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Ethnomethodology

- Harold Garfinkel coined the term ethnomethodology to designate the methods individuals use in daily life to construct their reality, primarily through intimate exchanges of meanings in conversation.

Harold Garfinkel

Ethnomethodology is an ethnographic approach to sociological inquiry introduced by the American sociologist Harold Garfinkel.

Ethnomethodology's goal is to document the methods and practices through which society's members make sense of their worlds.



Theories – Harold Garfinkle –
Ethnomethodology . Pg. 120 (8:50)

Ethnomethodology

- Ethnomethodology - Study of how we make sense of what others say and do
- “Background expectancies” – unstated cultural assumptions about what is said and why
- The experiment was to ask people about the precise meaning of their comments and questions.

Example

1. What’s the weirdest answer you’ve received when you asked someone:
 1. How are you?
2. Where are you going?
 1. What are you going to do?

Ethnomethodology: Garfinkel 1967

- Give three examples of **common sense** rules that we all follow
 - turn taking on phone
- Try one of his 'Breaching experiments'

- Ethnomethodology is the study of how social order is produced in and through processes of social interaction.
- Ethnomethodology is an ethnographic approach to sociological inquiry introduced by the American sociologist Harold Garfinkel. Ethnomethodology's goal is to document the methods and practices through which society's members make sense of their worlds.

ETHNOMETHODOLOGY

Ethnomethodology deals with the "ways we use to understand" the society we live in.



LECTURE #6

What is ethnomethodology?

- “the study of everyday methods that people use to live their daily lives”
- ethno = relevant to your culture
- method = how you use this knowledge

Origins of *Ethnomethodology*

- Founder- Harold Garfinkel (1917-2011), American Sociologist.
- Drawing the analogy with ethnobotany, ethnopsychology, ethnomusicology; he propounded *Ethnomethodology*.
- Coined the term in 1954 while preparing researches on juries.
- While analysing the Tape of jury deliberation, he became interested in "how the jurors knew what they were doing in doing the work of jurors"

What is Ethnomethodology

- Ethno = people; Method = method; ology = study
- The study of ordinary members of society in the everyday situations in which they find themselves and the ways in which they use commonsense knowledge, procedures, and considerations to gain an understanding of, navigate in, and act on those situations
- Ethnomethodology's interest is in how ordinary people make sense of their social world.

Differences



Ethnomethodology

- Influenced by sociology
- Focuses on methods used in sense making
- Focus on reality constituting procedures
- Focus on social interaction

Phenomenology

- Deeply influenced by psychology
- Focuses on cognitive aspects of sense making
- Focus on the real world
- Focus on abstract mental phenomenon



ETHNOMETHODOLOGY- DEFENITIONS

1. Ethnomethodology is a theoretical approach in sociology based on the belief that you can discover the normal social order of a society by disrupting it
2. Ethnomethodology- the study of the ways in which ordinary people construct a stable social world through everyday utterance s and actions
3. Ethnomethodology is a perspective within sociology which focuses on the way people make sense of their everyday world

Some Leading Policies, Methods, and Definitions

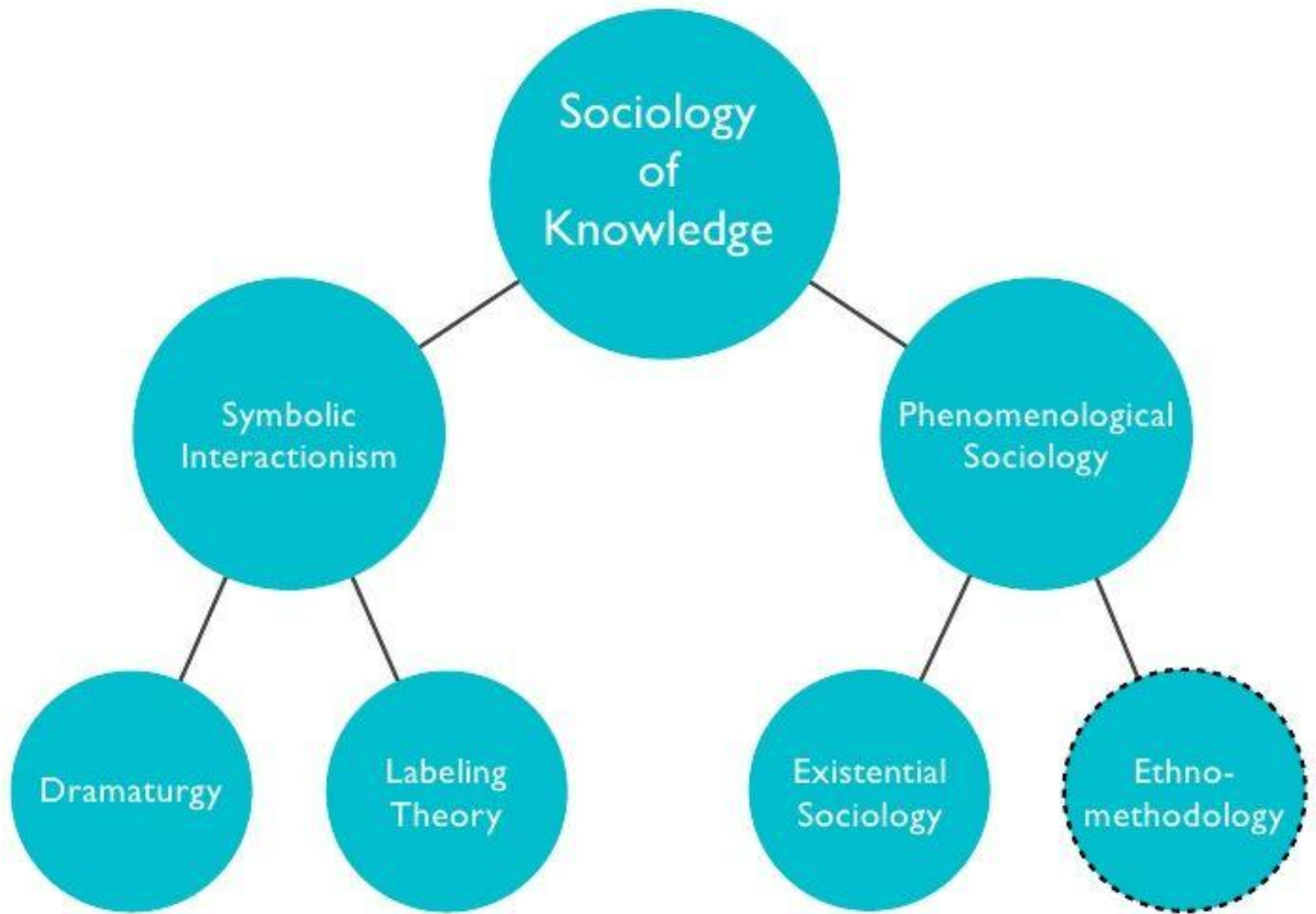
- Anne Rawls characterized this fundamental assumption, saying, “members of society must have some shared methods that they use to mutually construct the meaningful orderliness of social situations. “
- Ethnomethodological indifference: Ethnomethodology maintains a policy of deliberate agnosticism, or indifference, towards the dictates, prejudices, methods, and practices of sociological analysis. The policy of ethnomethodological agnosticism is specifically not to be conceived of as indifference to the problems of social order; ethnomethodological agnosticism refers to only seeing social concerns as society’s members see them.

Garfinkel discusses each of these "rationalities" and the "behaviors"

- Categorizing and Comparing
- Tolerable error
- Rationality
- Analysis of alternatives and consequences
- Strategy
- Concern for timing
- Predictability
- Rules of procedure
- Choice
- Grounds of choice
- Compatibility of ends-means relationships with principles of formal logic
- Semantic clarity and distinctness
- Compatibility of the definition of a situation with scientific knowledge
- Clarity and distinctness "for its own sake"



Thank you





Ethnomethodology

- ✓ Relies on techniques for breaking 'taken for granted rules' to better understand the invisible set of norms and values that surround and guide our daily interactions
- ✓ Babbie's public trash example
- ✓ Research subjects themselves are not so much the focal point of investigation as are the practices and processes that enable and constrain their daily lives



Thank you