SPECIAL ISSUE ARTICLE

Phenomenological Sociology Reconsidered
On *The New Orleans Sniper*

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I love this little book. And one feels that the author loves it, too. It seems as if Fran Waksler had to become a professor emerita (from Wheelock College) in order to finally complete an old pet project. The incident that she investigated happened a long time ago, in January 1973. A man who was later identified as Mark James Essex fired a gun on several floors in a downtown hotel in New Orleans, LA and shot 16 people, 7 of whom died, until he was eventually gunned down by the police when sniping from the roof. But the shooting went on the next day as there presumably existed a second sniper; seven more policemen were wounded, but the second sniper was never found. While the police were first convinced that there was a second sniper, they changed their official assessment over time, based on the collected evidence, and came to the conclusion that there was only one sniper as a second one could not have escaped from the site. The wounded police officers during the shootings on the next day were "obviously" victims of police ricochets.

Waksler poses the thrilling research question of "how that second sniper was first constituted and later unconstituted" (2010: 3). The book reads like a detective story where the search for the second murderer is the central theme. The second bad guy, however, never gets caught and so the first assumption is finally revised: a second sniper never existed. The reader is led through the different interpretations of the situation by diverse parties but in the end is being left with the fundamental uncertainty: Was there ever a second sniper who managed to escape in mysterious ways or was he just a misconception, a false belief? Was it just Mark Essex who did it all—and as he was killed, justice prevails? We will never know the truth…The book is well written and well structured. The preface frames it biographically, the introduction presents the project, the event, the data and the timeline of key events. Chapters 2 and 3 deal with the context and the evidence of constituting the Other (the second sniper), and chapter 4 scrutinizes how the Other is unconstituted in the

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aftermath. In a conclusion some basic features are suggested that proved to be relevant to the constitution of the other. In an appendix the witnesses' sightings and descriptions are listed in a table ordered by time and place.

A phenomenological case study

The project is to pursue a phenomenological case study of constituting the Other: "My goal is to follow Husserl's recommendation to explore *how,* in a given situation, an Other is constituted, *how* people, with their general procedures and resources, use them to constitute an Other in a specific situation—one in which the very existence of that Other is problematic" (2010: 3; emphasis in original). Waksler intends to apply Husserl's ideas to this particular instance in order to illuminate the intricate processes whereby an Other is constituted. If the Other is problematic and ambiguous, the underlying work of constituting the Other becomes visible—work that in everyday life sustains the given character of the Other; work that is essential but normally goes unnoticed. By juxtaposing newspaper reports with quotations from Husserl's *Cartesian Meditations* (and other books) the author demonstrates how Husserl's phenomenological ideas help to analyze empirical data.

The data consists primarily of contemporary reports in two New Orleans newspapers and in the (889-page) New Orleans Police Department Report. Additional data was consulted: tapes of television news reports, written summaries, and the author's own memories of hearing and reading about the event. It is explicitly pointed out that these data are not considered as objective or factual— after all, stories must be "newsworthy" and police work "justifiable"—but they "rely upon and provide versions of common-sense accounts of the doings of a problematic Other" (2010: 5). The following book chapters analyze these in more detail.

The analysis of *the constitution of the Other* (2010: 9–39) is primarily based on the newspaper reports. Waksler elucidates how a specific context of previous events favors certain assumptions for framing the sniper incident and how these first assumptions prevail when framing the subsequent events. Then she shows how the police reasoned about what one person is capable of doing—one cannot, for instance, be at two places at once. A related question is what an *ordinary* person is capable of doing and what an *extraordinary* person might accomplish. Next, she turns to explore the signs of an Other: others can be seeable, hearable, or recognized by signs of turn-taking (i.e., of reciprocity). Further signs may be leavings of an Other, which Waksler terms "disembodied evidence," including ballistic evidence. Further frames were delivered by speculation and conspiracy theories. As the ambiguity persisted about whether a second sniper existed, the deliberations went on. The author shows how either/or explanations were used and assessed. She also points out 'legitimating evidence': "evidence was assessed and legitimated not only in terms of its content but also in relation to *who* offered it" (2010: 37; emphasis in original). Police reports were considered the most accurate.

The analysis of *the unconstitution of the Other* (2010: 41–73) in the aftermath is primarily based on the lengthy police report. Waksler reconstructs how the evidence

is reworked. She follows the same criteria and structure as in the previous chapter: how is the evidence reinterpreted considering what one person is capable of doing and taking into account the signs that were seeable, hearable, and identified as turn-taking (reciprocity). The author shows how the police eventually reassessed the collected contradicting evidences and finally concluded that a second sniper would have been rather unlikely. Waksler's careful reconstruction of the instances of constituting a second sniper and later unconstituting him is meticulously illustrated by excerpts from the reports. This makes the story very lively and thrilling to read.

Based on her findings, Waksler draws the *conclusion* (2010: 75–78) that there are *specific features relevant to the constitution of the Other:* 1. The existence of an Other is plausible: Plausibility is a starting-point but further evidence is required which confirms the existence of this Other. In the sniper-case there was conflicting evidence. 2. A person is a kinetic/tactile-kinesthetic body that is visible, audible, and capable of movement. Such signs are used as evidence of an Other but can, of course, get misinterpreted. 3. Indications of present or past action can stand for the existence of an Other but can also be reinterpreted: Attributing actions to a specific actor, for instance, involves references that may be contested later on. 4. A person is subject to physical laws and cannot be, e.g., in two places at once. 5. A person is also subject to common-sense rules and is seen as 'acting like a person,' 'acting like a sniper,' 'acting like a police officer'. Such category-bound activities are used to attribute certain types of behaviors and utterances to either the sniper or the police officers. 6. Construction of an Other takes place in social settings: A witness may be convinced of what was observed, but such claims are made in social situations and get either confirmed or denied. Furthermore, the postulated reliability of perceptions and observations are discussed in the light of the conditions under which they happened—stress, limited visibility, confusing circumstances, danger.

Waksler suggests that these features are relevant to the constitution of *any* Other, not just to the constitution of a problematic Other, and she refutes the idea that an Other can be "directly grasped". Even if the 'givenness' of the Other is unproblematic in everyday life, there is always "work" involved: the—normally unnoticed—work of constituting the Other. She closes with two excerpts from Husserl in order to demonstrate that she followed his advice here to systematically explicate the overt and implicit intentionality in which the Other is constituted and 'made' (2010: 78).

How does a phenomenological analysis proceed?

It makes a big difference if you read this book with background knowledge of phenomenology or not—you frame things differently. In a recent book review Mackenzie (2011: 1077) states that Waksler just used excerpts from Husserl without further explaining the phenomenological approach and the fundamental concepts, perspectives, and tools in their own right. This needs not be taken as a critique, but is certainly a valid point that is worth further scrutiny. For novices to phenomenology, on the one hand, it may be difficult to get a clear grasp of how a phenomenological analysis of the constitution of the Other actually proceeds and

what all those Husserlian terms, like appresentation, certainty, contradiction, evidence, experience, harmoniousness, illusion, imminent data, intentionality, other, physical things, pseudo-organism, relativity, and sphere of ownness—all listed in the index (2010: 100)—actually mean. Phenomenologists, on the other hand, may be surprised how seamlessly Waksler uses Husserl's phenomenological analyses in the transcendental sphere for an interpretation of empirical, sociological data. This is particularly surprising for those who posit that phenomenology and sociology are two distinctly different enterprises that should not be mingled.

A clear distinction between phenomenology and sociology was advocated by Thomas Luckmann for methodological reasons. He posits (Luckmann 1973, 1979; transl. and quoted in Eberle 2012a: 282f.):

1. Phenomenology is a philosophy. It analyses phenomena of subjective consciousness. Its perspective is egological and its method proceeds reflexively. Its goal is to describe the universal structures of subjective orientation in the life-world.
2. Sociology is a science. It analyses phenomena of the social world. Its perspective is cosmological and its method proceeds inductively. Its goal is to explain the general properties of the objective world.

Husserl's phenomenology analyzes the constitution of phenomena in the intentionality of subjective consciousness. The consciousness is always consciousness of something and operates in the way of *ego cogito cogitatum*, meaning that phenomena are always constituted as a unity of noetic and noematic aspects in an *ego's* subjective consciousness. This is why a phenomenological analysis proceeds *egologically*. Phenomena are not just sensuous but meaningful, which is why phenomenology analyzes their meaning, i.e., their 'sense'. A phenomenologist analyzes (meaningful) perceptions and experiences as constituted in his or her own subjective consciousness. The phenomena of consciousness are experienced as a stream, as a temporal flow; an egological analysis proceeds reflexively: how are phenomena constituted in (inner) time. Sociology, in contrast, investigates how *other* members of society experience the world. Sociologists do not analyze their own subjective experience, but they rather collect empirical data about society. Based on this data they develop inductively theoretical interpretations of what goes on in the social world. Preferably, as Berger and Luckmann (1966) suggested, they research society as an objective as well as a subjective reality (as two sides of the same coin)—however, not the sociologists' but the members' subjective reality.

By way of the phenomenological method, Husserl strived for elucidating the universal formal structures of the life-world (Husserl 1936/1970). The eidetic method brackets stepwise all the contingencies of a phenomenon in order to explicate its *eidos,* its essence. And the transcendental method even goes a step further by bracketing the very existence of phenomena or, in other words, bracketing any interest in ontological considerations. Husserl was convinced that if we strip the mundane ego from all the assumptions which we use in everyday life we would arrive at the transcendental ego that succeeds to grasp essences and constitutive acts with evidence and apodictic certainty. Hence, the results of Husserl's phenomenological analyses are meant to have *universal validity*.

The *Structures of the Life-World* by Alfred Schutz, coedited by Luckmann, were worked out in the same vein: as *universal structures* that apply to any human on earth—although Schutz pursued a mundane, not a transcendental phenomenology (Schutz and Luckmann 1973, 1989). That is why these structures are also designated, in line with Max Scheler, as a 'philosophical anthropology' (Srubar 1988, 2005). Their (postulated) universal character explains the affinity of Berger and Luckmann's sociological approach to the philosophical anthropology of Plessner and Gehlen (1966: 65ff.). Luckmann (1973, 1979) calls the inquiry on the 'structures of the life-world' a *protosociology*—they provide, as Schutz intended it, a philosophical foundation to the methodology of the social sciences. They represent a basic matrix, a *tertium comparationis* for the empirical sociological, historical, and cultural data. For Luckmann, you do *either* phenomenology *or* sociology: you do phenomenology if you further elaborate the universal structures of the life-world by way of an egological, reflexive analysis, or you do sociology if you research general properties of the concrete, empirical social world.[1] But there is no such thing as a 'phenomenological sociology,' this label is—in Luckmann's eyes—a misnomer.

Given Luckmann's eminent intellectual influence, this clear-cut distinction between phenomenology and sociology is widely disseminated among German sociologists. Most of them avoid the label 'phenomenological sociology' and clearly distinguish between a phenomenological and a sociological analysis. Some engage in a so-called 'parallel action'—they analyze a phenomenon phenomenologically (egologically) and in parallel also sociologically in order to elucidate the protosociological as well as the sociological aspects. Jochen Dreher, for instance, recently presented a 'protosociology of friendship' (2009). Sociologists in the German language area usually use the self-description 'sociology of knowledge,' sometimes specified as a 'phenomenologically founded sociology of knowledge'. It is therefore a misconception when Bentz (2010: 207) states—citing Eberle (2010)— that there is "no phenomenological sociology in Germany"—there exist just different designations based on Luckmann's distinction.

On these grounds, it is comparatively easy to predict that German phenomenologists and sociologists would not consider Waksler's case study as being 'phenomenological'. The sniper study is not based on subjective experiences but on verbal accounts, on written descriptions. A Husserlian phenomenologist pursues an analysis of how phenomena are constituted in his or her subjective consciousness. This allows the study of their givenness in its most subtle aspects. A crucial phenomenological insight is, for instance, the distinction between the pre-predicative level and the predicative level, as worked out, e.g., in Husserl's *Experience and Judgment* (1948/ 1973). The Other is normally constituted on a pre-predicative level by passive syntheses in subjective consciousness. A basic phenomenological insight is that there are already basic typifications involved on this pre-predicative level, which marks a basic difference between phenomenology and semiotic approaches. When using *signs*,

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[1] A certain complication arises here as Schutz's life-world analysis not only comprised a subjective, phenomenological pole but also a pragmatic, action-related pole. I have recently depicted this point elsewhere (Eberle 2012a, 2012b).

however, we are entering a different level, namely the predicative level. This is the level of judgments and inferences where typifications of a higher level and of more complexity are used. Here we find many similarities to semiotic approaches.

While Waksler is using written descriptions as data, she cannot analyze the experiences and the intentionalities of the persons involved in the event; her analysis is restricted to how experiences and observations were described in the newspaper and police reports. In German 'phenomenological sociology'—to use an abbreviated form of 'phenomenologically founded sociology of knowledge'—such distinctions are crucial. We have only direct access to our own experiences and can learn about the experiences of Others only by way of communication. Even in qualitative sociology many researchers falsely talk about the 'experiences of others' as if verbal accounts would *represent* those experiences. In fact, they are dealing with verbal accounts and narrations that may depict the experiences of others but certainly do not represent them. The power of phenomenology rests in its potential to analyze subjective experiences *before* they are formulated on the predicative level in linguistic form. If we attempt to grasp the experiences of others we cannot proceed phenomenologically but must take a hermeneutic approach.

Hence, in German sociology phenomenology serves to elaborate protosociology, while the related sociology of knowledge proceeds hermeneutically. In line with this distinction, the later Luckmann (2007) proposed to reserve the term 'constitution' for the constitution of experiences in subjective consciousness and use the term 'construction' for the social process of reality constructions. This would render the terminology more consistent. On these grounds, Waksler's sniper study would be seen as dealing with the *construction of the Other* but not with the *constitution*, and therefore not being a phenomenological study, but an approach within the sociology of knowledge. Waksler coherently speaks of 'constituting and unconstituting the Other' but she uses twice, maybe by accident, also the wording 'construction of the Other' (2010: 9, 77)—without listing the term in the index. Which difference do such theoretical distinctions make—besides being intellectually more elaborated? Well, I think it is quite illuminating to distinguish between experiences-as-they-are-experienced and communicative—mostly verbal—accounts of experiences. It is crucial for a phenomenological perspective to see—and mark—this difference, otherwise we could as well adopt a linguistic approach that equates experiences with their verbal representation.

These distinctions also raise questions in regard to Waksler's use of Husserl's excerpts. The author has shown in detail how events were reinterpreted in the light of different assumptions. Could it be that Husserl's statements mean different things when applied to these newspaper and police reports than when read in the context of the phenomenological analysis in the transcendental sphere? After all, his statements referred to the intentionality of subjective consciousness and not to verbal descriptions of experiences and observations of others. Among the ten excerpts from Husserl the author uses in her book, it is probably fair to examine those two she uses in her conclusion. There she claims that she sought for a systematic explication, as Husserl suggested:

It is necessary to begin with a systematic explication of the overt and implicit intentionality in which the being of others for me becomes 'made' and explicated in respect of its rightful content—that is, its fulfillment-content (Fifth Cartesian Meditation 1960: 91–92). (Waksler 2010: 78)

It is evident that Husserl analyzes how the Other is constituted in subjective consciousness where he has direct access to the pre-predicative level. Waksler, given her data, inevitably restricts analysis to the predicative level. Furthermore, she reconstructs on the basis of these reports how *others* constituted (constructed) an Other. This is certainly a different access to the intentionality of subjective consciousness than Husserl advocated.

A crucial conclusion of Waksler is that "(t)he existence of a given Other is thus necessarily relative and tentative, subject to later confirmation and refutation" (2010: 78). And she quotes Husserl:

(T)he world is never given to the subject and the communities of subjects in any other way than as the subjectively relative valid world with particular experiential content and as a world which, in and through subjectivity, takes on ever new transformations of meaning; and that even the apodictically persisting conviction of one and the same world, exhibiting itself subjectively in changing ways, is a conviction motivated purely within subjectivity, a conviction whose sense—the world itself, the actually existing world—never surpasses the subjectivity that brings it about (Husserl, n.d.: 337). (Waksler 2010: 78)

Waksler raises an important point when arguing that the wording "grasping the Other" is inadequate, the Other is rather constituted (2010: 78). It is however striking that she uses Husserl to underpin a kind of *subjective relativism*. In the excerpt above, Husserl stresses the noetic aspects of phenomena; hence he concludes that "the apodictically persisting conviction of one and the same world (…) is a conviction motivated purely within subjectivity". And he is aware that a phenomenological analysis that equates truth with evidence is inevitably bound to the phenomenologist's subjectively relative experiences. Husserl's goal, however, is to overcome the subjectively relative contents of experiences and explicate the fundamental structures of the life-world that have *universal validity*. Therefore, he explicitly opposed the claims of psychologism and relativism. In Waksler's study, however, phenomenological analysis is not used to gain essential or apodictic insights; the substantiating evidences of truth are rather dislocated from the phenomenologist's subjective consciousness to the subjective perceptions of the participants that were involved in the event, in one way or the other, to their narrative accounts of a second sniper and to the social processes of interactional and institutional deliberation about which version seems more likely.

How does phenomenological sociology proceed?

Fran Waksler comes from a different background. She describes herself as a 'phenomenological sociologist' and writes: "Phenomenology has offered me a

congenial philosophical framework for doing sociology. It counsels minimizing assumptions and letting the data speak for itself" (www.franceswaksler.com). Within this framework she has investigated face-to-face interaction and a range of topics in the sociologies of childhood, of deviance, medicine, and family (Waksler 1991, 1996; Douglas and Waksler 1982). The sniper study is actually linked to the topic of her dissertation, *The Essential Structures of Face-to-Face Interaction: A Phenomenological Analysis* (Waksler 1973; Psathas and Waksler 1973) which she was finishing just when the New Orleans incident was broadcasted in the TV-news.

Waksler was intellectually socialized at Boston University as one of the early doctoral students of George Psathas, who became one of the prominent representatives of a *phenomenological sociology* (Psathas 1973, 1989; see Eberle 2012b; Nasu 2012; Nasu and Waksler 2012). Psathas learned about phenomenology through the writings of Harold Garfinkel (1967) and although he read the original publications of Husserl, Schutz, and Gurwitsch and even attended seminars of Herbert Spiegelberg, his interpretations remained strongly influenced by ethnomethodology. As one of a few ethnomethodologists, he kept close ties to phenomenology as well as ethnomethodology and conversation analysis. And although he carefully discussed the differences and commonalities between Schutz's phenomenology, ethnomethodology, and other versions of the sociology of knowledge (Psathas 1989, 2004, 2009), he takes up an integrative stance—or an "assimilative approach" (Bird 2009)—probably motivated by the breadth of the *Phenomenological Movement* (Spiegelberg 1982). Psathas designated ethnomethodology explicitly as 'a phenomenological approach in the social sciences' (Psathas 1989: 79–98), and he was convinced that phenomenological sociology offered a promising alternative to the restricted potential of positivist perspectives—at the time behaviorism and structural functionalism.

Waksler developed her approach in this context. In an early paper on the question "Is a Phenomenological Sociology Possible?" (1969) she defines "phenomenological sociology as a synthesis of phenomenology and sociology". Every sociological theory has not only an implicit theory of personality but also "an implicit theory of the nature of reality and of knowledge, an embedded ontology and epistemology" (1969: 2). Hence every sociological approach can be preceded by a "philosophical adjective": While phenomenological sociology does so explicitly, positivist social theories routinely do not. Phenomenology allows sociologists "to make explicit all the assumptions about reality and knowledge" that they hold. By focusing phenomena phenomenologically, "it also becomes possible to study social structures, social institutions, and large-scale phenomena in terms of how they come to be constituted" (1969: 3). This requires that static macro-sociological concepts get replaced by a perspective that investigates the interactions of involved participants in concrete, real-life settings. In regard to methodology, she proposes the descriptive methodology that is basic to phenomenology, citing Spiegelberg (1982). The methodological question "How do we know what we know?" helps to explicate implicit assumptions. As an example she refers to Garfinkel, who investigates "phenomena which in the past have been viewed as 'given,' e.g., gender dichotomy, age categories" (1969: 5). Waksler's approach to a phenomenological sociology implies working with assumptions different from those of positivist science;

questioning implicit assumptions about reality and knowledge with which sociologists operate; and asking how social phenomena that previously were seen as "given" are constituted.

The basic research question of *how* social phenomena are constituted or *how* they are socially constructed would probably never have had such an impact on sociology without the phenomenological movement. The different strands of phenomenological sociology, ethnomethodology and conversation analysis, social constructivism and constructionism have shown in numerous studies how prolific this perspective is. How does Waksler proceed?

In her research life Waksler has worked with different sorts of data. In the sniper study she used written reports as her main source. It is not an ethnography, as many phenomenological sociologists strive for, since the author could not pursue participant observation in the field. And nowadays it would have been too late to interview participants—their memories would be too imprecise. But the data also comprised 132 interviews with police officers and dozens of interviews with firefighters, hotel guests, hotel employees, and other witnesses. As this is a historical study, it was completely adequate to rely on written documents. The author investigates, in a way, the "documentary construction of reality"[2] in regard to the second sniper.

It is my firm impression that Waksler could not have done this study without the inspiration she drew from phenomenology. It is evident that she used much more background knowledge of phenomenology than she indicated by the ten excerpts from Husserl and by her further references. Like Garfinkel, she uses phenomenological analyses as a source of inspiration. The influence of ethnomethodology can be recognized in some of her terminology, for instance when she speaks of "(u)nderstanding the *resources* that people use as they define an Other as an Other" (2010: 2; emphasis added), of seeking "answers in the practices employed" (2010: 5), of exploring which "general procedures and resources" people use (2010: 3), of "in situ evidence" (2010: 3; emphasis in original), of the *"work* that went … into determining that there was at least a second sniper" (2010: 3; emphasis in original), of "common-sense accounts of the doings of a problematic Other" (2010: 5), or of the *"common-sense reasoning"* of participants (2010: 37; emphasis added). Contrary to Garfinkel, she does not use phenomenological inspiration in order to devise a sociological approach like ethnomethodology; she uses phenomenological findings directly to interpret her data.[3] She investigates the *mundane reasoning* of the participants, carves out the implied assumptions and elucidates the evidences that participants report—each illustrated by excerpts from their accounts. Husserl's phenomenological analyses of the constitution of the Other undoubtedly helped her in organizing her huge amount of data. And in the end, her own analysis provided a number of fundamental features of the constitution of the Other in mundane reasoning that are highly plausible and may even have universal validity (something that Waksler would not claim).

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[2] But not the social construction of documentary reality as Smith (1974) suggested.

[3] For a more theoretical phenomenological account of the constitution of the Other see Nasu (2005).

Conclusion

I used Waksler's "phenomenological case study of constituting the Other" to ponder how a phenomenological analysis proceeds and how phenomenological sociology proceeds. I argued that this nice little study will be received differently among German sociologists who apply Luckmann's clear-cut distinction between phenomenology and sociology and among American sociologists who were socialized in the context of ethnomethodology and phenomenological sociology. In the frame of German phenomenological sociologists, the sniper study is pursued with a sociology of knowledge approach that proceeds hermeneutically, attempting to understand how the participants of this event constructed reality and which assumptions, evidences, typifications, and inferences they employed. It would not be accepted as a proper 'phenomenological' study as the perceptions and experiences are not accessed directly—i.e., in subjective intuition—but rather reconstructed indirectly on the basis of written reports. In the frame of American phenomenological sociologists, these distinctions may appear rather sophistic given their interest in empirical studies. Waksler, as an example, seems to be more interested in analyzing the empirical data than in the intricacies of the theoretical debates on phenomenology and sociology. The results she presents are interesting, sometimes even thrilling, and certainly innovative.

Let me close by pointing out that there are new developments in German phenomenological sociology, even in the context of Luckmann's distinction between phenomenology and sociology. I have identified three new developments that have a direct link to empirical research (see Eberle in print): 1. The phenomenological analysis of small social life-worlds is also called 'life-world analytic ethnography'. It incorporates phenomenology by explicitly and reflexively using the subjective experience of the researcher as an 'instrument' of data generation and collection. By observing participation—as opposed to participant observation—the researcher tries to analyze experiences on a pre-predicative level, *before* they are formulated in language. 2. 'Phenomenological hermeneutics' attempts to explore the subjective experiences of an *alter ego*. It requires communication, e.g., narrative interviews, operating on the basis of data on a predicative level. The subtleness of a phenomenological perspective may help to elucidate deeper layers of sense-connexions of the other's experiences. 3. Ethnophenomenology pursues empirical research of non-observable, extraordinary experiences of actors, like visionary experiences, near-death experiences, or religious experiences. As such experiences are inaccessible to 'normal' phenomenologists, they cannot analyze them in their own subjective consciousness. Ethnophenomenology explores not only the contents but also the *mode* of extraordinary experiences of others, hence 'ethno'-phenomenology.

Waksler's analysis comes closest to *phenomenological hermeneutics* although by using written reports she cannot get any deeper in exploring other's experiences than the data disclose. But phenomenological hermeneutics also rests on the (heuristic) premise that the protosociological, universal structures which the phenomenological life-world analysis revealed apply to anybody. On the same grounds, Waksler could argue that Husserl's findings which he gained by his

phenomenological analysis in the transcendental sphere of subjective consciousness are true for anybody. Hence this legitimates her direct application of Husserl's insights to empirical, sociological data. Phenomenological insights help her to make sense of these data, to analyze how they were socially constructed but also to refer to subjective experiences as described in the reports. Her analysis does not further elaborate Husserl's phenomenology, but Husserl's phenomenology undoubtedly helped her in her analysis of sociological data. What else can a phenomenologically informed sociology hope for?

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