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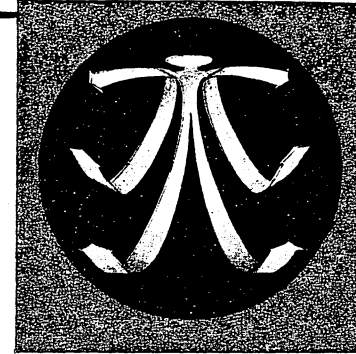
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Contributors

D. Lawrence Wieder is Associate Professor at the University of Oklahoma. He received his Ph.D. in 1969 from U.C.L.A. and has also taught at the University of Santa Barbara, California. His current work concerns the prospects of using phenomenological methods for the clarification and further development of the foundations of the social sciences. These studies focus on intersubjectivity, communication, cultural objects, and animal awareness.

Melvin Oliver is currently a visiting assistant professor of Sociology at the University of Missouri, St. Louis. He received a B.A. in Sociology from William Penn College, and a M.A. and Ph.D. in Sociology from Washington University. He recently completed his dissertation in the area of sociology of sport. His areas of interest include: sociological theory, sociology of sport, and sociology of the Black community.

Michael Stein is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Sociology at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln. He received his B.A. and M.A. in Sociology from Southern Illinois University. He has served as a teaching assistant at both institutions. General interests revolve around popular culture and its potential in sociological analysis. On most autumn Saturday afternoons he may be found in section 12, row 71, seat 4.

Parviz Piran is a graduate student in sociology at the University of Kansas, where he has taught courses in sociology of development, advanced sociology and currently social problems. He received a B.A. in sociology from the National University of Iran and a M.A. in sociology (social psychology) from Morehead State University. His areas of interest include: sociology of development, political economy, theoretical sociology and historical development of modern capitalism. His works in progress include: Meanings of Rationality for Max Weber; Totalizing Social History: A Review of the Annales school; and Elites and Development in the Third World: A critical Review.

ETHNOMETHODOLOGY AND ETHNOSOCIOLOGY

D. Lawrence Wieder
University of Oklahoma, Norman

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Understanding ethnomethodology seems to pose severe problems for many social scientists. The discussions and critiques of ethnomethodology by nonpractitioners are *almost* uniformly viewed by insiders as incompetent, and that is often so for even the sympathetic discussants. It is my intention, here, to try to provide the grounds for an intuitive grasp of what "classical" ethnomethodology¹ is about and to do so in a way in which it can also be appreciated just why this discipline should be so difficult to grasp. One of the difficulties in understanding ethnomethodology is that it both involves a substantive area of study, and its practice requires the use of a specific attitude or posture which is related to but different from that of traditional sociology. This means that ethnomethodology is, in a sense, a discipline which is distinct from sociology, although both its attitudes² and its subject matter are related to and relevant to the concerns of sociology.

Garfinkel coined the term "ethnomethodology" (recounted in Garfinkel, 1974, pp. 15-18) after seeing interests cognate to his own in the developing "ethnoscience" of ethnobotany, ethnomedicine, ethnopharmacology, ethnogeology, and the like.³ It was the initiating idea of ethnoscience and some of its descriptions which caught Garfinkel's attention and not the specific attitudes, orientations, theories, and methods which, in fact, markedly contrast with those of ethnomethodology (cf. Wieder, 1970; and Eglin, 1975). The initiating idea of the ethnoscience was the notion that the knowledge possessed by members of some societies could be viewed as analogous to the knowledge systems of the sciences (cf. Sturtevant, 1964, pp. 91-100; Tyler, 1969, pp. 5-7).

Along the same lines, one could also propose an