We will take a strong line here. We will insist that ethnomethodology is completely different from other kinds of sociology. This means that there is no point in trying to summarise how ethnomethodology differs from sociology-in-general on one,or even several,main points. That may seem a helpful thing to do because it enables you,much better,to see what ethnomethodology is about and where it stands,relative to other kinds of sociology,on your mental map of the discipline. If,however,your aim is to understand ethnomethodology itself,in its own terms,rather than to fit it into some set of preconceptions then this does not really help. It distorts the nature of ethnomethodology,making it look like something that deviates in specific ways from other approaches to sociology but does so in the context of a great deal that is held in common with them. You therefore drastically underestimate the extent to which ethnomethodology distinguishes itself from these other approaches on a multitude of issues.

We say this not as a basis for assailing sociology-in-general from the point of view of ethnomethodology but as a warning that nothing can be taken for granted in the way of assumptions about what sociology can,should or must do. Anya of the standard assumptions may be brought up for reconsideration and suspended as a requirement on ethnomethodology's own inquiries. The fact that a given assumption has not explicitly been discussed or set aside does not mean that it has been tacitly accepted. The re-examination of assumptions about the nature and purposes of sociology is going to be done exclusively in the environment of 'a working sociology' rather than in the form of principled debate and the issue of whether an assumption is considered or not will be decided by the relevances of that working sociology.

Arguments in sociology are very much over and at the level of matters of

principle. They are most centrally about the right sort of general principle that is to govern the interpretation of social activities and the course of sociological inquiry. At that level,participants are satisfied if they can establish that a line of interpretation or policy of inquiry is in principle possible or in principle the equal to or superior of some alternative one. These discussions do not usually take seriously the problem of translating principles into practice,of making the proposed line of interpretation or policy of inquiry work out thoroughly. At best they involve or lead to 'feasibility studies',rehearsals of what applying the line of interpretation or following the policy might involve. The business of putting these things into full scale operation is often relegated to the domain of the 'merely practical'. For reasons which will become apparent,we have much more respect than this for practical problems and do not,therefore,treat them as secondary to matters of principle. We are,therefore,concerned to examine sociological issues in the context of their practical examination,the manner in which they arise and can be resolved in the course of studies. It is in this sense that we talk of a working sociology,an environment in which one is concerned with how one would examine this situation,that kind of activity,treating problems as inseparable from the case-in-hand.

We insist that ethnomethodology and other kinds of sociology are quite comprehensively different,so much so that they are only in the most attenuated sense in the same business. Perhaps we can suggest,in a fairly gross way,the extent and character of the differences between them. It is something like the difference between drama criticism and dramatic production. A drama critic gives an account of plays,says what they are about,what their themes are,how they are written,appraises performances,compliments or derogates the

performers,characterises their achievements etc. The drama critic can and does do this without any acquaintance with or skill in the production of plays. The drama critic may know little or nothing about how a play is staged,about what skills are involved in set design,make up,direction,performance and the rest of it,nor about what a play looks like from the point of view of those called upon the transform it into a performance: what kinds of technical difficulties does a play present to performer,stage manager etc? We use this example to highlight the extent of the differences which people may take in the same thing,not to suggest that there is something inferior about the critics skills and performances. We think it is a reasonable analogy for the difference in interests between most sociologists and ethnomethodologists. The former have an interest in society which is more like that of the drama critic. Indeed,many of them are pleased to call themselves critics of society,and in such a role,to say how things are going in society,whether they are getting better or worse,whether a happy ending may be hoped for,who is to take credit for anything good and who to get the blame for the failings and so on. In order to produce that kind of commentary on society they do not have to know much,if anything,about how the affairs of society are actually produced,about how the 'directors' of society (if such there be) actually direct its affairs,how they ensure that the crew and cast will know their parts,have the resources ready to hand,be able to coordinate their contributions to the whole. They do not have to interest themselves in the skills of the people involved nor know what the social world looks like as a series of technical problems of production. It is,by contrast,into just those things that ethnomethodology cares to look. It devotes itself,by contrast,to the examination of the social equivalent of mounting a dramatic production,looking

to see what the theatre is like as a world of work.

The analogy is gross,we do not want to go into it any further. It serves to highlight the extent of the differences involved. It would be mistaken to think that a drama critic is being criticised for being a critic and for ignorance of the practicalities of production (necessarily). Many things important to staging the play are irrelevant to what the critic is interested in. For example,the critic may legitimately comment on the sets without any knowledge of carpentry or principles of stage design. The critic could not just incorporate an awareness of the practicalities of production into his criticism without radically readjusting his role,changing his relationship to the theatre itself. Assuredly,discussion of the carpentry skills involved in putting together a particular set or of the detailed choreographic problems involved in staging a fight would be out of place in a drama review designed to tell people whether they would like the play,whether the production makes the best of it,whether there are any remarkable performances being given. The analogy is good from this point of view too,then. It shows why we are so insistent that ethnomethodology does not fit into any conventional conception of sociology. Those conceptions cannot by minor readjustment incorporate the kinds of things ethnomethodology attends to. Just as a drama critic's acknowledgement of the invaluable contribution to the night's entertainment made by the stagehands does not represent a discussion of the practicalities of production,neither does an acknowledgement of the importance of the practicalities of social life comprise an examination of them. The necessity for the drama critic to recast his entire role to examine the theatre as a world of work corresponds to the sociologists need to recast his whole conception of sociology if he is going to look at social life as a

practical production.

We make this as a claim. Asserting that something is so does not make it so. We will,below,document at various points just how the ethnomethodologists interests run against those of the 'standard sociologist.' The trouble with doing that,though,is that one is automatically heard to be criticising those sociologists. In a way,maybe one is,but not for doing what they do. If one is criticising them,then it is for preventing (or attempting to prevent) ethnomethodologists from doing what they want to. If there is a criticism of other sociologies,it is for presenting themselves as definitive forms of sociological inquiry,as showing what one must do if one wants to make sociological inquiries. Ethnomethodology just supposes that there is a much wider range of things that one can (usefully) do under the heading 'sociology' than those which have so far been envisaged by marxists,functionalists,interactionists etc. Ethnomethodology is one of them. Insofar as marxists want to insist that we ought to be doing marxism,rather than functionalist,interactionism or ethnomethodology then we shall criticise them,just as we would criticise functionalists,interactionists or ethnomethodologists who would insist that we should all be doing their kind of thing rather than our own. Notice,then,the conditional form in which our assertion was cast. What we said was 'If you want to examine social life as a practical production,then you cannot do it within the framework of what has,hitherto,been conventionally designated as a properly sociological frame of reference.' We did not say,'You have to examine social life as a practical production.' We will,though,shortly give some answer to the question of why you might want to.

Now,just as we have said that conventional sociologies could not -

without fundamental restructuring - take over ethnomethodology's interests,let us stress that we are not recommending ethnomethodology because it can take over the interests normally conceived as those of sociology. It cannot do that either. We recommend it because of the distinctiveness of its interests. This is important but not because it represents some demarcation of territories,because it gives ethnomethodology something which it can claim for its own. We make much of this point because it has considerable methodological consequence. The main consequence is this: that ethnomethodology is interested in social phenomena purely as practical productions,that it is concerned with them in just those ways and just so far as the can be examined as practical productions. It disregards entirely such issues pertaining to other matters than practical production. We shall say a little more subsequently about this insistence on a 'pure conception' but can say now that its adoption indicates why so much criticism of ethnomethodology seems irrelevant to it,because it complains that ethnomethodology does not consider this or talk about that when it is plain to ethnomethodology itself that it has ruled these things out of its domain. Whether that is a wise thing to do is not something absolute but conditional: it depends what you want to do.

Back to the analogy with theatre. Ethnomethodology's policy would insist that one examine the theatre entirely as a world of work,devote itself to seeing just how plays are produced and put into performance. Instead of looking at the theatre through the eyes of a theatre critic,instead of attempting to be one itself,it would want to look at the theatre critic in terms of issues pertaining to the world of work,looking at theatre criticism itself as a job and at the way the work of criticism fits into the rest of the

work that goes on in the theatre. In this connection,ethnomethodology would be obsessive,occupied with everything as part of the business of practically putting-on-and-critically-reporting dramatic performances and only with matters in those terms. More generally,then,in the study of social life ethnomethodology evinces the same 'monomaniac' fixation on issues of practical production to the quite deliberate exclusion of evertything else. From its point of view,the interests of other sociologists only appear in the same particular way,as practically produced matters. It does not seek to look at things from the vantage point of the 'standard sociologist' but takes an interest in the standard sociologist only because and insofar as that person is involved in the practical production of social affairs.

Two injunctions will frequently be issued in this discussion. They are 'wait!' and 'remember!' It is tempting to draw conclusions as the argument goews along and thus,at this point,it will be tempting to think 'Ah,so ethnomethodology is more limited than marxism or functionalism etc.' On the strength of what we have said it may seem thus but,wait! The point of what we have been saying is to show something we now attempt to underline,that the difference between sociology-in-general and ethnomethodology is not in the subjects that they examine but in the ways they look at whatever they examine. Simplistic conclusions to the effect that sociology-in-general can look that this but ethnomethodology cannot should not be drawn. Ethnomethodology,programmatically speaking,can look at anything that goes on in social life,but it looks at it in a particular way,as a practical production. How far this comprises an advantage,and how far a limitation,is a complicated question which no one is as yet in a position to answer because it is far from being worked out just what it is to look as something

as a practical production.

The other injunction which we have said we will really need is 'Remember!' and we shall depend on that because the argument is meant to be intensely cumulative. When we discuss a topic we do not thereby dispose of it,so that it may be forgotten but,very often,we bring it up so that we give shape to our investigative approach,developing policies which are meant to be quite thoroughgoing. We cannot,for example,forget for one moment that we are examining phenomena purely in terms of their character as practical productions because to do so is to be inconsistent to our basic policies and we shall need to be reminded that we cannot respond to questions just because they look reasonable,plausible or interesting. We can only respond to them when they have been translated into questions pertaining to practical production because those are the terms in which we can talk. We cannot,as ethnomethodologists,talk in any other terms. We shall need,on numerous occasions ,to remind ourselves of this.

We have promised,though,that we will discuss issues in the context of a working sociology,rather than at the level of principle,and to avoid the crude example we have just used to generate lots of issues of principle we propose to turn immediately to matters of practical inquiry and,in doing so,to give some idea of what it means to look at a phenomenon purely as a matter of practical production. Toward that end,let us introduce a fragment of a transcription,recording the beginning of a jury's deliberations. This jury is a coroner's jury,the location a major Canadian city.

Insert transcript.

1. Bailiff: Order in Court.

[Locational shift from Courtroom to adjacent juryroom.]

[12 seconds.]

2. RCMP Corp: Okay, gentlemen and ladies.

(pause 14 sec.) (clearing throat) (pause 17 sec.)

There's the foreman over there, is he?

3. ?: Umhuh.

(pause 2 sec.)

4. Corp: You're still writing now, uh the write-up? Don't forget to write everything pretty well. I mean, you don't have to, but, I mean, or you want to put it in your own English better than the way I compose it there. We, the Jury (pause 6 sec.). Fine. Then, as I say, it is all there. Juan Rodriguez.

5. ?: Do we have to write all this out?

6. Corp: Yeah. You have to write it all out in longhand. That's the unfortunate part of being the foreman. He gets elected for the extra work. You write all that out or words to that effect but you have to get all that in so it's just as easy to copy it out word for word and then you you classify it. Then he's already told you cla.., told you it's uh classified as, uh unnatural and accidental. He told you that. Then I don't know, from there on you're strictly on your own. You have to all be in agreeance. As far as there's any, uh/

7. ?: (( )).

This is only a very short fragment from a much longer one. There are,we acknowledge,many issues which trouble people about the use of such materials,though we have no intention of trying to respond to them now. Remember that we have said that nothing need be preserved of what sociology is more widely conceived to be without consideration and that,therefore,ideas of what sort of materials we should collect and how we should use them are amongst these. Surely enough,these materials would not do for the kind of inquiries our sociological colleagues have in mind but then,reciprocally,the kind of materials that will do for their inquiries do not serve the needs of ours. We will not,in accord with out rule,give a principled defence of such materials,we will let the justification of their use arise from that use,we will try to show what can be done with them by doing things with them. At the moment,they are there mainly to concentrate the mind.

These few utterances record some talk between the jury and a courtroom official,leading into the beginning of the jury's deliberations. Thus,jury operations are going to be a topic of attention. Jury deliberations are the kind of things which might become the attention of sociologists of other persuasions than ours. They might propose to give a sociological account of how juries proceed. How would the things they might do relate to/differ from the things that we might do?

Sociologists will often tell you that they are interested in order and regularity in social life and that,basically,their intention is to explain that order and regularity. They might go on to tell you more about why they want to do this and how it is to be done. Many of them,though,would think that we would be making a most unpromising start in doing what,in their

view,sociology ought to do. Sure enough,one wants to look at jury deliberations,and one is looking,here,at some moments in the life of a jury,but this is not the way to go about looking for order and regularity in the life of juries. One cannot hope to detect such things by examining one jury. One would need to see how a number of juries deliberate. Then one would discover that there are patterns to the way juries go about things. One would see that though there are many particular and idiosyncratic things about juries,there are also many similarities,many ways in which the organisation of this jury is like the organisation of other juries,even of juries in general. How,though,could one find out what the pattern of jury organisation was by looking at this jury? One can be sure,though,that there will be respects in which the doings of one jury will repeat the pattern of doings of other juries,will show regularities of which those who are in those juries are unaware.

Now,we don't want to disagree with this. We don't want to say that you won't find regular patterns in the conduct of juries,resemblances between one jury and another of which the jurors are collectively unwitting. Any idea whatsover that the burden of our argument is that you cannot find regularities in the doings of juries should be dropped altogether. We would be no less prepared than these other sociologists to bet that with patience and application you will find such things. If they are what you are looking for. Sociologists take comfort in the fact that there is a great deal of regularity in social life that anyone can see for themselves,encouraging the idea that we will see even more of it if we look closer and through the specialised instrumentality of sociological analysis. Again,we have no desire to argue with this assumption. However,we do not want to follow up

on it in the ways that other sociologists seem to want to do.

Bluntly put,its like this. Sociologists can find patterns in the doings of juries. They can take the proceedings of juries,record and analyse them and they will find all kinds of things that prove (perhaps surprisingly) to be characteristic of juries. Of course,to do this they are relying on the fact that jury deliberations take place,on the fact that people gather together,make up a jury,consider a case and deliver a verdict. They are relying on the fact that somehow jurors can 'stage' jury deliberations,that somehow jurors can make the events that the sociologist is going to record and subsequently analyse take place. Now,that jurors can,somehow,do these things is of course no surprise to sociologists. Of course not,because they are banking on this. They are living on the assumption that if they can get their tape recorders (or whatever) into jury rooms then people will turn up their and behave like juries. It is not a complaint that they take these things for granted,but it is important to establish the possibility and clarify the character of our interests that it be established that they do.

There is something of a complaint,though,if people think that these things can be taken for granted because they don't matter. If you have ambitions to develop a science (which many sociologists do) then you cannot be satisfied to say that somehow something happens,somehow things work out so that you can make your studies. Your job as a a would-be scientific inquirer is to replace 'somehow' with a description of 'as a matter of fact,how'. So,for the purposes of some kinds of sociological inquiry it is enough that,somehow,people get done things like gathering as a jury and reaching a verdict through deliberation but,from the point of view of

sociology as a whole,this judgement must be a provisional and temporary one. At some point,someone ought to undertake to say what comes under this heading of 'somehow'.

Remember,then,we do not want to deny that there is regularity in social life. It is the kind of interest we are to take in that regularity which is at issue. It is a feature of the most basic teaching techniques of sociology that teachers will try to persuade you that there is plenty commonplace regularity to social life. They will try to remind you that there is a great deal of regularity in your own affairs,in the ways that you dress,how you talk to people,carry out ordinary tasks. Reminding you of how much orderliness you expect in your life is,though,for them,only the first move. It is a step toward persuading you that there is more orderliness than you ordinarily recognise,that there will be regularities to your life and that of other members of society of which you will not now be aware. It is sociology's job to dig out those unrecognised regularities.

For us,by contrast,reminding you that there is the plenty of readily visible regularity to social life is not a basis for moving further. It is,rather,the occasion for suggesting that the orderliness which is familiar to you is unexamined. Everyone takes it for granted that there is plenty of regularity,sheer predictability,to daily life,but no one bothers much to ask about the kind of orderliness that there is or to ask how it gets there? But these are the questions we will ask. Note though,that there is such orderliness is no news to sociologists. They are aware of it,but it is not something that they are much interested in.

This,of course,affects the attitude that we take to the examination of any instance of social activity,such as the proceedings of a jury. The kinds

of things that count as achievements in sociology more generally,and in ethnomethodology are wholly disparate. The aim of sociology,in its more characteristic mode,is to make unprecedented observations. It starts from the fact there are plenty regularities people can recognise,but seeks regularities which they cannot. The aim in examining an activity is,then,to find patters which are hitherto unnoticed. It is an achievement,then,to see something which would ordinarily be hard to notice in the activities you are examining. Being able to see what anyone might is not worth anything. In our business,however,the thing to do is to attend to just the things that anyone might notice. The aim is to take a good clear and close look at things that are staring you in the face.

To designate something as obvious is typically to invite you to look straight past it,and these exercises therefore go against the grain because they invite the attention to linger on and to ponder about that which is,in the contexts of daily life,entirely obvious. The aim is not,though,to wonder whether these things are as obvious as they seem or to confirm that they are just as they seem. It is to ask: how come they are obvious? What is it for them to be obvious?

The examination of the transcript we have presented does not call,in this context,for the exercise of 'sociological insight',for the seeing of something odd,surprising or previously unnoticed. There are plenty of (from our point of view) investigative 'bad habits' that need shaking off. One of them probably is the desire to find a way of looking at these materials which will make them seem more interesting. As they are,they probably seem quite uninteresting. There seems nothing very significant about these materials. They provide no promising opportunity for raising any of the 'great issues.'

The temptation may well be to try to find a way of looking at them that will make them seem more interesting,a way which will show up something about juries-in-general and the problems of our civilisation,say,or even about the whole 'human condition.' This might count for a lot in sociology more generally,but it is out of place here. Nothing is achieved for us by trying to 'blow up' the materials,by trying to find some interesting heading under which they can go. These materials are pretty ordinary,they may have no significance beyond themselves. We do not examine them because they have any intrinsic interest,but because they are quite commonplace and unremarkable.

One very elementary thing we can notice about these activities is that they are directed toward producing some outcome. One of the things we do know about juries is that their routine business is: getting out a verdict. We are,therefore,prepared from the start to look at the things people are saying and doing in terms of how they are 'progressing toward a verdict.'

In no way do we want to force these things. We do not want to insist that <u>everything</u> that goes on in the jury must be looked at in terms of its likely or effective contribution to deciding a verdict,or that we must be able to say just how this or that saying leads to a final outcome. We want to capture the kind of sensitivity to the need to reach a verdict which will be present in the jury itself,and thus its for us to wait to see how far its members insist on sticking to business. What we can say,though,about the requirement for an outcome is that it is omnirelevant. Any point,in any number of ways the fact that these people are here to reach a verdict is something that can matter,that they can be concerned with (for some examples) whether what they are doing now helps get a verdict,whether they are really making any progress toward getting a verdict,whether they ought to stop doing this and

get back to the business of trying to reach a verdict. And so on.

Since 'reaching a verdict' is the leading objective of this assembly,we can look at what they are doing as 'making a decision.' Analysing 'decision making' is the sort of thing that sociologists think they should/may legitimately do. Hence,analysing how these jurors make a decision,i.e. reach a verdict,is something that we do that sociologists also do.

We want to press home the point,though,that the issue is not - at least at this broad level of characterisation - about what you look at but about how you look at whatever you look at.

How are we to look at decision making? We've already mentioned the issue of whether you can work with just one instance like this one we have here. That problem usually gets raised by people who are worried about whether we will be able to generalise from it? As always,we are refraining from making judgements of the right/wrong sort and so we hold off arguing that people are wrong to look for generalisations. Our point would be,many people just assume that we should be looking for generalisations above everything else and that,therefore,the first question about any data should be: can we generalise from it? We aim to get away from the context in which the can we/should we generalise? question is the first thing asked. As far as we are concerned,to ask if we can generalise from this is to suppose that we know what 'this' is. As far as we are concerned,though,we do not yet know,except in the most superficial sense,what 'this' is. We haven't examined it,nor has anyone else. The question of whether we can analyse from this,if it is to be asked,needs to be asked when we have some better idea of what we are asking it about. Thus,a fairly strong procedural change: instead of making the first question,what can we do with this data? we make our very first question 'What

is the data,what is it data of?'

When people go into studying decision making they are usually guided by a strong desire to get some generalisations out. This affects the way they think of the problem. They tend to think that the way to study decision making is to study decision making in general,to be able to say something general about the way people reach decisions. It thus becomes their prime objective to relegate to irrelevance what the decision making is about. They will get a sense of achievement if they can find out something about how decisions are made,regardless of what they are about. We insist,we are not criticising them for this,simply trying to bring out the character of their particular cast of thought. And thus to show that a very different one is at work here. Though we do not say that nothing has been achieved by showing that (say) decision making in poker is mathematically the same as decision making in politics is mathematically the same as making household decisions about purchasing consumer durables is no achievement,we do wonder what kind of an achievement is and how it contributes to our understanding of poker,politics and the buying of a washing machine variously and respectively?

We want you to realise that you perhaps assume too easily that if you can show that this is like that you have achieved something and that you have done just the sort of thing that sociology is supposed to be doing. It is,thus,an absolutely routine assumption of sociological work that what you ought to be doing is finding that things which do not seem to be the same really are. This gives the appearance of generalisation alright. However,we take it that you are a serious inquirer and do not want something which just has the appearance of a generalisation,you want a genuine generalisation (whatever one of those might be.) However,if you have shown that (to stick with the

examples) poker playing,politics and shopping can all be described in the same mathematical terms,have you shown that they are in any other respects the same. Is their anything more,here,than a formal resemblance? We cannot pose this as an issue to be argued out now,but as something which can be thought about. It may be very clever of Erving Goffman to show that there are ways in which life in a monastery,a mental hospital and a concentration camp are alike,but it is a good question (and one we suggest you probably don't have an answer to and one you won't find an answer to in Goffman either) as to what he has therefore shown us about monastery's,mental hospitals and concentration camps as such and relative to each other?

Our objection,then,it is too readily assumed that we should be looking for generalisations and too prematurely determined how we should seek to generalise things. If we undertake to look at decision making in jury deliberations,then is the best way to understand them to try to see them as the same as decisions about psychiatric admissions,the provision of welfare benefits and so on? Is it,indeed,more useful to understand decision making in disregard of what it being decided than to begin with the recognition that making decisions involves deciding about <u>something</u>. The jurors are not just making a decision but making a decision about cause of death,whilst the family out shopping are deciding whether to get the Phillip's Autowash or the Zanussi 625. The question must not be understood as being asked so as to count out any possibility but simply in a 'let us see' spirit: do we really want to leave out of account what is being decided in analysing decision making?

The reason for introducing these arguments and taking us down this particular line is to lead to the central point,one which might otherwise have seemed more contentious than,if our strategy has worked,it now will.

We argued (through the theatrical analogy) that you cannot simply take ethnomethodology's interests and include them within a more comprehensive 'conventional sociology'. They are such different kinds of interests,quite at odds with those sociologists would normally pursue. Of course,saying so doesn't make it so,and we can at least give you an idea as to why it is so,why you cannot just slightly readjust sociology to accomodate these interests. Perhaps sociology could take note of these things. Perhaps,for example,if ethnomethodology says such things as 'reality is a social construction' or 'social facts are achieved' (if it says such things) then sociology could take note of them: we could perhaps add such claims to those that this or that sociological theory makes without having to change this or that theory too much. This is just the kind of thing that Tony Giddens and Stuart Hall are forever doing,grafting one approaches contentions onto another's (perhaps hoping that,in that way,they build up a more watertight position. Thus,Giddens tries to include ethnomethodology into his overall picture.

As we see it,though,that he does this shows he does not understand correctly the level at which ethnomethodology differs from these theories: it doesn't aim to compound a list of theoretical claims (which is what they do) but to shape the course of inquiries (or,rather,reshape them. And the reason why sociology cannot (if our argument is right) just take note of what ethnomethodology says is because an adequate response to what ethnomethology says is to see what it means for what you do,for how you make your studies. So,if ethnomethodology makes a difference that matters,its at the level of how we do things and there is makes (we say) a hell of a difference.

More is needed than saying so. Demonstration is called for. What we want to say about the case of the jury (and about all other cases) is that,in

practical terms,conventional sociological inquiries and ethnomethodological ones get in each other's way. All the time.

Harold Garfinkel tells and retells the story of the disagreement between Fred Strodtbeck and Edward Shils. It relates to the study of juries. Strodtbeck was one of the pioneers of 'small group studies' which were quite popular in the 1950's. Sociologists studies small groups to see what sorts of organisation they had,whether they developed leaderships,atmospheres and other characteristics and how? Strodtbeck had been studying decision making in juries. Shils said that Strodtbeck had shown us what a jury was like as a small group,but could he tell us what a jury was like as a jury? As Garfinkel tells it,Strodtbeck persuaded Shils that we should not ask that quesgtion. We do though. Garfinkel was not persuaded that we should not,nor are we.

So,these very different questions would call for very different answers. The sorts of things Strodtbeck can say about juries would not,could not,answer Shils' question. Could not,just because Strodtbeck's methods will be designed so as to leave out just the things that would answer Shil's questions. What Strobtbeck's method leaves out is not just this or that bit of information that would answer Shils' question but systematically disregards pretty much everything that would enable him to answer Shils' question. From Strodtbeck's point of view,what has to matter about the jury is that it is a small group and whatever features it possesses by virtue of being a small group. The last thing that could possibly matter is that it is a jury,and whatever particular and peculiar features it has by virtue of being a jury. Those are just the things that Strodtbeck's method will have to leave out. To answer Shils' question,though,the first thing that will matter is that this is a jury,and

those other features which it possesses by virtue of being a jury. For Shils this is not just 'a small group' but 'a small group of a distinctive kind' and that contrasts very sharply with Strodtbeck's interest in its being a small group,only incidentally a jury. This affects too,if we can put it this way,how the facts about the groups character as a jury could possibly enter in to the analysis of behaviour. For Strodtbeck they must enter in as just that,incidental considerations,things which have only contingently to do with what is going on in the jury. Figuring out what is going on in this jury is to be done by Strodtbeck by working out how this or that event satisfies for this group requirements that any group might have. Shils,however,invites us to figure out what is going on in the group by working out how it fits into the work of a jury.

There is a whole world of difference between the ways in which Strodtbeck and Shils would lead us to look at doings in juries. They might,at some much later point after they have both been very well worked out,come together and complement each other or even merge (who is to say they won't - or that they will) but insofar as getting on with working them out is concerned,it should be clear that they go in divergent directions,and that they systematically do so: Strodtbeck and Shils can examine the same juries,the same records,but they are far from doing the same thing,studying the same phenomena,because they will be looking at them in different ways.

Notice,because we will come back to this in detail (cf.),that the issue is about frames-of-reference,the terms within which we are to carry on our operations. To do the kind of thing Shils asks for is to impose on yourself very different requirements than if you try to deliver what Strodtbeck calls for. Bear this in mind now,because as you will see,the fact

that this is a matter of relationships between frames of reference affects our understanding of what we are doing and,particularly,of what is at stake when we are deciding which way to in inquiries. Further,you will find - as we will show - that a lot of ethnomethodology's critics simply issue irrelevancies because they themselves don't understand this point.

Anyway,the point is to use the jury materials to show up something about the incompatibility of ethnomethodology's interests with those of other sociologists,and to show those at the level where - as far as we are concerned - it really counts,at the level of actual investigation. The point is,that ethnomethodology wants to pay attention to just those things that other sociologies want to disregard. This means that standard sociological inquiries obscure the very things that ethno wants to look at. It has to do that to raise its own questions and get out its own answers. So,one cannot start to raise and answer ethno's questions without giving up on those that other sociologists want to ask. Which is not to say: so you should give up on those. Just that you cannot expect other sociological strategies ever to deliver into your hands ways of tackling ethnomethodology's questions. We can show through the jury materials that,for sure,this is true in one case. We claim it is so in all cases,in respect of an endless variety of matters. We start,though,by trying to establish it for one case,but also to show that its not due just to the features of this case,but to the intrinsic characters of the general strategies for looking at the case. We will later show,in other connections,that it is also the case. First,though,this case.