Introduction

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I

Providing an introduction for a special issue such as this, in tribute of a sociologist of the stature of Wes Sharrock, is quite a responsibility. Doing any kind of justice to his lengthy career must take into account the scope of his programmatic work, contributions to various substantive fields, ability to work across disciplines, and prolific publication record. And this is not to mention the span of his influence on 60 or so doctoral students, or his countless courses, classes and seminars, and his central role in the still-extant reading group of the 'Manchester School' of ethnomethodology. Nor is it to mention the continuing seminars at the Grafton pub. His has been, and continues to be, a most remarkable career. Thankfully, it has been made it slightly easier for us to provide a decent account of his achievements thanks to some resources that were produced to mark Wes's formal retirement a few years back, when his long-standing employer, the University of Manchester, along with other friends and sundry colleagues who have worked with him over the years, realised that they could not let him end that part of his career quite as quietly and modestly as he would have liked. Other resources, occasioned by his lifetime achievement award in 2011 from the Ethnomethodology and Conversation Analysis Section of the American Sociological Association, have also been helpful. (For a clear account of Wes's own thoughts on his career, we recommend that readers should view the video of his 2014 interview with his former student Dave Calvey, which is available on the University of Manchester's 'ManchesterSociology' Youtube channel at www.youtube.com/watch?v=g_DxE5uLGN8.)

At about the time of Wes's retirement, several of us started to ask whether we could publish a *Festschrift* to commemorate his career and continuing influence on our own work as well as that of many others. The response to initial inquiries about the *Festschrift* was overwhelmingly positive, and after much deliberation and one or two false starts, we approached *Ethnographic Studies* with a proposal to publish a series of articles honouring Wes. We chose *Ethnographic Studies* for a number of reasons. Since its inception, the journal has been associated with the

specific sociological and philosophical work that Wes has been central to. Second, the amount of lead-time between the initial proposal and final publication promised to be much less than it would be for a published volume. And, third, the Editors and Advisory Board of *Ethnographic Studies* (which includes many of the contributors to this *Festschrift)*, were enthusiastic about the project, and were more open to the range of articles we intended to publish than other possible publication outlets were likely to have been. We would therefore like to thank Alex Dennis and the other Editors and Advisory Board members for their support and for the considerable amount of work they put into composing, editing, and reviewing drafts and papers in the *Festschrift* (often at very short notice).

Publishing the *Festschrift* as a special issue of *Ethnographic Studies* enabled contributors to write open encomiums to Wes. Though such open personal praise is, no doubt, directly contrary to Wes's genuinely modest sensibilities, the editors and contributors deeply wanted a forum in which they could express their debt to Wes as a scholar and person. We hope that Wes will approve the way that contributing authors have been able to draw upon their work with him over the years to find clear lines of his influence on their own thinking. It is gratifying to see that sheer hagiography has been avoided, and that authors of the articles in this issue have been able to provide biographical and historical reflections on Wes's career and the circumstances in which it has unfolded, and to present original research that demonstrates clear connections with Wes's work. Reading the papers in this volume should demonstrate that Wes's influence was conveyed not only through his published studies and his involvements with some of the most important developments and debates in social sciences over the past half century, but also through his unique ways of involving interested scholars in debate, discussion, and collaboration. As anyone who has spent any length of time with him knows, Wes works in the very best traditions of education; not so much through direct instruction, as through jointly and constantly sharing in the excitement of discovery. This is very well brought out in the paper in this issue by Andrew Carlin about Wes's teaching and his many introductory texts that old hands as well as novices frequently consult. It is also in many of the papers by others who were (and continue to be) collaborators with him. Several others of the papers in this *Festschrift* also provide testimony to, and exemplary samples of, the extraordinary amount of collaborative work that Wes has published over the years. Wes has joked that sometimes he wishes that his surname began with a letter earlier in the alphabet, and it is worth appreciating that he was the leading author of, and inspiration for, many of the writings in which his name is preceded by 'and' or glossed over by 'et al.'

II

Now Professor Emeritus of the University of Manchester, Wes was, at the time of his official retirement, without doubt among the longest-serving academic

members of staff on the books of the University. Wes began his career at the University of Manchester as a post-graduate student in 1965, and became a teaching member of staff two years later, meaning that his career alone is longer than the entire lives of many present colleagues who are well into 'mature' stages of their careers. Wes began his studies with a degree in Social Sciences at the University of Leicester in 1962. He studied at Leicester with an exceptional group of instructors including Anthony (now Lord) Giddens, and, first among equals in Wes's view, Percy Cohen. As John Lee mentions in his paper in this issue, when Wes began at Manchester, he was in a joint Department of Social Anthropology and Sociology, in which the anthropologists, under the leadership of Max Gluckman, were if anything the senior partners. Many of the figures who have subsequently come to be known as eminent sociologists started in that department, one obvious example being Peter Worsley, who supervised Wes's Manchester PhD. The first 'Manchester School' that Wes had a connection with, then, was formally associated with Social Anthropology.

His exposure to the combination of sociology and social anthropology was formative for Wes's development, and provided clear links to his prevailing academic interests and approaches. In apprehending the form of these approaches, we owe a debt to Bob Anderson and Graham Button, both contributors to this special issue, who provided us with some extremely useful comments on Wes's contributions over the years.

While Wes was impressed with much of Erving Goffman's work, and the ethnographic work by several members of the Manchester department when he joined it, he nonetheless found that it fell short of the focus and rigour he imagined should be possible for characterising and describing members' practices. Sociology has always been an empirical discipline, to some extent, and close scrutiny of observational materials allows sociologists to see, *in vivo*, how social orders are produced and recognised, but such empirical research is underpinned, and often undermined, by the concepts sociology draws from natural language. Wes recognised and embraced Peter Winch's idea that sociology's topics and explanatory concepts are borrowed from ordinary language, and explicating their ordinary uses was the initial, and potentially endless, task faced by the field. But, where Winch proposed such explication as a philosophical project, Sharrock found in ethnomethodology a distinctive empirical way to take up Winch's challenge by rigorously examining, in a unique way, the circumstantial production of natural language usage in and as practical action.

To quote from a personal comment from Anderson and Button, while Wes has of course been involved in sociological studies in a variety of substantive areas, and notably a series of projects on information technology design and application in workplace settings:

> In all of these, while new or advanced technologies might be the 'occasion' or 'site' of the study, the investigative interest is always in how such 'objects' appear within local reasoning practices; how they are being understood, interpreted and represented within the setting (which is, of course, an extension and application of his primordial questions: 'How is sociology understanding, interpreting and representing the 'objects' under its purview?' and 'What should be the relationship between these two [i.e. sociology's and common sense's sets of practices]?') The important thing for us about balancing Wes's interests in this way is that it centres him in sociology as a theoretically driven empirical discipline while drawing important insights and resources from philosophy rather than marginalising him to both.

One of the payoffs of this insight is that, while it is tempting to understand Wes as an ethnomethodologist, or better, the foremost UK-based exponent of ethnomethodology, and as a scholar who has an abiding interest in the implications of Wittgenstein's work for the conduct of social science, it would be an error to define the entire scope of his work and influence in those terms. Rather, the exemplary studies of Garfinkel and Wittgenstein have been instrumental in allowing Wes to pursue his own vision of the conduct of sociology. Starting with his time in Leicester, Wes has had a lifelong interest in the methodology of this discipline. Part of his success, and ongoing influence, should be seen in his unremitting commitment to understanding the point of view of members (where membership is a 'mastery of natural language' in Garfinkel and Sacks' [1970] terms, more than a simple group affiliation), which he considers as a vital part of strong sociological methodology. In short, Wes has very much pursued his own sociological endeavour over the years, with a set of principles that never fail to be both disciplining (in both senses, or any sense) and useful points of departure to those around him.

III

Of course, ethnomethodology sets great store by studying and understanding the points of view of the participants in work settings. Despite what we have written above, it is perhaps still fair to speculate that this is the field of study where Wes's work is most likely to be encountered by younger scholars.

It is worth saying something about the context of institutional sociology—that is to say, the sociology that is found in universities and expressed through a disciplinary literature and pedagogy. It is important to note this, because at the time of writing there is no longer a 'Manchester School' of ethnomethodology. The aforementioned reading group still convenes at the University, and it remains a natural place to organise related gatherings, such as Mind and Society meetings. It is even being referred to in publications (e.g., Psathas 2008), and in the present tense, as the source of UK ethnomethodology. There are, however, to our knowledge no members of the current academic staff, at least in the Department of Sociology at

the University of Manchester, who would embrace the description of 'ethnomethodologist'. Nevertheless, the 'Manchester School' has a more lasting lineage in a more diffuse network of scholars in and well beyond the Manchester region, and in the large body of writing and thought that Wes, his colleagues, and students have produced over the past half-century.

As part of the small band of scholars who set the sociological agenda rather than follow it, it is often less fruitful to assess Wes's work in terms of prevailing fashions of the day; instead, it is better to reflect on just how influential he has been in setting the scene of the sociological landscape over the years. Ethnomethodology is often consigned to being a niche field within its 'parent discipline' of academic sociology, which has itself been involved in a long-term struggle against dismissal and distrust in the public arena, not least in terms of its 'utility' in the ongoing debates as to the value of higher education generally and so-called non-vocational degree programmes in particular. It is, we suppose, possible to claim that ethnomethodology was briefly fashionable; anyone reading Ernest Gellner's (1975) derisory account of it as 'California sociology' will be afforded a, perhaps amusing though wholly inaccurate, image of how early EM/CA may have looked.

Although this is not the place to fully take up such matters, it is certainly the case that ethnomethodology has a historically fraught relationship with professional academic sociology, both in terms of conceptual debate and internecine institutional relations. The fact that ethnomethodology was and to some extent continues to be seen as 'disruptive' to the sociological mainstream, with some authors in the days after its initial dissemination in the wake of publication of Garfinkel's (1967) *Studies in Ethnomethodology* offering a near-apocalyptic vision, would not have helped with intra-departmental relations. Ethnomethodology, and the related work of Wittgenstein, can easily be seen as 'correctives', and they have been widely misunderstood. Wes has been as active as any other ethnomethodologist over the years in attempting to dissolve some of these misunderstandings. We can leave matters of tribalism to another day. However, it is this joint conceptual and institutional context that we need to see Wes's achievements and the respect that he is accorded in academic circles.

We have already mentioned the pivotal role that Wes has played in nurturing and inspiring new generations of scholars in ethnomethodology and related fields. What is perhaps less well celebrated is that he has provided substantial academic leadership to his colleagues more generally. He has worked with, collaborated with, and supervised doctoral students in mainstream sociology (assuming that we can claim there is such a thing), and his more reflective colleagues will have realised what we mentioned earlier, that his aim has not been to defend a particular intellectual or ideological position, but rather to investigate the possibilities for a rigorous social science methodology. It is fair to say that he is widely respected for this, as much as he is for being present at the cusp of key historical movements in

UK social science, and, we might add, for the fact that he has not sought out senior leadership positions in higher education.

Put as simply as possible, it is easy to imagine someone who has made as many concerted critiques and asked as many challenging questions as Wes has over the years being far less widely admired and respected than he is.

IV

When it comes to characterising Wes's publication history, this again is a long and complex task. Suggesting even a long shortlist along the lines of 'most important publications' is something of a fool's errand. Rather than aim for completeness, we can list some of our favourites here, in a roughly chronological order that may allow some scope for seeing trends emerge. We should make it clear, though, that in doing this we are inevitably going to be leaving out particular works and perhaps even whole phases of Wes's work, that many of our readers are likely to find most important. It might be that this list will also serve as a good start for scholars just starting their discovery of Wes's publications.

One of Wes's earliest works, and the first to appear in an edited collection, was his chapter on 'The Problem of Order' which appeared in *Introducing Sociology* (1970), edited by Peter Worsley. This is noteworthy for Wes drawing on a variety of sociological approaches to this key sociological problematic, including Goffman and Parsons. He reprised this for the second edition of *Introducing Sociology* in 1977, although it is interesting to note that in *The New Introducing Sociology*, Wes was instead writing on 'Theoretical Schools' (Sharrock 1989a).

In Roy Turner's edited collection *Ethnomethodology*, Wes had published a short but very influential paper, 'On Owning Knowledge' (Sharrock, 1974). Wes himself tends to groan when he hears this paper invoked, and retorts, in all seriousness, that he has written other things. This paper is noteworthy in many ways, though. For a start, it is one of the earliest papers that Wes produced that is cited to this day. It is of historical value for its use of ethnographic data, betraying Wes's anthropological influences. And at least for one of the present editors, it has just been recharged with a new energy given the latest edition of the 'culture wars' and the pervasive notion that knowledge, or cultural production, can meaningfully said to be 'owned' for the purposes of progressive politics.

Wes has a particular connection to the work of Peter Winch, who, not least thanks to the writings of Wes and frequent co-author Bob Anderson, remains a vital component of UK ethnomethodology due to his explications of the work of Wittgenstein for social science (Winch 1958). One of Wes's most prolific years saw the publication of two particularly good expressions of his work, both published with Anderson: 'Criticising Forms of Life' (Sharrock and Anderson 1985a), and 'Magic Witchcraft and the Materialist Mentality' (Sharrock and Anderson 1985b). The latter was published in the then unofficial ethnomethodology journal, *Human*

Studies. These two papers are clear and useful expositions of Winchean and Wittgensteinian ideas, particularly in the way they take up the notion of 'form of life', and discuss what it means to compare disparate ways of thinking. This is central as a consideration for the social scientist when it comes to faithfully describing the members' practices that he or she may encounter. Since the introduction of Wes and Bob's archive at http://www.sharrockandanderson.co.uk/, a series of other papers from about this period on Winch, often unpublished, have been made available. These are rare treats for Winch scholars and those with an interest in the philosophy of the social sciences. Later expressions of Wes's scholarship in philosophy of social science are found in his co-authored publications, *Thomas Kuhn: Philosopher of Scientific Revolutions* (2002) with Rupert Read, which discusses, among other things, what Kuhn's thought affords the social sciences, and *There is No Such Thing as a Social Science*, written with Rupert Read and Phil Hutchinson (Hutchinson et al. 2008). In addition to being provocative, these books are valuable resources for teaching philosophy of social science.

Readers looking for a good explication of ethnomethodology could look to two sources: first, a short and pithy book, *The Ethnomethodologists* (Sharrock and Anderson 1986), is an excellent introduction to the field; and, second, and perhaps even more important for those who want a representative expression of Wes's thoughts, a short piece in the *British Journal of Sociology* simply titled 'Ethnomethodology' (Sharrock 1989b) which is virtually a repository of many of his most commonly stated arguments to this day. For instance, he suggests that ethnomethodology 'was never likely to gratify the requirements that sociologists in a hurry and those with a mission would bring to it' (p. 657). This statement tersely sets out a demarcation line between ethnomethodology and those critical modes of sociology in which the researcher finds what they want to find as opposed to what the materials reveal to them when submitted to careful scrutiny. The idea of sociologists being in a hurry will be familiar to anyone who has unavoidably had to present results under pressure of time, but we are reminded of Harvey Sacks' (1992) observations in his *Lectures* that a researcher can, if (un)motivated to do so, gain novel insight into even small fragments of data when they are examined over extended periods, perhaps years. The lessons in Sharrock's paper bear repeating, as they are hard-won, easily forgotten, and require great discipline.

In 1989–90 Wes was a Visiting Senior Scientist with Rank Xerox in Cambridge, UK. This period naturally saw a substantial amount of work in Computer Supported Cooperative Work (CSCW), what some might call an applied field, but which Wes, and his colleagues who have been central to it prefer to treat as an original field in its own right. Some prominent publications on design work followed in the years after this, of which some examples are 'Getting the Design Job Done' (Anderson and Sharrock 1993), in *The Journal of Intelligent Systems*; and 'Supporting the Design Process within an Organisational Context' (Anderson, Button and Sharrock 1993). This interest in computer science and systems design

was followed, at least in bibliographic terms, by a critical engagement with cognitive science, cognitive philosophy, and contemporary issues in fields such as artificial intelligence. Two books from this period are *Computers, Minds and Conduct* (Button, Coulter, Lee and Sharrock 1995), and *Brain, Mind and Human Behaviour in Contemporary Cognitive Science* (Coulter and Sharrock 2007).

Moving into the 2000s, Wes produced a series of papers with Christian Greiffenhagen on logical, mathematical, and linguistic relativism, among other subjects (e.g., Greiffenhagen and Sharrock, 2006a,b, 2007). These papers incorporate some ingenious arguments, and the paper on linguistic relativism (2007), in particular, deserves to be required reading for students in linguistics, translation, and education, as well as in sociological and philosophy. Along with Michael Mair, Wes and Christian have produced a further series of papers (2011, 2013, 2015, 2016), many of which return to Wes's interest in the methodology of the social sciences in an original way, being among the first *fieldwork studies* of social scientists at work (with thanks for this point to personal communication from Michael).

This brings us more or less up to date. Thankfully, Wes is still writing about the latest developments in the fields that he has given so much to, and typically, his output is among the richest and most thought-provoking that can be found. Readers are recommended his commentary with Button, 'In support of conversation analysis' radical agenda' (Button and Sharrock 2016) for a special issue of *Discourse Studies* critical of the 'epistemics' polemic in conversation analysis, and the provocative paper on the Sharrock and Anderson web site, 'Has ethnomethodology run its course?' (Anderson and Sharrock 2017). And typically, Wes continues to innovate, as seen in his latest monograph with Anderson, *Action at a Distance* (Anderson and Sharrock 2018).

A final mention should go to the many 'introductions' (Wes is careful not to say 'textbooks') that he has contributed to over the years. See Andrew Carlin's paper in this *Festschrift* for many examples of these volumes, which remain eminently readable. Readers of the other papers in this *Festschrift* will find that many of these papers, and many others that we have not the scope or time to mention, are reference and discussed.

V

The *Festschrift* begins with two papers by long-term (and continuing) collaborators with Wes Sharrock: Bob Anderson and Graham Button. Both were among Sharrock's first PhD students, and both went on to successful academic careers in sociology (Bob at Manchester Metropolitan University, and Graham at University of Plymouth), and both made mid-career moves into research management at Xerox EuroPARC, where they also made key contributions to the nascent field of Computer Supported Cooperative Work (CSCW). And, both also capped their careers as directors of university research at Sheffield Hallam University and, in

Bob's case, CEO at University Campus Suffolk. The Sharrock-Anderson Archive is a major online resource for reading 'classic' works by Sharrock and Anderson as well as some of their most recent writings: http://www.sharrockandanderson.co.uk.

In their papers for the *Festschrift*, Anderson and Button not only describe and elucidate some of Wes's many contributions, they present examples of their collaborative research *with* him. This approach is highly appropriate, given the fact that all of Sharrock's books are co-authored, and most of his published writings are as well. In addition to his many writings with Anderson and Button, Sharrock has co-authored numerous works with John Hughes, Rod Watson, Jeff Coulter, Ted Cuff, John Lee, and many others (including many of the authors of papers in this *Festschrift*). Anderson's paper presents an account of a 'risk register'; an example that is taken from a recent study he conducted with Sharrock on executive management practices. This graphic catalogue of ordered risks is a focal point for Anderson's study with Sharrock, and for the managerial reasoning they studied. Their analysis of this managerial artefact elucidates the intersubjective work of management practice; work that is obscured when managerial reasoning is presented as an abstract cognitive process.

Button presents two quite different samples from unpublished collaborative writings with Sharrock. One is from one of the many studies of hardware and software engineers that they have studied in the past three decades. The other example addresses a more explicit 'theoretical' matter, which is the long-standing attempt in the social sciences to transcend or surpass 'mere' common-sense with theoretically and empirically grounded knowledge. Extracts from both studies are used to argue the case for an approach that takes common sense (whether embedded in the vernacular of engineering or in ordinary language and practice) *seriously*, not as true doctrine but as integral to circumstantially organized actions. And, not incidentally, Button uses the two samples to exemplify how Sharrock has been extensively engaged in detailed empirical studies informed by his, perhaps more widely known, work in philosophy of social science.

These two papers are followed by one authored by John Lee, a long-term friend and colleague of Wes's in the Manchester Department of Social Anthropology and (later) Sociology, who along with Wes and Rod Watson were mainstays of the 'Manchester School' in ethnomethodology. As Lee mentions in his paper, their relationship started in the mid-1960s, when both were post-graduate students, and has continued for decades afterwards. Lee was co-author with Wes, Graham Button, and Jeff Coulter of *Computers, Minds and Conduct*, a critical study of cognitivist philosophy (Button et al. 1995), and his research covered a broad span from philosophy of social science to detailed conversation analytic studies with Gail Jefferson on 'troubles talk' (Jefferson and Lee 1981).

In his paper, he recalls their initial meetings and provides a brief account of the Department of Social Anthropology at that time. He mentions that he and Wes

developed an interest in Peter Winch's critique of social science, and later turned to ethnomethodology out of dissatisfaction with the lack of rigour in sociology. The paper summarizes Lee's dissertation research, and describes how he developed an understanding of 'talking politics' from his extended engagement with changing factions, and talk of factions, in the local Labour Party organisation he studied. His approach exemplifies an attention to circumstantially changing way 'politics' entered into the talk and organizational actions of party members, and he gives major credit to conversations with Wes Sharrock for developing his orientation to political talk and action.

Andrew Carlin in his paper also describes his initial encounters with Wes, more than two decades later when he began his post-graduate studies at Manchester. He recalls his impressions during the first time he joined the 'Wednesday Reading Group,' an informal seminar that included Wes, and a group of colleagues and students. Then, as now, Wes was the central figure in the reading group, and Carlin relates how impressed he was by the utter seriousness of this 'informal' seminar, and by the participants strong commitment to this extra-curricular forum. In his paper, he goes on to elaborate his appreciation of the sizable body of Wes's writings over the years that introduce sociology and social phenomena to postgraduate, undergraduate, and even A-level students. Carlin himself has written and edited some key pedagogical work in (and on) sociology and ethnomethodology, as well as conducting ethnographic research on the practical organization of bibliographic and biographical information (Watson and Carlin 2012).

Michael Lynch was not a student of Wes Sharrock, but has known and admired him since first encountering him in the late 1970s. Since then, they have met on many occasions, engaged in published dialogs (Lynch 2000a,b; Sharrock 2000) and co-authored introductions to two collections of ethnomethodological works (Lynch and Sharrock, 2003; 2011). Lynch's paper takes up a line of Wes's work that developed Sharrock's early interest in Peter Winch's critique of social science, which John Lee mentions in his paper. While recognizing Sharrock's many empirical investigations, Lynch focuses on, and emphasizes the value of, his distinctive critiques of, for example, motive explanations in social science and trends toward reifying linguistic structure in 'modern' Conversation Analysis.

Ivan Leudar, a long-time friend and colleague of Sharrock's at the University of Manchester, taught psychology there until becoming Emeritus Professor in 2011. Leudar's research is on the history of psychology and psychology of art, among other topics, and he has also done a substantial amount of work on the interactional organization of psychotherapy sessions. His paper summarizes three projects on psychotherapy practices, and examines some of the ways psychotherapists participated in the research. Sharrock was a collaborator in one of the projects, and consistent with his participation, the paper argues that an adequate analysis of talk in therapy sessions requires an understanding of the ethnographic background.

Jeff Coulter was one of the first PhD students Sharrock supervised at Manchester, and in the decades since they have co-authored numerous books and papers (e.g., Coulter and Sharrock 2007). Coulter went on to a long and illustrious career in Sociology at Boston University, and with his colleagues and students there he helped establish a variant of the 'Mancunian' approach to ethnomethodology at BU. Coulter's paper in this issue presents an argument about the insanity defence in Anglo-American criminal law. The paper reviews the history of the insanity defence, pointing out that psychologists' conceptions of insanity have greatly changed since the early 19th century, and that juries persistently take account of the 'heinousness' of crimes as well as the alleged psychological condition of the accused person.

Max Travers also was one of Wes's students in a more recent era. His research, dating back to the 1990s, deploys ethnographic methods to investigate day to day legal practices (Travers 1997), as well as activities in other bureaucratic settings. His paper for this issue takes up a topic—the organisational use of rules in practical actions—that is one of Sharrock's main theoretical and empirical interests. Travers addresses the specific way magistrates exercise discretion when making bail decisions in Australian courts.

Nozomi Ikeya is another of Sharrock's former students who has taken the 'Manchester' approach far afield—in her case to Japan. Her empirical research is on workplace interaction in the IT industry and in medical settings. She also has taken up broader conceptual and theoretical issues in EMCA, such as in her paper with Sharrock on practices of classification (Ikeya and Sharrock 2018). Her paper for this *Festschrift* explicates an early essay by Harvey Sacks on 'lawyers' work' and relates it to the workplace studies that developed decades later.

Rupert Read, currently Reader in Philosophy at UEA, was a lecturer in philosophy at the MMU and University of Manchester in the 1990s, where he and Sharrock began a collaboration that has lasted through the decades since then. Among their publications is a book on Thomas Kuhn (Sharrock and Read 2002). Christian Greiffenhagen worked as a postdoctoral fellow with Sharrock at the University of Manchester and collaborated with him on an ongoing series of projects on mathematical education and the practice of mathematical reasoning (e.g., Greiffenhagen and Sharrock 2011). Read and Greiffenhagen's paper in this *Festschrift* takes a central topic in the philosophy of language 'self-reference' and runs it through an examination of Gödel's theorem. Drawing upon Wittgenstein and Sharrock, they reject the idea that *sentences* can refer to themselves and argue that *people* perform the *action* of referring, and they support their argument with a reading of Gödel's theorem.

Alex Dennis and John Rooke are both former graduate students of Wes, with John now working as a freelance blogger and independent researcher, and Alex now Lecturer in Sociology at the University of Sheffield. In parallel with what they describe as the 'Winch moment' in reasoning (after Peter Winch), demonstrating

this through Winch's critique of Evans-Pritchard, they coin the 'Sharrock moment' as the point at which a thinker becomes fatally committed to false conclusions through adopting faulty premises—for instance, by adopting a category mistake. They demonstrate this through the analysis of a conversation involving the radical atheist and biologist Richard Dawkins, who, like Evans-Pritchard, is shown to be determined to judge religious faith by the standards of scientific thought.

Phil Hutchinson, a Senior Lecturer in Philosophy at MMU, has been actively involved in recent years with the reading group and Mind and Society meetings in the Manchester area. His book with Sharrock and Read (Hutchinson et al. 2008) provides an up-to-date extension of Winch's withering critique of efforts to turn social and psychological inquiry into a science. Hutchinson's paper for this *Festschrift* addresses a central challenge that runs through Sharrock's work to the effort by social scientists to overcome the vagueness and circumstantial relativity of vernacular concepts and replace them with technical concepts that are consonant with available theories and methods.

Björn Wallmark is an independent researcher whose relationship to Wes Sharrock we cannot comment on. Gathering from his acknowledgements, he is indebted to Philippe Sormani, a former student of Sharrock's who has gone on to address central topics in ethnomethodological studies of work, such as 'unique adequacy' (Sormani 2014), and to expand upon the repertoire of Garfinkel 'experiments' for which ethnomethodology is so widely known. The paper in this *Festschrift* is written in the spirit of Garfinkel's 'experiments' and describes the contingencies and conflicts arising in a fictitious(?) institute that aimed to create a common venue for artists and science.

Phil Brooker, Will Dutton, and Michael Mair have co-authored *The New Ghosts in the Machine* for this special issue. Phil and Michael were both doctoral students of Wes at Manchester and now both work at the University of Liverpool, Phil as Lecturer in Sociology, and Michael as Senior Lecturer in Sociology, Social Policy, and Criminology, while Will works for the AI company Peak, in Manchester. Their paper provides a fascinating insight into anthropomorphising practices in the usage of artificial intelligence algorithms. Inspired by Wes Sharrock and Wittgenstein, and adapting their title from Ryle, they argue that we not only need to dissolve the danger of drawing conclusions about the mind from the perceived characteristics of artificial intelligence, but also—this being the main point of their paper—that we need to pay close heed to the *practical* contexts in which artificial intelligence algorithms are used in order to come to a proper understanding of what their characteristics are to start with.

Mike Ball, another formal doctoral student of Wes's, has recently retired from Staffordshire University, where he was Senior Lecturer in Anthropology and Sociology. Greg Smith is Professor of Sociology at Salford University. In their paper, they use a different point of departure from Wes's work, the injunction that a large set of conclusions can be drawn from a small amount of data. With this as

inspiration and with Schutz's work on multiple realities as a key conceptual tool, they provide an in-depth analysis of a 60-second television advert to draw out the routine, and not-so-routine grounds on which the marketer has predicated their message. Despite several obvious breaches of mundane reality, they conclude that the advertisement achieves a readable coherence.

The editors once again provide their thanks to everyone involved in the production of this issue. Most of all, our thanks goes out to Wes and his outstanding contribution to sociology.

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