**Ethnomethodology**: a phenomenological approach to the interpretation of everyday action and speech in various social contexts; derived from phenomenological sociology. Introduced by Harold Garfinkel, the method aims to guide research into meaningful social practices and everyday activity as experienced by participants. A major objective of the method is to arrive at an interpretation of the rules that underlie everyday activity and thus constitute part of the normative basis of a given social order. Research from this perspective generally focuses on mundane forms of social activity--e.g. psychiatrists evaluating patients' files, jurors deliberating on defendants' culpability, or coroners judging cause of death. The investigator then attempts to reconstruct an underlying set of rules and ad hoc procedures that may be taken to have guided the observed activity. The approach emphasizes the *contextuality* of social practice--the richness of unspoken shared understandings that guide and orient participants' actions in a given practice or activity.