case that what an event exhibits as a distinctive determination is a condition of its membership in a known-in-the - manner - of - common-sense-environment. Instead the conditions of its membership are the attributions that its determinations, *whatever they might substantively consist of,* could be seen by the other person if their positions were exchanged, or that its features are not assigned as matters of personal preference but are to be seen by anyone, i.e., the previously enumerated features. These and only these enumerated features *irrespective* of any other determinations of an event define the common sense character of an event. Whatever other determinations an event of everyday life may exhibit—whether its determinations are those of persons' motives, their life histories, the distributions of income in the population, kinship obligations, the organization of an industry, or what ghosts do when night falls—if and only if the event has for the witness the enumerated determinations is it an event in an environment "known in common with others."

Such attributions are features of witnessed events that are seen without being noticed. They are demonstrably relevant to the common sense that the actor makes of what is going on about him. They inform the witness about any particular appearance of an interpersonal environment. They inform the witness as to the real objects that actual appearances are the appearances of, but without these attributed features necessarily being recognized in a deliberate or conscious fashion.

Since each of the expectancies that make up the attitude of daily life assigns an expected feature to the actor's environment, it should be possible to breach these expectancies by deliberately modifying scenic events so as to disappoint these attributions. By definition, surprise is possible with respect to each of these expected features. The nastiness of surprise should vary directly with the extent to which the person as a matter of moral necessity complies with their use as a scheme for assigning witnessed appearances their status as events in a perceivedly normal environment. In short, the realistic grasp by a collectivity member of the natural facts of life, and his commitment to a knowledge of them as a condition of self-esteem as a bona-fide and competent collectivity member,[8] is the condition that we require in order to maximize his confusion upon the occasion that the grounds of this grasp are made a source of irreducible incongruity.

I designed a procedure to breach these expectancies while satisfying the three conditions under which their breach would presumably produce confusion, i.e., that the person could not

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[8] I use the term "competence" to mean the claim that a collectivity member is entitled to exercise that he is capable of managing his everyday affairs without interference. That members can take such claims for granted I refer to by speaking of a person as a "bona-fide" collectivity member. More extensive discussion of the relationships between "competence" and "common sense knowledge of social structures" will be found in the Ph.D. dissertation by Egon Bittner, "Popular Interests in Psychiatric Remedies: A Study in Social Control," University of California, Los Angeles, 1961.

The concepts of "collectivity" and "collectivity membership" are intended in strict accord with Talcott Parsons' usage in *The Social System,* Glencoe: The Free Press, 1951, and in the general introduction to *Theories of Society,* by Talcott Parsons, Edward Shils, Kaspar D. Naegele, and Jesse R. Pitts, New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1961.

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turn the situation into a play, a joke, an experiment, a deception and the like, or, in Lewinian terminology, that he could not "leave the field"; that he have insufficient time to work through a redefinition of his real circumstances; and that he be deprived of consensual support for an alternative definition of social reality.

Twenty-eight pre-medical students were run individually through a three hour experimental interview. As part of the solicitation of subjects as well as at the beginning of the interview, the experimenter identified himself as a representative of an Eastern medical school who was attempting to learn why the medical school intake interview was such a stressful situation. It was hoped that identifying the experimenter as a person with medical school ties would make it difficult for students to "leave the field" once the expectancy breaching procedure began. How the other two conditions of (a) managing a redefinition in insufficient time and (b) not being able to count on consensual support for an alternative definition of social reality were met will be apparent in the following description.

During the first hour of the interview the student furnished to the "medical school representative" the medical interview facts-of-life by answering for the representative such questions as "what sources of information about a candidate are available to medical schools?", "What kind of man are the medical schools looking for?", "What should a good candidate do in the interview?", "What should he avoid?" With this much completed the student was told that the representative's research interests had been satisfied. The student was then asked if he would care to hear a recording of an actual interview. All students wanted very much to hear the recording.

The recording was a faked one between a "medical school interviewer" and an "applicant." The applicant was a boor, his language was ungrammatical and filled with colloquialisms, he was evasive, he contradicted the interviewer, he bragged, he ran down other schools and professions, he insisted on knowing how he had done in the interview. Detailed assessments by the student of the recorded applicant were obtained immediately after the recording was finished.

The student was then given information from the applicant's "official record." Performance information, and characterological information was furnished in that order. Performance information dealt with the applicant's activities, grades, family background, courses, charity work and the like. Characterological information consisted of character assessments by "Dr. Gardner, the medical school interviewer," "six psychiatrically trained members of the admissions committee who had heard only the recorded interview," and "other students."

The information was deliberately contrived to contradict the principal points in the student's assessment. For example, if the student said that the applicant must have come from a lower class family, he was told that the applicant's father was vice president of a firm that manufactured pneumatic doors for trains and buses. Was the applicant ignorant? Then he had excelled in courses like The Poetry of Milton and Dramas of Shakespeare. If the student said the applicant did not know how to get along with people, then the applicant had worked as a voluntary solicitor for Sydenham Hospital in New York City and had raised $32,000 from 30 "big givers." That the applicant was stupid and would not do well in a scientific field was met by citing A's in organic and physical chemistry and graduate level performance in an undergraduate research course.

Students wanted very much to know

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what "the others" thought of the applicant and had he been admitted? The student was told that the applicant had been admitted and was living up to the promise that the medical school interviewer and the "six psychiatrists" had found and expressed in a strong recommendation of the applicant's characterological fitness which was read to the student. As for the views of other students, the student was told (for example) that thirty other students had been seen, that twenty-eight were in entire agreement with the medical school interviewer's assessment, and the remaining two had been slightly uncertain but at the first bit of information had seen him just as the others had.

Following this the student was invited to listen to the record a second time, after which he was asked to assess the applicant again.

Results. Twenty-five of the twenty-eight students were taken in. The following does not apply to the three who were convinced there was a deception. Two of these are discussed at the conclusion of this section.

Students managed incongruities of performance data with vigorous attempts to make it factually compatible with their original and very derogatory assessments. For example, many said that the applicant sounded like or was a lower class person. When they were told that his father was vice president of a national corporation which manufactured pneumatic doors for trains and buses, they replied like this:

> "That explains why he said he had to work. Probably his father made him work. That would make a lot of his moans unjustified in the sense that things were really not so bad."

When told he had a straight A average in physical science courses, students began to acknowledge bewilderment openly.

> "Well! I think you can analyze it this way. In psychological terms. See—one possible way—now I may be all *wet* but this is the way I look at *that*. He probably suffered from an inferiority complex and that's an over compensation for his inferiority complex. His *great* marks—his *good* marks are a compensation for his failure—in social dealings perhaps, I don't know."

Attempts to resolve the incongruities produced by the character assessment of "Gardner" and "the other six judges" were very much less frequent than normalizing attempts with performance information. Open expressions of bewilderment and anxiety interspersed with silent ruminations were characteristic:

> (Whistles.) I—I don't think he sounded well bred at all. That whole tone of voice! ! —I— Perhaps you noticed though, when he said "You should have said in the first place," *before* he (the recorded medical school examiner) took it with a smile. — But even so! No, no I can't see that. "You should have said that before." Maybe he was being funny though. Exercising a — No! To me it sounded impertinent!

Soon after the performance data produced its consternation, students occasionally asked what the other students made of him. Only after they were given "Dr. Gardner's" assessment, and their responses to it had been made, were the opinions of "the other students" given. In some cases the subject was told "Thirty-four out of thirty-five before you agreed with Dr. Gardner," sometimes forty-three out of forty-five, nineteen out of twenty, fifty-one out of fifty-two. All the numbers were large. For eighteen of the twenty-five students the delivery hardly varied from the following protocol:

> (36 out of 37) I would go back on my former opinion but I wouldn't go back too far. I just don't see it. — Why should I have these different standards? Were my opinions more or less in agreement? (No.) That leads me to think.— That's funny. Unless you got thirty-six unusual people. I can't understand it. Maybe it's my personality. (Does it make any difference?) It does make a difference if I assume they're correct.

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> What I consider is proper, they don't. — It's my attitude — Still in all a man of that sort would alienate me, a wise guy type to be avoided. Of course you can talk like that with other fellows— but in an interview? . . . Now I'm more confused than I was at the beginning of the entire interview. I think I ought to go home and look in the mirrow and talk to myself. Do you have any ideas? (Why? Does it disturb you?) Yes it *does* disturb me! It makes me think my abilities to judge people and values are way off from normal. It's not a healthy situation. (What difference does it make?) If I act the way I act it seems to me that I'm just putting my head in the lion's mouth. I did have preconceptions but they're shattered all to hell. It makes me wonder about myself. Why should I have these different standards. It all points to me.

Of the twenty-five subjects that were taken in, seven were unable to resolve the incongruity of having been wrong about such an obvious matter and were unable to "see" the alternative. Their suffering was dramatic and unrelieved. Five more resolved it with the view that the medical school had accepted a good man; five others with the view that it had accepted a boor. Although they changed they nevertheless did not abandon their former views. For them Gardner's view could be seen "in general" but it was a grasp without conviction. When their attention was drawn to particulars the general picture would evaporate. These subjects were willing to entertain and use the "general" picture but they suffered whenever indigestible particulars of the same portrait came into view. Subscription to the "general" picture was accompanied by a recitation of characteristics that were not only the opposite of those in the subject's original assessment but were intensified by superlative adjectives so that where previously the candidate was gauche, he was now "supremely" poised; where he had been boorish, he was "very" natural; where he had been hysterical, he was "very" calm. Further, they saw the new features through a new appreciation of the way the medical examiner had been listening. They *saw*, for example, that the examiner *was smiling* when the applicant had forgotten to offer him a cigarette.

Three more subjects were convinced that there was a deception and acted on the conviction through the interview. They showed no disturbance. Two of them showed acute suffering as soon as it appeared that the interview was finished, and they were being dismissed with no acknowledgement of a deception.

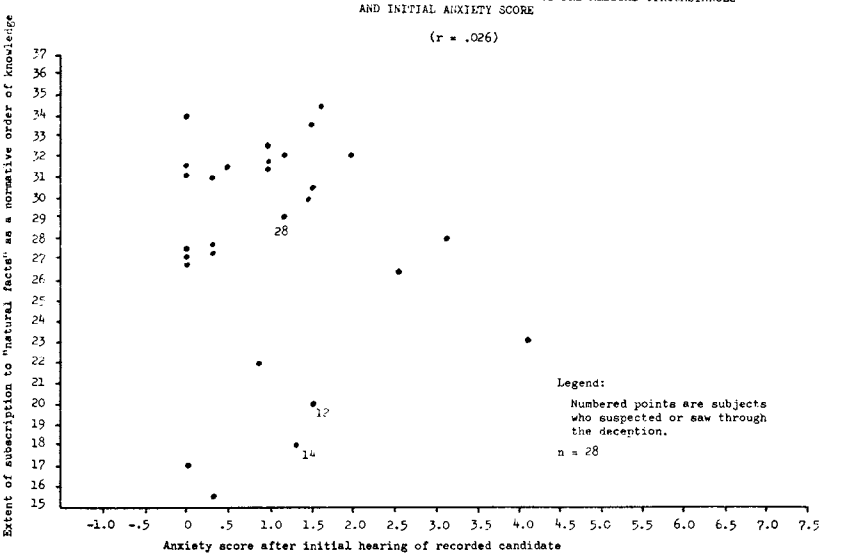
Three others, by suffering in silence, confounded the experimenter. Without giving any indication to the experimenter, they regarded the interview as an experimental one in which they were required to solve some problems and thought therefore they were being asked to do as well as possible and to make no changes in their opinions for only then would they be contributing to the study. They were difficult for the experimenter to understand during the interview because they displayed marked anxiety yet their remarks were bland and were not addressed to the matters that were provoking it. Finally three more subjects contrasted with the others. One of these insisted that the character assessments were semantically ambiguous and because there was insufficient information a "high correlation opinion" was not possible. A second, the only one in the series, according to his account found the second portrait as convincing as the original one. When the deception was revealed he was disturbed that he could have been as convinced as he was. The third one in the face of everything showed only slight disturbance of very short duration. However, he alone among the subjects had already been interviewed for medical school and had excellent medical school contacts. Despite a grade point average of less than C, he estimated his chances of admission as fair and

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FIGURE 1

CORRELATION OF THE EXTENT OF SUBJECT'S SUBSCRIPTION TO THE "NATURAL FACTS" AS AN INSTITUTIONALIZED ORDER OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT PRE-MEDICAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND INITIAL ANXIETY SCORE

(r = .026)



had expressed his preference for a career in the diplomatic service over a career in medicine.

As a final observation, twenty-two of the twenty-eight subjects expressed marked relief—ten of them with explosive expressions—when the deception was disclosed. Unanimously they said that the news of the deception permitted them to return to their former views. Seven subjects had to be convinced that there had been a deception. When the deception was revealed they asked what they were to believe. Was the experimenter telling them that there had been a deception in order to make them feel better? No pains were spared and whatever truth or lies that had to be told were told in order to establish the truth that there had been a deception.

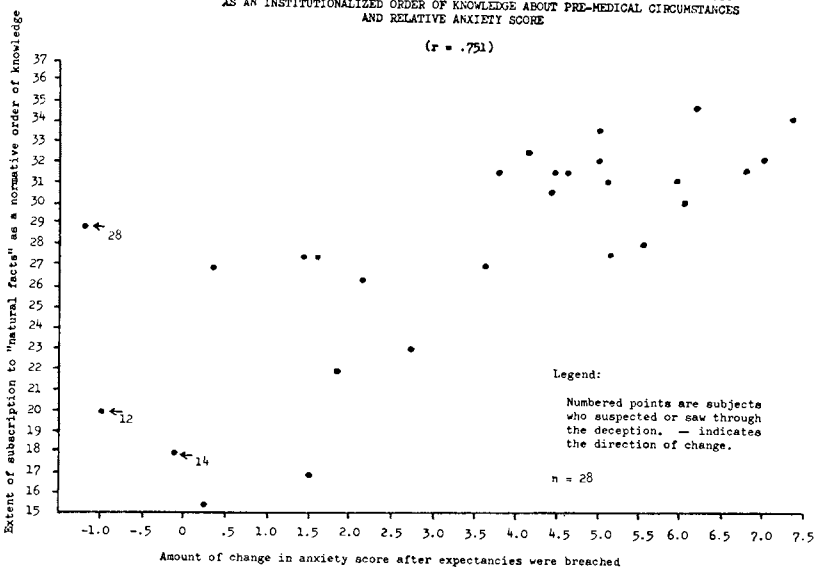
Because motivated compliance to the expectancies that make up the attitude of daily life consists from the person's point of view of his grasp of and subscription to the "natural facts of life," variations in the organizational conditions of motivated compliance for different collectivity members would consist of members' differential grasp of and subscription to the "natural facts of life." Hence the severity of the effects described above should vary directly with the enforceable commitments of members to a grasp of the natural facts of life. Further, because of the *objective* character of the grasped common moral order of the facts of collectivity life, the severity should vary with their committed grasp of the natural facts of life and independently of "personality characteristics." By personality characteristics I mean all characteristics of persons that investigators use methodologically to account for a person's courses of action by referring these actions to more or less systematically conceived motivational and "inner life" variables while disregarding social and cultural system effects. The results of most conventional personality assessment devices and clinical psychiatric procedures satisfy

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FIGURE 2

CORRELATION OF THE EXTENT OF SUBJECT'S SUBSCRIPTION TO THE "NATURAL FACTS" AS AN INSTITUTIONALIZED ORDER OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT PRE-MEDICAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND RELATIVE ANXIETY SCORE

(r = .751)



this condition.

Thereby, the following phenomenon should be discoverable. Imagine a procedure whereby a convincing assessment can be made of the extent of a person's committed grasp of the "natural facts of social life." Imagine another procedure whereby the extent of a person's confusion can be assessed ranging through the various degrees and mixtures of the behaviors described before. For a set of unselected persons, and independently of personality determinations, the initial relationship between the committed "grasp of natural facts" and "confusion" should be random. Under the breach of the expectancies of everyday life, given the conditions for the optimal production of disturbance, persons should shift in exhibited confusion in an amount that is coordinate with the original extent of their grasp of the "natural facts of life."

The type of phenomenon that I propose is discoverable is portrayed in Figures 1 and 2 which are based on the study of the twenty-eight pre-medical students reported above. Prior to the introduction of incongruous material, the extent of students' subscription to a common moral order of facts of pre-medical school life and the students' anxiety correlated —.026. After the incongruous material had been introduced and unsuccessfully normalized, and before the deception was revealed, the correlation was .751. Because assessment procedures were extremely crude, because of serious errors in design and procedure, and because of the *post hoc* argument, *these results do no more than illustrate what I am talking about. Under no circumstances should they be considered as findings.*

The Relevance of Common Understandings to the Fact That Models of Man in Society Portray Him as a Judgmental Dope

Many studies have documented the finding that the social standardization

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of common understandings, irrespective of what it is that is standardized, orients persons' actions to scenic events, and furnishes persons the grounds upon which departures from perceivedly normal courses of affairs are detectable, restoration is made, and effortful action is mobilized.

Social science theorists—most particularly social psychiatrists, social psychologists, anthropologists, and sociologists—have used the fact of standardization to conceive the character and consequences of actions that comply with standardized expectancies. Generally they have acknowledged but otherwise neglected the fact that by these same actions persons discover, create, and sustain this standardization. An important and prevalent consequence of this neglect is that of being misled about the nature and conditions of stable actions. This occurs by making out the member of the society to be a judgmental dope of a cultural and/or psychological sort with the result that the *unpublished* results of any accomplished study of the relationship between actions and standardized expectations will invariably contain enough incongruous material to invite essential revision.

By "cultural dope" I refer to the man-in-the-sociologist's-society who produces the stable features of the society by acting in compliance with preestablished and legitimate alternatives of action that the common culture provides. The "psychological dope" is the man-in-the-psychologist's-society who produces the stable features of the society by choices among alternative courses of action that are compelled on the grounds of psychiatric biography, conditioning history, and the variables of mental functioning. The common feature in the use of these "models of man" is the fact that courses of common sense rationalities[9] of judgment which involve the person's use of common sense knowledge of social structures over the temporal "succession" of here and now situations are treated as epiphenomenal.

The misleading character of the use of the judgmental dope to portray the relationship between standardized expectancies and courses of action goes to the problem of adequate explanation as the controlling consideration in the investigator's decision to either consider or disregard the common sense rationalities when deciding the necessary relationships between courses of action, given such problematic considerations as perspectival choice, subjectivity, and inner time. A favored solution is to portray what the member's actions will have come to by using the stable structures—what they came to—as a point of theoretical departure from which to portray the necessary character of the pathways whereby the end result is assembled. Hierarchies of need dispositions, and common culture as enforced rules of action are favored devices for bringing the problem of necessary inference to terms, although at the cost of making out the person-in-society to be a judgmental dope.

How is an investigator *doing* it when he is making out the member of a society to be a judgmental dope? Several examples will furnish some specifics and consequences.

I assigned students the task of bargaining for standard priced merchandise. The relevant standardized expectancy is the "institutionalized one price rule," a constituent element, according to Parsons,[10] of the institution of contract. Because of its "internalized" char-

[9] Common sense rationalities are discussed at length in Schutz, *op. cit., Economica,* and in my article, "The Rational Properties of Scientific and Common Sense Activities," *Behavioral Science,* 5 (January, 1960), pp. 72-83. The common sense rationalities were made the basis of a radical criticism and reconstruction of sociological interests in mental illness in Egon Bittner, *op. cit.*

[10] Parsons, Talcott, "Economy, Polity, Money, and Power," dittoed manuscript, 1959.

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acter the student-customers should have been fearful and shamed by the prospective assignment, and shamed by having done it. Reciprocally, anxiety and anger should have been commonly reported for sales persons.

Sixty-eight students were required to accomplish one trial only for any item costing no more than two dollars, and were to offer much less than the asking price. Another sixty-seven students were required to accomplish a series of six trials: three for items costing two dollars or less, and three for items costing fifty dollars or more.

Findings. (a) Sales persons can be dismissed as either having been dopes in different ways than current theories of standardized expectancies provide, or not dopes enough. A few showed some anxiety; occasionally one got angry. (b) Twenty percent of the single tries refused to try or aborted the effort, as compared with three percent of those who had been assigned the series of six trials. (c) When the bargaining episode was analyzed as consisting of a series of steps—anticipation of the trial, approaching the sales person, actually making the offer, the ensuing interaction, terminating the episode, and afterwards—it was found that fears occurred with the greatest frequency in both groups in anticipating the assignment and approaching the sales person *for the first try.* Among the single trials the number of persons who reported discomfort declined with each successive step in the sequence. Most of the students who bargained in two or more trials reported that by the third episode they were enjoying the assignment. (d) Most students reported less discomfort in bargaining for high priced than low priced merchandise. (e) Following the six episodes many students reported that they had learned to their "surprise" that one could bargain in standard priced settings with some realistic chance of an advantageous outcome and planned to do so in the future, particularly for costly merchandise.

Such findings suggest that one can make the member of the society out to be a cultural dope (a) by portraying a member of the society as one who operates by the rules when one is actually talking about the anticipatory anxiety that prevents him from permitting a situation to develop, let alone confronting a situation in which he has the alternative of acting or not with respect to a rule; or (b) by overlooking the practical and theoretical importance of the mastery of fears. (c) If upon the arousal of troubled feelings persons avoid tinkering with these "standardized" expectancies, the standardization could consist of an *attributed* standardization that is supported by the fact that persons avoid the very situations in which they might learn about them.

Lay as well as professional knowledge of the nature of rule governed actions and the consequences of breaching the rules is prominently based on just such procedure. Indeed, the more important the rule, the greater is the likelihood that knowledge is based on avoided tests. Strange findings must certainly await anyone who examines the expectancies that make up routine backgrounds of common place activities for they have rarely been exposed by investigators even to as much revision as an imaginative rehearsal of their breach would produce.

Another way in which the member of the society can be made a judgmental dope is by using any of the available theories of the formal properties of signs and symbols to portray the way persons construe environmental displays as significant ones. The dope is made out in several ways. I shall mention two.

(a) Characteristically, formal investigations have been concerned either with devising normative theories of

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symbolic usages or, while seeking descriptive theories, have settled for normative ones. In either case it is necessary to instruct the construing member to act in accordance with the investigator's instructions in order to guarantee that the investigator will be able to study their usages as instances of the usages the investigator has in mind. But, following Wittgenstein,[11] person's actual usages are rational usages in *some* "language game." What is *their* game? As long as this programmatic question is neglected, it is inevitable that person's usages will fall short. The more will this be so the more are subjects' interests in usages dictated by different practical considerations than those of investigators.

(b) Available theories have many important things to say about such sign functions as marks and indications, but they are silent on such overwhelmingly more common functions as glosses, synecdoche, documented representation, euphemism, irony, and double entendre. References to common sense knowledge of ordinary affairs may be safely disregarded in detecting and analyzing marks and indications as sign functions *because* users disregard them as well. The analysis of irony, double entendre, glosses, and the like, however, imposes different requirements. Any attempt to consider the related character of utterances, meanings, perspectives, and orders necessarily requires reference to common sense knowledge of ordinary affairs.

Although investigators have neglected these "complex" usages, they have not put their problematic character entirely aside. Instead, they have glossed them by portraying the usages of the member of a language community as either culture bound or need compelled, or by construing the pairing of appearances and intended objects—the pairing of "sign" and "referrent"—as an association. In each case a procedural description of such symbolic usages is precluded by neglecting the judgmental work of the user.

Precisely this judgmental work, along with its reliance upon and its reference to common sense knowledge of social structures, forced itself upon our attention in every case where incongruities were induced. Out attention was forced *because* our subjects had exactly their judgmental work and common sense knowledge to contend with as matters which the incongruities presented to them as practical problems. Every procedure that involved departures from an anticipated course of ordinary affairs, regardless of whether the departure was gross or slight, aroused recognition in subjects that the experimenter was engaged in double talk, irony, glosses, euphemism, or lies. This occurred repeatedly in departures from ordinary game play.

Students were instructed to play ticktacktoe and to mix their subjects by age, sex, and degree of acquaintance. After drawing the ticktacktoe matrix they invited the subject to move first. After the subject made his move the experimenter erased the subject's mark, moved it to another square and made his own mark but without giving any indications that anything about the play was unusual. In half of 247 trials students reported that subjects treated the move as a gesture with hidden but definite significance. Subjects were convinced that the experimenter was "after something" that he was not saying and whatever he "really" was doing had nothing to do with ticktacktoe. He was making a sexual pass; he was commenting on the subject's stupidity; he was making a slurring or an impudent gesture. Identical effects occurred when students bargained for standard priced merchandise, or asked the other to clarify his commonplace remarks, or joined without invitation a strange

[11] Wittgenstein, Ludwig, *Philosophical Investigations,* Oxford; Basil Blackwell, 1959.

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group of conversationalists, or used a gaze that during an ordinary conversation wandered "randomly" by time to various objects in the scene.

Still another way of making the person out for a cultural dope is to simplify the communicative texture of his behavioral environment. For example, by giving physical events preferred status one can theorize out of existence the way the person's scene, as a texture of potential and actual events, contains not only appearances and attributions but the person's own lively inner states as well. We encountered this in the following procedure.

Students were instructed to select someone other than a family member and in the course of an ordinary conversation and, without indicating that anything unusual was happening, to bring their faces up to the subject's until their noses were almost touching. According to most of the 79 accounts, regardless of whether the pairs were the same or different sexes, whether they were acquaintances or close friends (strangers were prohibited), and regardless of age differences except where children were involved, the procedure motivated in *both* experimenter and subject attributions of a sexual intent on the part of the other though confirmation of this intent was withheld by the very character of the procedure. Such attributions to the other were accompanied by the person's own impulses which themselves became part of the scene as their not only being desired but their desiring. The unconfirmed invitation to choose had its accompanying conflictful hesitancy about acknowledging the choice and having been chosen. Attempted avoidance, bewilderment, acute embarrassment, furtiveness, and above all uncertainties of these as well as uncertainties of fear, hope, and anger were characteristic. These effects were most pronounced between males. Characteristically, experimenters were unable to restore the situation. Subjects were only partially accepting of the experimenter's explanation that it has been done "as an experiment for a course in Sociology." They often complained, "All right, it was an experiment, but why did you have to choose *me*?" Characteristically, subject and experimenter wanted some further resolution than the explanation furnished but were uncertain about what it could or should consist of.

Finally, the member may be made out to be a judgmental dope by portraying routine actions as those governed by prior agreements, and by making the likelihood that a member will recognize deviance depend upon the existence of prior agreements. That this is a matter of mere theoretical preference whose use theorizes essential phenomena out of existence can be seen by considering the commonplace fact that persons will hold each other to agreements whose terms they never actually stipulated. This neglected property of common understandings has far reaching consequences when it is explicitly brought into the portrayal of the nature of "agreements."

Apparently no matter how specific the terms of common understandings may be—a contract may be considered the prototype—they attain the status of an agreement for persons only insofar as the stipulated conditions carry along an unspoken but understood *et cetera*[12] clause. Specific stipulations are formulated under the rule of an agreement by being brought under the jurisdiction of the *et cetera* clause. This does not occur once and for all, but is essentially bound to both the inner and outer temporal course of activities and thereby to the progressive development of circumstances and their contingencies. Therefore it is both misleading and incorrect to think of an agreement as an actuarial device where-

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by persons are enabled as of any Here and Now to predict each other's future activities. More accurately, common understandings that have been formulated under the rule of an agreement are used by persons to normalize whatever their actual activities turn out to be. Not only can contingencies arise, but persons know as of any Here and Now that contingencies can materialize or be invented at any time that it must be decided whether or not what the parties actually did satisfied the agreement. The *et cetera* clause provides for the certainty that unknown conditions are at every hand in terms of which an agreement, as of any particular moment, can be retrospectively reread to find out in light of present practical circumstances what the agreement "really" consisted of "in the first place" and "all along." That the work of bringing present circumstances under the rule of previously agreed activity is sometimes contested should not be permitted to mask its pervasive and routine use as an ongoing and essential feature of "actions in accord with common understandings."

This process, which I shall call a method of discovering agreements by eliciting or imposing a respect for the rule of practical circumstances, is a version of practical ethics. Although it has received little if any attention by social scientists, it is a matter of the most abiding and commonplace concern in everyday affairs and common sense theories of these affairs. Adeptness in the deliberate manipulation of *et cetera* considerations for the furtherance of specific advantages is an occupational talent of lawyers and is specifically taught to law school students. One should not suppose, however, that because it is a lawyer's skill, that only lawyers are skilled at it, or that only those who do so deliberately, do so at all. The method is general to the phenomenon of the society as a system of rule governed activities.[13] It is available as one of the mechanisms whereby potential and actual successes and windfalls, on the one hand, and the disappointments, frustrations, and failures, on the other, that persons must inevitably encounter by reason of seeking to comply with agreements, can be managed while retaining the perceived reasonableness of actual socially organized activities.

A small scale but accurate instance of this phenomenon was consistently produced by a procedure in which the experimenter engaged others in conversation while he had a wire recorder hidden under his coat. In the course of the

[12] The *et cetera* clause, its properties, and the consequences of its use have been prevailing topics of study and discussion among the members of the Conferences on Ethnomethodology that have been in progress at the University of California, Los Angeles, and the University of Colorado since February, 1962, with the aid of a grant from the U. S. Air Force Office of Scientific Research. Conference members are Egon Bittner, Harold Garfinkel, Craig MacAndrew, Edward Rose, and Harvey Sacks. Published discussions of *et cetra* by conference participants will be found in Egon Bittner, "Radicalism: A Study of the Sociology of Knowledge," *American Sociological Review* (in press); Harvey Sacks, "On Sociological Description," *Berkeley Journal of Sociology,* 8 (1963), pp. 1-16; Harold Garfinkel, "A Conception and Some Experiments With Trust . . . ," *op. cit.* Extended studies dealing with coding procedures, methods of interrogation, lawyers' work, translation, model construction, historical reconstruction, "social bookkeeping," counting, and personality diagnosis will be found in unpublished papers by Bittner, Garfinkel, MacAndrew, Rose, and Sacks; in transcribed talks given by Bittner, Garfinkel, and Sacks on "Reasonable Accounts" at the Sixteenth Annual Conference on World Affairs, University of Colorado, Boulder, April 11-12, 1963; and in Conference transcriptions. Publication of these materials is planned by the group for 1964.

[13] Insofar as this is true, it establishes the programmatic task of reconstructing the problem of social order as it is currently formulated in sociological theories, and of criticizing currently preferred solutions. At the heart of the reconstruction is the empirical problem of demonstrating the definitive features of "et cetera" thinking.

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conversation the experimenter opened his jacket to reveal the recorder, saying, "See what I have?" An initial pause was almost invariably followed by the question, "What are you going to do with it?" Subjects claimed the breach of the expectancy that the conversation was "between us." The fact that the conversation was revealed to have been recorded motivated new possibilities which the parties then sought to bring under the jurisdiction of an agreement that they had never specifically mentioned, and that indeed did not previously exist. The conversation, now seen to have been recorded, thereby acquired fresh and problematic import in view of unknown uses to which it might be turned. An agreed privacy was thereupon treated as though it had operated all along.

Concluding Remarks

The expectancies that make up the attitude of everyday life are constitutive of the institutionalized common understandings of the practical everyday organization and workings of society as it is seen "from within." Modification of these expectancies must thereby modify the real environments of the societies' members. Such modifications transform one perceived environment of real objects into another environment of real objects.

Each of many kinds of modifications of the background of everyday expectancies furnish an area of needed further work. Each modification has as its counterpart transformed objective structures of the behavioral environments that each modification produces. It is disconcerting to find how little we know about these different sets of background expectancies and the different objective environments that they constitute.

One such modification consists of the ceremonial transformation of one environment of real objects into another. Such modifications occur in play, theatre going, high ceremony, religious conversion, convention going, and scientific inquiry. A second modification consists of instrumental transformations of environments of real objects such as occur in experimentally induced psychosis, extreme fatigue, acute sensory deprivation, brain injuries, prefrontal lobotomies, and the use of hallucinogenic drugs. A third transformation consists of neonate learning which quite literally entails the growth of a world and is directed to the production of objective features of the persons' environment that "any competent member can see." The growth of the world is necessarily accompanied by the progressively enforced and enforceable compliance of the developing member to the attitude of daily life as a competent societal member's way of "looking at things." A fourth set of modifications are involved in adult socialization, distinguishable from neonate learning by the absence of radically naive expectancies. Other modifications are those of estrangement, which must include the various phenomena intended under the currently popular theme of "alienation," as well as the phenomena of the cultural stranger, of the major and minor forms of mental illness, of the degradation that accompanies charges of criminality and the fates of social incompetence found in mental retardation and old age. Modifications occur through mischief, playful and serious; through the subtle psychopathic effects of aging as one comes to learn that one may sin, cause others harm, and not "pay"; and through the discovery that the common societal orders which in adolescence appear so massive and homogeneous not only have their interstices but depend for their massiveness upon persons' continual improvisations. Finally, there is the modification that consists in the discovery and rationalization of the common sense world through the

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growth of social science as a social movement.

I have been arguing that a concern for the nature, production, and recognition of reasonable, realistic, and analyzable actions is not the monopoly of philosophers and professional sociologists. Members of a society are concerned as a matter of course and necessarily with these matters both as features and for the socially managed production of their everyday affairs. The study of common sense knowledge and common sense activities consists of treating as problemmatic phenomena the actual methods whereby members of a society, doing sociology, lay or professional, make the social structures of everyday activities observable. The "rediscovery" of common sense is possible perhaps because professional sociologists, like members, have had too much to do with common sense knowledge of social structures as both a topic and a resource for their inquiries and not enough to do with it only and exclusively as sociology's programmatic topic.

ON MAINTAINING DEVIANT BELIEF SYSTEMS: A CASE STUDY

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The present paper explores some selected aspects of a belief system shared by a small group of "mystics" located in southeastern United States. Its major concern is the means through which these divergent beliefs are maintained in the face of a disbelieving larger society.

Data for the report were gathered from intimate association and many lengthy conversations with a prominent member of the group and from much briefer conversations with four other members. Pamphlets and newsletters of the group were also examined. Observations from a number of other fringe groups have also been drawn upon.

The concept "belief system" is here defined as the set of notions with which individuals and groups interpret the physical and social reality around them and within themselves. No classification of these notions, such as the psychoanalytic one of conscious vs. unconscious, or Parsons' distinction among cognitive, expressive, and evaluative symbols[1] will be made here since it is neither feasible nor necessary for the purposes of this paper. The term "system" will call the reader's atention to the important fact that beliefs do not exist as a heap of disconnected items, but are related into some kind of "coherent" and "consistent" pattern.

THE ESPERS

The group, which we will call Esper, has its headquarters in a semi-isolated mountainous area of Georgia. This location was picked partly for its relative seclusion and for the natural protection it would afford in the event of a nuclear war. Several members have sold their business and properties in other locations to settle here permanently. The buildings and grounds are extensive, including housing for perhaps two hundred people, ample garden space, springs, and

I am indebted to George J. McCall for many of the ideas implicit in this article and to Daniel Glaser for help in revision.

[1] Talcott Parsons, *The Social System*, Glencoe; Free Press, 1951, pp. 326-383.

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