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'K IS MENTALLY ILL' THE ANATOMY OF A FACTUAL ACCOUNT¹

DOROTHY E. SMITH

Abstract. The paper analyses an interview describing how K came to be defined by her friends as mentally ill. The method of analysis assumes that the structure of the conceptual scheme 'mental illness' which the reader uses in recognizing 'mental illness' is isomorphic with that organizing the text and hence is discoverable 'in' it. The full text of the interview is presented as the data. The analysis explicates the interpretation of the text as a method of reading. The text is found to provide instructions for its interpretation and for the authorization of its facticity. K's mental illness is to be located in the collection of instances of K's behaviour which the interview records. How is behaviour to be described as 'mentally ill type' behaviour? It is suggested that the interview as a whole organizes a 'cutting-out' procedure whereby K's behaviour is presented as making sense neither to her friends nor to the reader of the text. The procedure involves showing for each instance of her behaviour as well as for the collection as a whole that K's behaviour is not properly provided for by relevant social rules or definitions of the situation. To be recognizable as 'mentally ill type' behaviour examples of K's actions must be constituted as anomalies rather than as *deviations* from a norm or rule.

THE CONSTRUCTS of the social scientist are, as Schutz (1962) has pointed out second-order constructs. The phenomena which she studies and seeks to explain are already structured by the interpretations and characterizations of those she studies. That structure is an essential feature of the phenomena, not something added to it which she must strip away to get at 'how things really are'. Moreover the procedures she uses to assemble and interpret her data are not essentially different from those that lay actors use in bringing about the phenomena which become her data. What she so uses has already been worked up for purposes which have usually nothing to do with hers. In the construction of her data, others have been busy. The process of transforming social action into sociological data must be recognized as a joint, though not ordinarily purposefully concerted, activity.

The ordinary working situation of the social scientist presents her with a special difficulty. It is a normal feature of her data that the events with which she is concerned have already travelled into the past and cannot be checked over. The perpetual decay of the phenomena she would describe and explain make her singularly dependent on records, descriptions, etc., of various kinds. Her practice is fundamentally historical.

This paper analyzes an interview which tells how K comes to be defined by her friends as mentally ill. It is not just a record of events as they happened, but of events as they were seen as relevant to reaching a decision about the character of those events. This is a common feature of the kinds of records, etc., etc., with which the social scientist in the field of deviant behaviour is concerned. The various agencies of social control have institutionalized procedures for assembling, processing, and testing information about the behaviour of individuals so that it can be matched against the paradigms which provide the working criteria of class-membership, whether as juvenile delinquent, mentally ill, or the like. These procedures, both formal and informal, are a regular part of the business of the police, the courts, psychiatrists, and other like agencies (Cicourel, 1968). A full description of the organizational practice of such agencies in these respects would be a description of one type of procedure by which a set of original and actual events is transformed into the currency of fact.

A number of studies in the field of mental illness (Goffman, 1961; Scheff, 1964; Mechanic, 1962; Smith, 1976), show that descriptions of the activities of the official agencies are far from adequate in accounting for how people come to be defined as mentally ill. In this account it is K's friends who are doing the preliminary work. K does not get so far as the formal psychiatric agencies though this is foreshadowed. Accounts of 'paths to the mental hospital' (Clausen & Yarrow, 1955) suggest that a good deal of non-formal work has been done by the individual concerned, her family, and friends, before entry to the official process. These non-formal processes may also be described as a social organization which in this case precedes the production of an interview account of the kind I am concerned with here.

The term social organization is used here in a sense which leaves the question of planning or purpose open. Such a use of the concept can be compared with the economic concept of a market which makes possible the analysis of the activities of numbers of individuals buying and selling as a social organization which is unintended by its participants and which produces 'market phenomena' as an unintended consequence. It is used here analogously to include as participants in the production of this account, not just the sociologist, the interviewer, and the respondent, but also those who brought about the original events and those who tried to reach a decision about what they were. It is thus a means of making explicit the various steps and activities that intervene between the reader of the account and the original events; and of showing how the acceptability of the interview as a factual account and as an account of someone who is, or is becoming, mentally ill is provided for. I have accordingly also stressed throughout the fact that we all recognize but normally bracket, namely that the sociologist is and must be an active participant in constructing the events she treats as data.

The origin of the data

In an undergraduate course of deviance, I worked with a few students on a research project concerned with how the lay person comes to define someone as mentally ill. The research was modelled, though loosely, on Kitsuse's paper on 'Societal Reaction to Deviant Behaviour' (Kitsuse, 1962) which examines how people come to identify someone as homosexual.

The interviewing approach used was less structured than Kitsuse's. The interviewees were instructed to begin with the question 'Have you ever known anyone you thought might be mentally ill?' Respondents were to be told to define mental illness and to tell the story pretty much in their own way, but the interviewer was told to get information on four points:

1. the incident or situation in which the respondent first came to think the person might be mentally ill;
2. what the subject was doing then or in other previous situations that suggested this definition or which could later be seen as instances of that kind of behaviour;
3. what the relationship between the subject and respondent had been; and
4. what others were involved in the process of definition, who the respondent had talked to, etc.

This interview is not in any way a model of what such interviews might be like. The interviewer's write-up did not include her own questions, nor was the interview tape recorded, which is the ideal, though one seldom available to undergraduates. But my interest in analyzing it is in part precisely *because* of its imperfections as an ordinary sociological interview.

The interview was discussed in class. At that time I did not have the written account before me. The interviewer gave a verbal presentation. Hearing her account, I took it to be an account of a developing schizophrenic reaction of some type. I thought to myself, 'the subject will get more and more disorganized and then one day things will go to pot at work and she'll be hospitalized'. In other words I heard the interviewer's account as an account of someone who was or was becoming mentally ill. The verbal account differed, and differed I believe in important ways from the written account, in that it included some material that is not in the written account and omitted some that is.

Later, however, I saw the typescript of the interview and it was just as clear to me that a rather different picture of the goings-on could be drawn and that I'd have no trouble drawing it, at least as a tentative picture, on the basis of evidence internal to the interview. The alternative picture, very simply stated, was that what was going on was a kind of communal freezing-out process, very like that which Lemert describes in his paper on 'Paranoia and the Dynamics of Exclusion' (Lemert, 1962) and that if there was anything odd in K's behaviour (and reading the account suggested to me that there was doubt whether anything *was* very psychiatrically

odd) it might reasonably be supposed that people do react in ways which seem odd to others when they are going through this kind of process.

The usual thing to do with this kind of difficulty is to try to arrive at some kind of decision about which interpretation is correct. This would normally involve wanting more information, or examining with care what is already there. In this case most likely the decision would have to be that the interview wasn't adequate for this purpose. But what I'd been struck with was the figure-ground effect, that first I saw the verbal account as mental illness and could still see distinctly the lineaments of that in the written interview, and that now I could see the alternative. So the interview can be read for the mental illness effect and then that is what you see (and clearly that had been what the interviewer had seen and had further communicated to myself and the students in class); but having seen the alternative model it is then hard to see the one where the subject is mentally ill.

Recognizing mental illness

The criteria of class-membership in other types of deviant categories, such as homosexual, juvenile delinquent, etc., are fairly straightforward. A definite rule must have been broken or a norm deviated from. The process of showing that something an individual has done can be properly seen as an instance of breaking the rule is not by any means simple. Nevertheless the difficulty with the category 'mental illness' is of another kind. The criteria of class-membership are not clear. It is not clear what norms are deviated from when someone is categorized as mentally ill. Yet it is clearly possible to describe behaviour in such a way that people will make that definition with full confidence in its propriety. There must therefore be some set of rules or procedures for representing behaviour as mentally ill types of behaviour and those procedures must meet the normative conditions for recognizing individuals as members of the class of persons who are mentally ill.

In the verbal account given by the interviewer in class I, and I take it others present, recognized the behaviour of the subject, K, as mentally ill behaviour. The interview purports to be, and can be, recognized in the same way. Recognizing in events the 'fact' that someone is mentally ill involves a complex conceptual work. It involves assembling observations from actual moments and situations dispersed in time, organizing them or finding that they can be organized, in accordance with the 'instructions' which the concept provides. A simple, immediate and convincing recognition of a fact at this conceptual level implies that much of the work of providing events with the appropriate conceptual order has already been done. All that the reader/hearer has to do is to discover in those events, or rather that accounts of events, the model which enables her to classify them as this or that kind of social fact.

The conceptual schema which is the meaning of the term 'mental illness' (as I know it) provides a set of criteria and rules for ordering events against which the

ordering of events in the account may be matched, or tested. An account which is immediately convincing is one which forces that classification and makes any other difficult. And if it does then the events of the account of them must already display the order which gives them the shape of the fact of the reader/hearer.

It is this which entitles me, I suggest, to analyze this account to discover (in a preliminary way) the lineaments of the concept of mental illness. The structure of this account with respect to how it may be seen as an account of someone being mentally ill is treated as isomorphic with the structure of the conceptual schema used to recognize it as such. In analyzing this account as an account of mental illness I am, I argue, *recovering the structure of the conceptual model which I make use of in recognizing that that is what it is.*

The interview itself as data

In this analysis the interview is not being viewed as an account from which we are trying to infer back to what actually happened. The effect of questions is not merely to generate information. The difference between questions in different forms is not merely that some yield more and others less information. The form of the question tells the respondent what sort of work she is being asked to do. It asks her to operate on her knowledge, experience, etc., in a particular way. In this interview the opening question—'Have you ever known anyone you thought might be mentally ill?'—asks the respondent to do a matching operation, to find from her own experience an instance (presumably known only to her) which can be properly matched against criteria of class membership assumed to be known at large. An interview of this kind is thus a process in which the respondent works up and tests the status of her experience, knowledge, and definitions of events against the knowledge, etc., imputed to the interviewer as representative of the culture at large. This account therefore is a further step in establishing the propriety of the definitions made prior to the interview. Thus from the respondent's point of view the interview is a further though unanticipated step in the process of testing a categorization already made. She has her uses for the interview just as the interviewer and I have ours.

What actually happened—whatever that was—was something that the respondent was and still was in the interview (I believe) working up into an intelligible form, a form in which she could find the shape and direction of those events. The actual events can be looked upon as a set of resources upon which the respondent drew in creating for herself and the interviewer an account of what had happened. Of course the actual events were much richer, much less orderly, simply much *more*, than those arranged into an interview of an hour or so. And indeed might have lent themselves to being worked up in different ways than that selected by the respondent. So that radical processes of selection have gone on; a lot is left out and what is left in is ordered to provide a coherence for the reader which was not

present in the events. Moreover some events are brought into the foreground as elements of the picture whereas others that are also there are treated as part of the background or of the machinery of the narrative.

That may be conceived to be the work of the respondent. But we have a second step before it arrives at the reader/hearer. This is the work of the interviewer. Since the interviewer was inexperienced and did not use a tape recorder, we may suppose that this was fairly substantial and do not know precisely what it has been. Thus the interview as we have it must be regarded as a co-operative working up of a now rather distant and wholly indeterminate set of events. In addition I have myself done some very minor editing to ensure further that the subject should be identifiable.

In analyzing the account and the organization of its relationship to the actual events it claims to represent, we will not be concerned with the actual character of these events. Whether K was really mentally ill or not is irrelevant to the analysis. It is important that I convey to the reader *that the data the paper is concerned with are wholly present to her—just as they are to me—in the typescript of the interview which she will find below.*

Here is the interview as I received it, plus minor alterations to further conceal identities. The punctuation is the interviewer's. The form and paragraphing are as the interviewer wrote it up.

1 Angela was interviewed about her impressions regarding a friend,
 2 who will be called "K" for the purpose of this study.
 3 Angela met K about 4 years ago, during her first year at university.
 4 Angela had been to the same school but in a grade below K and when
 5 introduced to K felt full of admiration.

6 Here was a girl, a year older, of such a good family, a good student,
 7 so nice, so friendly, so very athletic, who was willing to befriend
 8 her. K suggested outings, and they went skiing, swimming, playing
 9 tennis together. In the fall they shared in a carpool, so that
 10 more people were immediately involved in the contact.

11 Nearly every morning K would cry in the car, being upset about little
 12 things, and the girls would comfort her. Sometimes she would burst
 13 into tears in the middle of a conversation. She began to have trouble
 14 with her courses, dropped some of them and switched some.

15 ANGELA: My recognition that there might be something wrong was very
 16 gradual, and I was actually the last of her close friends who was
 17 openly willing to admit that she was becoming mentally ill.

18 Angela found it easier to explain things chronologically, and in
 19 retrospect it appears that this would make the observations fall
 20 more easily into place.

21 We would go to the beach or the pool on a hot day, and I would sort of

22 dip in and just lie in the sun, while K insisted that she had to swim
23 30 lengths. It was very difficult to carry on an intelligent conver-
24 sation with her, this became apparent when I wanted to discuss a
25 particularly good movie, and she would make childish inane remarks,
26 completely off the point.

27 Slowly my admiration changed to a feeling of bafflement. I began to
28 treat her more like a child who was perhaps not too bright, and I
29 became protective of her. I realized that this change had taken
30 place, when a mutual friend, Trudi who was majoring in English, had
31 looked over one of her essays, and told me afterwards: She writes
32 like a 12 year old – I think there is something wrong with her.

33 K is so intense about everything at times, she tries too hard. Her
34 sense of proportion is out of kilter. When asked casually to help
35 in a friend’s garden, she went at it for hours, never stopping,
36 barely looking up. When you meet her, you are struck, by a sweet girl-
37 ish appearance. She will sit quietly in company, smiling sweetly at
38 all times, and seems disarmingly appealing. But when there were young
39 men in the company, she would find it harder than ever to carry on a
40 conversation, and would excuse herself and leave very soon. During all
41 the time that I have known her she has really never gone out with a boy,
42 although she did occasionally share with them in athletic activities.
43 It was obvious that she was terrified of anyone getting too near to
44 her, especially men. And yet she used to pretend to us (and obviously
45 to herself too) that she had this and that guy really keen on her.

46 During this time Angela had become more friendly with Trudi mainly
47 because she felt she could discuss things with her. Her friendship
48 with K continued, but was confined more to athletic activities.

49 At the beginning of the next academic year Trudi and Angela had found
50 an apartment which they wanted to share, but it was too expensive for
51 two. Since K’s family had moved away, she was sort of on her own.
52 And Angela particularly felt sort of responsible, and it was agreed
53 that K would share the apartment. Trudi had her doubts that it would
54 work out, but Angela felt confident that things would work out.

55 For a few days, before the apartment became available, K went to
56 stay with Angela in her home. Angela’s mother had always admired the
57 girl, K, for her politeness and general good manners, and made her
58 most welcome. Angela tried to prepare her mother for any odd
59 behavior, but found she could not bring herself to this.

60 On the first morning, Angela’s mother offered to make K’s breakfast.
61 K very sweetly said: Oh I don’t want to give you any trouble, just any-
62 thing, anything that you have got. So Angela’s mother enumerated the
63 things available and K after much coaxing, and shy smiles, asked for
64 tea and a hard boiled egg. At that time, Angela’s mother’s own break-
65 fast was ready on the table, coffee and a soft boiled egg. Angela’s
66 mother turned to the stove, to put on an egg, and water for tea and
67 when she came back to the table, there was K smiling sweetly, eating
68 the soft-boiled egg and drinking coffee. At the time Angela’s mother
69 thought, well she misunderstood me. But later she noticed that K was

70 unable to put on a teapot cover correctly, she would not reverse its
71 position to make it fit, but would simply keep slamming it down on the pot.

72 Angela's parents are very warm and quite vocal people. Angela's re-
73 lationships with them is particularly good and rests on mutual respect
74 and continued expressions of affection since childhood. During K's
75 stay, she had occasion to observe Angela's father put his arm round his
76 daughter. K turned away in embarrassment, and later confided to Angela's
77 mother: You know my father never put his arm around me.

78 A little while after the three girls began to share the apartment, they
79 had to face the fact that K was definitely queer. She would take baths
80 religiously every night and pin up her hair, but she would leave the
81 bath dirty. She would wash dishes, but leave them dirty too. They
82 would try and live within a strict budget, and take turns in cooking din-
83 ner and shopping for it, each for one week. K invariably overshot the
84 budget by several dollars. She would buy the most impractical things,
85 such as a broom, although they already had one, 6 lbs. of hamburger at
86 one go, which they would have to eat the whole week. She would burn prac-
87 tically everything. When something had gone radically wrong, obviously by
88 her doing, she would blandly deny all knowledge, but got very upset at
89 little things, like a blown fuse. She did not seem to absorb the simplest
90 information regarding the working of the stove or other household imple-
91 ments. She had definite food-fads, and would take condiments such as
92 ketchup, pepper to excess. Also things like tinned fruit and honey, she
93 would eat them by the jar, at one go. We gradually began to realize that
94 she just could not cope and we began to take over more and more of her
95 responsibilities.

96 She had begun to work in an accountant's office and we told her that
97 she probably had too much to do in her first year of working at her
98 new job, and that she could cook at the weekends only, but that we
99 would do the shopping.

100 Trudi and I found ourselves discussing her foibles in her absence.
101 I still tried to find explanations and excuses – I refused to ac-
102 knowledge the fact that there was anything definitely wrong with K.

103 But she'd tiptoe through the apartment, when there was not need to, she
104 would always speak in a whisper, and she was always smiling, it was like
105 a mask, even when we sensed that she was unhappy. As if she was trying
106 to put on a brave front: I am going to be happy, even if it kills me.

107 We began to notice that she could never do two things at once, such
108 as: watch TV and knit, or knit and talk, or eat and talk, or eat and
109 talk and listen. If she talked her food would get quite cold, she would
110 start when everyone had finished. Or she would ask, when is dinner ready,
111 and when told in about 10 minutes, she would go and prepare something
112 quite different for herself.

113 At a third friend's, Betty's apartment, things came to a sort of head.
114 Betty is a Psychology major, and we had gone there by chance, with K,
115 had dinner and settled down for a chat, when a boyfriend of Betty's
116 walked in, an easygoing friendly fellow whom K and I had not met before.

117 K wanted to go to the kitchen and wash dishes but we dissuaded her.
 118 She sat down with us, and was her usual retiring, sweet smiling self.
 119 Conversation was lively, but she did not take part. A boy was dis-
 120 cussed, but K had not met him. However she suddenly cut in: Yes, isn't
 121 he nice. Everything was quiet for a moment, but I carried on talking
 122 sort of covering up for her. A few minutes later she cut in again, with:
 123 Oh yes, and the little black sheep and the lambs. . . . This was really
 124 completely out of touch. The young man thought K was kidding him, but
 125 no doubt by our embarrassment could tell something was wrong. K
 126 was upset and we suggested that she went home, because she must be
 127 tired. Our apartment was very near by.

128 At this point Betty suggested that something should be done. It seems
 129 that all the girls involved were of a particular social stratum, the
 130 parents business people and acquainted with each other. A woman friend
 131 of the family was 'phoned and her advice was asked: Did you know that
 132 K is not well, that she needs help, her behaviour is not as it should be.
 133 The woman then was willing to talk about it, and admitted that this had
 134 been silently acknowledged by the social circle for some time that K
 135 had seen a psychiatrist some while back. This man had been recommended
 136 by the family doctor, and although he had not really been of much help,
 137 it was inconceivable that anyone else could be approached, because of
 138 etiquette etc. It was arranged that K should go back to the psychiatrist.

Definitions

In talking about the interview material I make use of a set of terms which are defined below:

The reader/hearer	I or anyone else who reads or hears read the text of the interview.
The interviewer	The student who did the interview and who with the respondent constructed the text now available to the reader/hearer. The presence of the interviewer is identifiable in the text in the occasional use of the impersonal mode.
The respondent	The person who was interviewed by the interviewer and who co-operated with her in constructing the text. The respondent is represented in the text as the "teller of the tale": but is not methodologically equivalent since the teller of the tale is internal to the text and is therefore the joint product—as a personage—of the interviewer and the respondent.
The teller of the tale	has in part already been defined in the above definition of the respondent. The teller of the tale is the 'I' of the account who is represented as telling the story of what happened.
Angela <i>et al.</i>	The sub-set personages who are represented as being actively involved in the process of categorization. This includes—Angela, Trudi, Angela's mother, Betty and "a woman friend of the family." It excludes K, Angela's father and Betty's boyfriend. This term is given further specification in the discussion of the construction of a factual account below (pp. 21–5).
The personages	Those persons internal to the account who are referred to as being in any way active in moving the events along, in however trivial a way. So that it includes all the main characters designated by the term <i>Angela et al.</i> It also includes K, Angela's father and Betty's boyfriend. It does not,

however, include persons who are reference personages only and not participants—ie. K's family, and the psychiatrist.

The attentive reader will have noticed that this has a kind of Chinese box structure. The definitions identify different levels of responsibility for making the account and the contributions of various persons at each. In effect they yield a role structure, for describing the social organization of the account. At the point where I am and where other readers of the interview are (the reader/hearers), there is the complete document. In the making of the document (apart from the slight intervention of the editor which I have neglected here since it is so minor) there is the concerted work of interviewer and respondent. The respondent is identified in the text as the 'teller of the tale'. The teller of the tale is telling a tale about a set of personages one of whom is herself. Internal to the account as it is told is the personage 'Angela' and the sub-set of personages who co-operate in working up the raw material of the events as they happened into a form which was then available to be transformed into the document we have before us. Then, at the level of personages at large, are those who were active in generating the original set of events, who were *doing* what happened and what constituted the raw material out of which Angela *et al.* constructed a view of K as mentally ill. Note then the one term which is common to all levels of the account, namely Angela. Within the conventions of the account, she is entered as one of those active in doing the events; she is entered as one of those conceptualizing the events (the Angela *et al.* level); she is entered as teller of the tale; and she is also, as one of the members of the document, entered as the respondent. The above set of definitions is thus not merely a convenience, it also lays bare the structure which related the document you and I have to the original events as they happened. You, as reader of what I now write, may also wish to add the penultimate if not the ultimate level, namely my analysis of the document.

Preliminary instructions

The first part of the interview—lines 1–14—are written as the interviewer's account of what Angela, the respondent, told her. At line 15, the mode changes to the tale as told by Angela with the interpolated explanation by the interviewer (lines 18–20) that Angela found it easier to tell the tale in chronological form. In lines 15–20 the reader/hearer is provided with a set of instructions about how the interview is to be read, what it is an account of—as follows:

My recognition that there might be something wrong was very gradual, and I was actually the last of her close friends who was openly willing to admit that she was becoming mentally ill. (15–20)

I want to draw attention to two effects which are announced at this point and which in important ways provide a set of instructions for how the account is to be read. As follows:

1) That K is 'becoming mentally ill' is asserted as a fact at the outset and is preserved as such throughout. The same construction is offered at various other points in the text. As follows:

they had to *face the fact* that K was definitely queer (78-9)

we gradually began to *realize* that she just could not cope (93-4)

I refused to *acknowledge the fact* that there was anything definitely wrong with K. (101-2)

I have placed emphases at those points which establish that K's state is to be treated as something which is (a) a fact and (b) is therefore already there prior to and independently of, its being 'admitted', 'realized', 'faced', or acknowledged' by Angela or others.

2) We are also provided with a preliminary set of instructions for how to read further descriptions of K's behaviour. These are to be read as the behaviour of someone who is 'becoming mentally ill'. This has important effects for the authorization of the version which I shall next try to elucidate.

The instructions to read the behaviour as 'odd', 'wrong', etc., are repeated at intervals throughout the account. Indeed sub-collections are distinguished by markers consisting of some summary statement, the conclusion of a member of Angela *et al.* or the like, that K's behaviour is definitely queer, etc. These can be viewed both as summary conclusions of the previous sub-collection and as renewing or reminding the reader/hearer of the instructions for how to read what comes next (these may be found at lines 31-2, 58-9, 78-9, 101-1).

The authorization of the version

I take it as axiomatic that for any set of actual events, there is always more than one version that can be treated as what has happened, even within a simple cultural community. This is because social events or facts at the level of those I am analyzing here involve a complex assembly of events occurring in different settings, at different times, sometimes before different collections of persons; and that secondly the moment of actual observation is at that point where the consciousness of the individual is and that any process of assembly from the past can no longer draw on the total universe of resources which were at successive 'moments' present to the observer.

An important problem then must always be how a given version is authorized as *that* version which can be treated by others as *what has happened*. A correspondingly important set of procedures will therefore be concerned with who is allocated the privilege of definition and how other possible versions or sources of possible disjunctive information are ruled out. I think in this instance this works as follows:

1) Durkheim's (1960: 102) rule that the definition of an act as deviant serves to sanction and legitimize a social order can be extended to authorize as representatives of that order those who make that judgement. Their rules or norms are to be

recognized as rules and norms against which the behaviour of the deviant is defined as deviant. Thus that we are told at the outset that K is mentally ill authorizes the version of those who realized or came to admit the fact of her illness. It authorizes or assigns to Angela the definitional privilege and—internal to the account—it authorizes also the version of Angela's friends at those points when Angela is still 'unwilling to admit' the fact. The circularity of this process is a feature of the account. Its logical impropriety does not obstruct the effect. K's illness is presented as a fact independently of the wishes of the 'observances'. Her deviance serves therefore to authorize the account of her deviance which is provided and the 'rightness' of the judgement of those who defined her as such.

In particular, the authorization of the judgement of the 'teller of the tale' (Angela) and her associates, requires the reader/hearer to treat as *the* proper collection of events, the collection we have before us. Their selection procedures are implicitly sanctioned even though it is not made clear what they are.

Possibly there is a further and more general process at work here not directly linked to Durkheim's rule. Angela is presented as having been present as an observer of the events recounted. Recollected introspection of how I read the account suggests that something like a 'willing suspension of disbelief' effect is operating—that is, I tended to suspend or bracket my own judgemental process in favour of that of the teller of the tale. The reader/hearer is always open to the challenge 'How do you know? You weren't there'.

2) Deviant categorizations of the same family as mental illness serve to circumscribe the area of intelligible and warrantable behaviour and belief. Since K is defined at the outset as becoming mentally ill and other members of the account are not, the boundaries in this instance are drawn so that K is excluded. This has the following consequences:

(a) that as between K and Angela *et al.*, K's behaviour may not be treated as a source of normative definition whereas Angela *et al.*'s may be so treated. Here is an instance where this stipulation clearly decides how the normative accent should be assigned:

We would go to the beach or the pool on a hot day, and I would sort of dip in and just lie in the sun, while K insisted that she had to swim 30 lengths (21–3).

Angela's beach behaviour provides the norm in terms of which K's behaviour is to be recognized as deviating.

(b) K is by this rule disqualified from participating in the construction of social facts. Hence any version that she might have presented is discounted from the outset. The definers are privileged to present their version without taking hers into account. This procedure cuts off a possible set of resources which might otherwise be available in making interpretations of what is happening—namely that set of resources available only to K.

This legitimates the restriction of resources used in interpreting K's behaviour to what is available to Angela *et al.* Here is an instance of this effect:

Nearly every morning K would cry in the car, being upset about little things, and the girls would comfort her (11–12).

In this instance, the reasons for K's crying are taken to be those immediate occasions which were directly observable to 'the girls' and which were 'little things', not sufficient to warrant her weeping. Angela does not raise the possibility that there might have been features of K's biography unknown to her and the others which would provide adequate reasons for K's disposition to cry so readily.

(c) Accordingly also it is not a problem or ought not to be a problem for the reader/hearer who properly follows the instructions for how the account is to be read, that no explanation, information, etc., from K is introduced at any point in the account. And it is not or ought not to be strange that at no point is there any mention of K being asked to explain, inform, etc.

In sum then, the rules, norms, information, observations, etc., presented by the teller of the tale are to be treated by the reader/hearer as the only warranted set.

The construction of the account as a factual account

The actual events are not facts. It is the use of proper procedure for categorizing events which transforms them into facts. A fact is something which is already categorized, which is already worked up so that it conforms to the model of what that fact should be like. To describe something as a fact or to treat something as a fact implies that the events themselves—what happened—entitle or authorize the teller of the tale to treat that categorization as ineluctable. 'Whether I wish it or not, it is a fact. Whether I will admit it or not, it is a fact.'

If something is to be constructed as a fact, then it must be shown that proper procedures have been used to establish it as objectively known. It must be seen to appear in the same way to anyone. Here are some of the relevant procedures in this account:

1) The teller of the tale, Angela, is K's friend. Others involved are also described as her friends, or as having a definitely positive attitude toward her. This structural frame is continued throughout. Since the 'fact' to be realized or established is a negative one and the structural frame declares for only positive motives toward K, there are no grounds for suspecting Angela's motives. The rhetoric of the fact is here that Angela is *constrained* to recognize it. It is a fact independently of her wish; she does not wish it and yet she is 'forced to face' it.

This provision tends only to remove a possible difficulty. There are others more fundamental to the construction of objectivity. The construction of a fact involves displaying that it is the same for anyone and that their recognition of it as a fact is based on direct observation, is constrained by the nature of the event itself and is

not determined by a hearsay construction. The following structure establishes a succession of independent witnesses:

2) A series of steps can be identified defined by the addition of one person to the circle of those who recognize or know that something is wrong:

- (i) at lines 21–32, Angela alone.
- (ii) at lines 29–32, Angela and Trudi.
- (iii) at lines 55–71, Angela, Trudi, and Angela's mother.
- (iv) at lines 113–27, Angela, Trudi, Angela's mother, and Betty.
- (v) at lines 129–34, Angela, Trudi, Angela's mother, Betty, and a woman friend of the family.

The last step in this account breaks out of the local circle of those personally known to Angela by disclosing that this same 'fact' is known to others independently—it 'had been silently acknowledged by the social circle for some time', (134); and also that it had the formal sanction of a psychiatrist.

This simple additive formula is a familiar one from children's stories—for example, that of Henny-penny who went to tell the king the sky was falling. A cumulative effect is established. Each new member is introduced as if she had not been there before. This construction is particularly striking because it overrules indications present in the interview that some of those personages had been around before—e.g. there was a carpool—who was in it and saw K cry (9–14)? Angela was 'the last of her close friends' who admitted, etc. Did those friends include or exclude Trudi and Betty (16–17)? Trudi was a mutual friend of Angela and K (3); Betty's apartment is just 'nearby' the apartment of Angela, Trudi, and K and the account of the encounter suggests a casual dropping in ('we had gone there by chance'—11–15) characteristic of a continuing friendship.

The phone call to a woman friend of the family (130–1) is apparently to someone hitherto unconnected, and apparently taps a social circle independent of those personally known to Angela. Yet it is also said that 'all the girls involved were of a particular social stratum' and that their parents were 'business people and acquainted with each other' (129–30). The inference is possible that the two social circles were in fact not independent of one another.

The additive structure overrules other possible principles governing the introduction of witnesses. The items I've referred to above are introduced as parts of the connecting machinery of the story and are otherwise background.

3) This structure makes possible the treatment of each additional witness as independent of the others. The judgement of each is based on direct observation or by inference on opportunity for such observation:

- (i) Angela—in the course of ordinary interpersonal encounters with K, her admiration changes to bafflement (21–9).
- (ii) Trudi looks over one of K's essays and comments afterwards, "She writes like a twelve year old. I think there is something wrong with her." (30–1).
- (iii) Angela's mother observes two instances of K's odd behaviour (60–71).
- (iv) Betty is present at a conversation during which K's contribution shows her to be "completely out of touch" (113–24).

- (v) "The woman friend of the family" may be taken to have opportunities of personal observation independently of those made by previous witnesses (130-1).

These two features of the account establish the judgements as arrived at independently by each witness and on the basis of direct observation (or a reasonable basis for inferring the same) uncontaminated by previous prompting or definitional work which might be interpreted as a source of bias. Note in this connection that Angela specifically mentions that she did not prepare her mother for any 'odd behaviour' on K's part. The ordering of events in the narrative constructs the objectivity of the fact, the items which might serve to suggest the opposite are not only relegated to the background, they are also not constructed in the same way. They are merely, as it were lying about. A careful search may identify them, but the work of bringing them into an order must all be done by the reader/hearer.

The construction 'mental illness'

The account provides the reader/hearer with an itemized and specific account of K's character and behaviour. The reader/hearer is thus apparently given an opportunity to judge for herself on the basis of a collection of samples of the behaviour from which Angela *et al.* constructed the fact of K's mental illness. The instructions for reading the account contained in lines 15-17 of the interview ('I was actually the last of her close friends who was openly willing to admit that she was becoming mentally ill') are that the collection is to be read as the behaviour of someone who is becoming mentally ill. Thus the items are to be tested against a concept of mentally ill type behaviour (which I shall abbreviate hereafter to m.i. type behaviour). The reader/hearer thus knows at the outset how this collection of characterological and behavioural descriptions is to be interpreted. If the collection is viewed as a problem, then we have been told what the solution is. The problem presented by the account is not to find an answer to the question 'what is wrong with K?', but to find that this collection of items is a proper puzzle to the solution 'becoming mentally ill'.

Earlier when I was discussing how the account is authorized, I pointed out that defining K at the outset as 'becoming mentally ill', removes her from the circle of potential witnesses to the events. The collection of items must therefore establish or justify this exclusion. K must be construed as a person who does not recognize what anybody else would recognize, who does not share the same cognitive ground as others. The description of her character and behaviour must be worked up as a 'cutting out' operation (the OED gives for 'cutting out' to detach (an animal) from the herd'), which serves to draw the boundaries of the circle to exclude her. The final moment when things 'come to a head', i.e. when K is seen to be 'completely out of touch' (lines 123-4) is the point at which the cutting out operation is completed. This is its conclusion.

A strategy usually identified with the 'medical model' (see Scheff, 1966: 19-22)

of mental illness views m.i. type behaviour as symptoms of a 'disease' or 'illness'. Thus behaviour is treated as arising from a state of the individual and not as motivated by features of her situation. The medical model is not used here although the term mental illness is. But the same fundamental strategy is used. An important part of the work of constructing K's behaviour as m.i. type behaviour involves showing that it is not adequately motivated by K's situation of action. It is shown as not fully provided for by the instructions which follow from a rule or from how a situation is defined.

We have established already that it is the teller of the tale's privilege both to define the rule or situation and to describe the behaviour. A rule or a definition of the situation yields a set of instructions for selecting those categories of action which are appropriate as 'responses'. We (the reader/hearer) must take on trust that the coding procedures for going from the original and actual behaviour to such descriptive categories have been properly done. This definitional privilege and the use which the teller of the tale makes of it are of considerable importance in the cutting out operation. Behaviour which is properly responsive to a rule or situation shows that the actor recognizes that rule or situation in the same way as it is defined by the teller of the tale. If it is not properly responsive, the reader/hearer may find an alternative rule or situation to which it is; or she may decide to sanction the teller of the tale's definition. The authorization rules direct the reader/hearer to select the second of these alternatives. So when we find in this account instances of a lack of fit between behaviour and a rule or situation, these work as part of the cutting out strategy.

By a lack of it I do not mean, for example, what Austin (1962: 14) means by infelicitous or 'unhappy' behaviour. I want to find something closer to what could be meant by 'anomalous' behaviour, i.e. behaviour for which no rule or set of instructions can be found. I'm suggesting that social rules and definitions of situations can be viewed as if they provided a set of instructions for categorizing responses. (I should emphasize that the notion of instructions here is a metaphor at this moment, but I find it helpful.) Any such set of instructions provides for categorizing responses in two main ways: 1) by selecting a set of categories for describing behaviour complying with the instructions; and 2) by selecting a set of categories for describing behaviour which does not comply. So any set of instructions which might be written in the form 'do such and such' can also be written by a simple transformation rule in the form 'do not do such and such', where the negation is not just logical exclusion, but is antonymous—i.e. the contrary or opposite of the behaviour required by the instructions. In this sense then non-compliance or infractions of a rule are fitting. The instructions do provide for them (there are, I think, some types of instructions where the deviant option isn't available at all). Behaviour which doesn't fit is behaviour which isn't provided for by the instructions either way. It is then anomalous, and anomalies, I suggest, are what we have to find in the descriptions of K's behaviour.

The cutting out operation thus involves showing how K's behaviour is not properly instructed by the definitions of the rules or situations which are provided. The instructions to read K's behaviour as m.i. type required that the search go from the behaviour described to find the relevant rule or definition of the situation under which that behaviour can be seen not to fit, or rather to be anomalous. If it doesn't fit, then it can be taken that K doesn't recognize the rules or situations as anyone else would recognize them. The procedure is analogous to the lay identification of colour blindness. Anyone (given that she knows the coding rules) can identify colours in the same way. If you find someone who cannot distinguish between red and green, you do not raise questions about whether red and green can be discriminated; you rather identify as a special state of that individual her being unable to make that discrimination. You say she is colour blind. The attribution of mental illness behaves in the same way. It is the state of not being able to recognize the social reality which is there for anyone else and it is effectively defined in the process of that individual having been found not to do it. The process of finding that out is what I have designated the 'cutting out operation'.

This collection of items in this account as I've earlier pointed out, is not grandly convincing. There are few if any items that stand up as immediately convincing. The teller of the tale has to do a good deal of working up in order to display K's behaviour as m.i. type. This visibility of the work is one of the things that makes the account worth analyzing in such detail. There are descriptions of K's behaviour which deprived of the contextualizing work put in by the teller of the tale wouldn't look particularly out of the way. There are even some that might be viewed as positive characteristics if the perspective were shifted just a little—for example K's insisting 'that she had to swim 30 lengths' (21-3) on a hot day at the pool is honourable behaviour in an athlete; or her working so devotedly in her friend's garden might be a particularly creditable interpretation of the obligations of friendship. So that we can begin looking at this collection with the hunch that the teller of the tale has to do rather a lot of contextual work to show how the behaviour can read as m.i. type.

The contextual work at the level of individual items is most apparent in a device which I will call a contrast structure. Contrast structures are those where a description of K's behaviour is preceded by a statement which supplies the instructions for how to see that behaviour anomalous. Here are some examples:

When asked casually to help in a friend's garden, she went at it for hours, never stopping, barely looking up (34-6).

She would take baths religiously every night and pin up her hair, but she would leave the bath dirty (79-81).

When something had gone radically wrong, obviously by her doing, she would blandly deny all knowledge (87-8).

The first part of the contrast structure finds the instructions which selects the

categories of fitting behaviour, the second part shows the behaviour which did not fit. The first part may define a social rule, or a definite occasion, or some feature of K's behaviour. I have counted 23 discrete items of behavioural description. Of these 11 are contrast structures. I have defined this category very loosely since I am using it only to identify what seems to be a typical procedure. Other items which are not constructed as contrast structures at the level of individual items, can be shown to be contrastive with reference to larger segments of the account. And of course there are other things going on, some of which I shall try to analyse later.

Analysis of some contrast structures

(i)

(The parts of the c-structure are separated typographically and identified by the numerals i and ii):

- (i) It was obvious that she was terrified of anyone getting too near to her, especially men.
- (ii) And yet she used to pretend to us (and obviously to herself too) that she had this and that guy really keen on her (43-5).

Embedded in this structure are two statements about K's behaviour both of which are more or less deviant in themselves. These two are:

she was terrified of anyone getting too near to her, especially men.
and
she used to pretend to us (and obviously to herself too) that she had this and that guy really keen on her.

The first is a description of a presumably stable feature of K's character and the second a description of a kind of behaviour she used to engage in. What is the effect of packaging them as a contrast structure established by the links 'It was obvious . . . and yet . . .'?

In part ii of the c-structure, K is said to 'pretend'. To be pretending, the actor must be trying to make others believe, or to give them the impression, by means of a current personal performance in their presence, that the actor is *abc*, in order to disguise the fact that she is really *xyz* (this sentence is lifted directly from Austin's paper on 'Pretending' (Austin, 1964: 113), but I have modified the wording and therefore supply it without quotes).

(a) The first thing this does is to make it clear what information was available to the teller of the tale at the time the events referred to took place. Without the 'It was obvious . . .' it would not be clear whether or not the teller of the tale and others knew *at that time* what it was that K was trying to dissemble. It could only be inferred that at some time or another the teller of the tale knew that K was pretending.

(b) What is obvious is what may be plainly seen or understood by anyone. It is

available to anyone and therefore available to K—the latter interpretation is reinforced by the retroactive effect of the c-structure so that the part i statement is both what is obvious and what K is concealing. But if it is obvious, then it is not only known to K but she must *also know that it is known*.

(c) 'Pretending' is intentional. The actor is *trying* to conceal *abc* by doing *xyz*. The term thus assigns to K a plan or at least a prefiguring of what the teller of the tale tells us she was doing. It also implies the following distribution of information so far as the actor is concerned:

- (1) The actor knows that she is really *abc*.
- (2) She believes that those she is trying to deceive do not know that she is really *abc*.

These are the 'belief conditions' of pretending.

(d) The inference from 'It was obvious'—namely that others know and that K knows they know removes one term of the required belief conditions—namely that the actor believes that those she is trying to deceive do not know what it is she is trying to conceal. So this c-structure yields a paradox as follows:

Pretending gives the following 'proper' alternatives under different belief conditions:

Either:

K believes that others know *abc*

Therefore does not believe that she can conceal it from them.

Or:

K believes that others do not know *abc*

Therefore believes that she can conceal it from them.

But not what in fact we have:

K believes that others know *abc*

Therefore she believes that she can conceal it from them.

The effect of 'it was obvious' on 'pretending' is to shift the two statements out of the normal deviance class into a paradox which can't be internally resolved. It is here that the instructions given at the beginning of the interview become important because they tell us which term to select in order to resolve the paradox. Changing the second term might raise questions about the accuracy of the teller of the tale's description of what K was doing. This is ruled out by the authorization rules (above p. 33). Changing the first term implies that what is obvious to others, is *not* obvious to K. Then K believes that others do not know *abc* even though it is obvious. So K isn't on the same wave-length as others; she isn't seeing what is obvious to anyone else. That is the cutting out operation.

Observe the same device in the c-structure:

- (i) When something had gone radically wrong, *obviously* by her doing,
- (ii) she would blandly deny all knowledge . . . (87–8).

(ii)

Here is another kind of *c*-structure:

- (i) she would bath religiously every night and pin up her hair,
- (ii) but she would leave the bath dirty.

This kind of *c*-structure works differently from the foregoing. Part i gives a rule which is derived from routine features of *K*'s behaviour; part ii shows that she also routinely violates that rule. The procedure is something like this—from the occurrence of *a* and *b* expect *c*. But you don't get *c*, you get *x*.

Note that the ordinary sociological notions of expectation don't work here as they probably never really do. For the following reason: that to get the expectation of *c* from the occurrence of *a* and *b* involves reference to a model or pattern in which these items occur regularly in that sequence. Seeing them as a series implies having grasped a model or pattern which is known in advance and on other grounds. One kind of rule here is what might be called a 'standard pattern rule', like the alphabet. For there is nothing that holds the alphabet together as an ordered series of letters except customary usage. There'd be no way in which you could infer which letter must follow from any other without knowing already how it occurs. Another type of rule is a formation rule which generates the series. The typical exercise which illustrates this type of rule is one in which a 'subject' is given a series of signs such as '1, 2, 3 . . . ! or 2, 4, 6 . . . !' and is asked to continue the series. She may be told what rule to follow in doing so, but it is a common intellectual game and one that I.Q. tests sometimes make use of, to ask the subject to derive the rule for continuing the series from the series as it has been presented to her. We have a procedure like that here. The reader/hearer is instructed, I think, in virtue of the contrast structure to find from the first part the rule for continuing the series. The rule which she will presumably find would be some kind of 'be clean' rule which can be rewritten as (bathe religiously every night, pin up your hair, leave the bath clean). Part ii of the contrast structure would however read back to the simple deviance transformation of that rule. The two can be stated as follows (the arrow means 'rewrite as'):

Be clean → (every night do the following: bathe, pin up your hair, leave the bath clean)

Do not be clean → (every night, do not do the following: bathe, pin up your hair, leave the bath clean)

From the first part of the *c*-structure we get a formation rule which is antonymous to the formation rule derived from part ii. And vice-versa. So that we find that we can't retrieve a rule that does for both.

But I sense that this is a weak construction as a construction of m.i. type behaviour because it is fairly easy to find an alternate rule which provides for the coherence

of the set. For although this assemblage doesn't work under formation rules derived from looking at the items as a series, it could work perfectly well under a standard pattern type of rule, e.g. I might say, 'well, some people who take a lot of trouble with their personal appearance, etc., are otherwise slobes (or inconsiderate, or what have you). 'They just *are* that way,' I might say. Which I take to be an appeal to a standard pattern rule which would permit this series.

A similar construction can be found later in the same paragraph as follows:

- (i) She would wash the dishes
- (ii) and leave them dirty too.

Here the contrast structure isn't built syntactically but is derived from the contradiction between the two parts. It could be, I suppose, a normal incompetence to find someone who washes dishes but does not wash them very well, so that bits of noodle, egg, etc., can still be found on fork and plate after the washing is done. Leaving them dirty *after* washing them is more than incompetent. Indeed it is almost Dada and an achievement in itself. So that to leave dishes dirty after washing them is not just normal incompetence. In fact it is almost 'against nature' so that the straining to realize what K has made available as m.i. type behaviour does here, I think, overstep the limits of credibility.

Another instance of this kind of c-structure is the following:

- (i) When you meet her, you are struck by a sweet girlish appearance. She will sit quietly in company smiling sweetly at all times, and seem disarmingly appealing (36–8).
- (ii) But when there were young men in the company, she would find it harder than ever to carry on a conversation, and would excuse herself and leave very soon (38–40).

(iii)

Here is a contrast structure in three parts:

- (i) We would go to the beach or pool on a hot day,
- (ii) I would sort of dip in and just lie in the sun
- (iii) while K insisted that she had to swim 30 lengths (21–3).

Part i identifies an occasion and part iii the behaviour, but it is clear that parts i and iii alone are not sufficient to show how K's behaviour is odd. The day is hot and K insists on swimming 30 lengths—so? The middle term (part ii), by giving an example of behaviour which is properly instructed by that type of occasion, provides a 'precedent' which strengthens this structure. Part of the effect of contrasting Angela's behaviour with K's (ii with iii), is done by the authorization rules which have established how the definitional privilege is to be allocated as between Angela and K. So the specific instructions here are to read Angela's behaviour as normal and K's as not normal, and Angela's can therefore stand as a proper precedent.

The first two parts combined set up a model of occasion and fitting behaviour

which is more restrictive than part i alone. I suspect that quite a lot of work is done by the specification 'hot day' since that sets the instructions for the 'lazing' behaviour which is confirmed as the rule by the description of Angela's behaviour. Thus K's behaviour is not instructed by the occasion as it is specified by both part i and part ii *together*. Part i by itself *would* permit the behaviour described in part iii so that the model of the occasion must be elaborated to give the swimming 30 lengths as anomalous.

More work is then done by giving K's behaviour an obsessional cast. She '*insisted* that she *had* to swim 30 lengths'. So it is displayed in an imperative form without being referred to a social structure which would warrant that imperative. I think there is a definite imperfection in the account here because we are still close to the categorization of K as 'so very athletic' (line 7), which plugs in a social structure which would warrant this imperative. True this term isn't 'active' at this point, i.e. it hasn't been brought forward by the teller of the tale to define the actors and their relationship. At this point the working category appears to be 'friend' and since Angela appears to establish a 'friends do the same things and have the same interests' model of friendship, that category probably also works to establish the relevance of what Angela does on a hot day at the pool as a model for what K should do.

(iv)

A compound contrast structure—there are two sets of contrasts which may be written as follows:

- I. (i) When something had gone radically wrong, obviously by her doing
- (ii) she would blandly deny all knowledge.
- II. (i) When something had gone radically wrong . . . she would blandly deny all knowledge
- (ii) but got very upset at little things, like a blown fuse.

The first contrast structure is in the same form as that analyzed above which begins 'It was obvious she was terrified . . .' (see Analysis I above). The second contrast structure (II), is of a different type and gives the 'inappropriate affect' effect as follows: the degree of feeling should be proportionate to the seriousness of the event. Correspondingly the value of an event is displayed by the degree of feeling exhibited in the response. So if something has gone radically wrong, the upset should be proportionate. In (II) it is not K's denial that something has gone radically wrong that is operative, but that it is *blandly* denied. The indifference is contrasted with getting very upset at little things in (II) ii. The matter may be formally stated as follows. The rule that the degree of feeling should be proportionate to the seriousness of the events may be written as instructions on how much to care when things go wrong, as follows:

- (a) When something goes seriously, be seriously upset.
- (b) When something goes mildly wrong, be mildly upset.

So from the 'something has gone radically wrong' given by part i of c-structure (II), we get the instruction 'be very upset'. The negative transformation would read 'do not be very upset'. And that is what we have. I'm not at this time sure whether that is properly provided for by the rule, because there are other instances, e.g.

Nearly every morning K would cry in the car, being upset about little things (I2–I3).

which could be had by a straightforward transformation. And it does seem to me that this is one of those rules where the negative is not provided. Otherwise it would be hard to get the inappropriate affect effect, and we do get it. But in any case the (II) c-structure 'above' is reinforced by showing that a possible negative transformation 'do not be upset' doesn't hold either since K does get very upset at little things. The c-structure here thus works rather like the one in Analysis II, because the rule you generate from either tail of the c-structure does not hold for the other. So K is shown not to discriminate properly between things that go radically wrong and little things that go wrong.

(v)

Here I want to identify a device which is not properly a contrast structure, except perhaps in reverse. I've suggested that the contrast structures are ways of supplying the contexts with reference to which K's behaviour can be seen as m.i. type and the implication is that if it were described without those contexts, then the description of the behaviour alone would not do the trick. There are however some types of non-routine behaviour which normally require contextualization, or rather require to be shown as specially situationally instructed in order to establish them as properly motivated. Some examples are tip-toeing (103), whispering (104). These kinds of behaviour are, I think, usually provided with a 'reason' since they are behaviours which do not occur routinely in our culture. Routine occurrences are those where either no explanation need be given because it is assumed that there is some routine explanation; or where the occurrence itself suggests its typical grounds for occurring. The strategy here is to exhibit these without supplying an adequate reason. As follows:

'She'd tiptoe through the apartment, when there was no need to.' (I10).

'She'd always speak in a whisper . . .' (I11).

An analogous device is used in the instance discussed above where K's behaviour is given an obsessional cast by depriving the imperative of proper warrant. ('She insisted that she had to swim 30 lengths.') I suspect that instances of this type will form a greater proportion in accounts of m.i. type behaviour which are stranger than this.

(vi)

This last section is merely numbered to show its discrete character. There will

be no contrast structure. I want to conclude this section—which is, of course, a far from exhaustive analysis of the types of items included in the account—by looking briefly at those few items where K is shown to have a peculiar relation to material objects. These are:

- (a) She would buy the most impractical things, such as a broom, although they already had one (84–5).
- (b) She did not seem to absorb the simplest information regarding the working of the stove or other household implements (89–90).
- (c) She had definite food-fads, and would take condiments such as ketchup, pepper to excess. Also things like tinned fruit and honey, she would eat them by the jar, at one go (90–3).
- (d) K was unable to put on a teapot cover correctly, she would not reverse its position to make it fit, but would simply keep slamming it down on the pot (69–71).

G. H. Mead has described how ordinary material objects—tables, chairs, etc.—as well as more complex social forms, are constituted by socially organized responses which refine and elaborate their uses out of the possibilities given by their sheerly physical properties (Mead, 1934: 75–82). The object itself, the cultural object so defined and constituted, may thus also be understood as yielding sets of instructions for how to act towards it, how it may be inserted into human programmes of action. And as with occasions and situations a failure to act within the terms provided by these instructions displays the actor as failing to recognize the object as it is for any one else. In these examples we may notice a much stronger structure than that which arises when rules or definitions of situations are in question. The objects themselves are treated as sufficient. Their definition doesn't have to be further elaborated or worked up to show K's failure to enter into that intersubjective world which is 'ours'.

Yet the constructions are implicitly more complex than they seem. I shall discuss (a) in another and later context. Here I just want to draw the reader's attention to these instances of misuse—that for example tinned fruit and honey carry the 'instructions' 'use in bits at intervals'; that ketchup, etc., carries the 'instructions', 'eat in small quantities'; that a teapot in relation to its lid is constructed so that the sticky-out bit on the top fits into a notch in the rim of the pot and hence the 'instructions'—'if the top doesn't fit the first time around then rotate it until the sticky-out bit fits into the notch'. And beyond these not just that K doesn't recognize these objects as they are constituted for anyone else, but that she is also apparently unable to 'absorb' the simplest information about such uses. Similarly departures from household budgeting rules are presented not as 'extravagance' or normal incompetence, but as a failure to grasp the ordinary properties of things—a new broom when they already had one; six pounds of hamburger—and the social structures which define their uses. With respect to the broom for example, it would have been odd on the part of the teller of the tale if she had said that K had 'bought a spoon, although they already had one'. The social structure of a household

requires that its members eat simultaneously, but not that they sweep simultaneously; therefore a spoon for each is 'needed', but only one broom. This follows from the form and typical inventory of occasioned activities characteristic of household organization in our culture.

It is enough however in the account merely to refer to the inappropriate uses of the objects. The rules do not have to be further elaborated presumably because they may be taken to be known at large. Unlike other features they are 'obvious' without having to be declared as 'obvious'. The objects are treated as 'carrying' or simply implying the rules for using them. The latter don't need further explication or identification.

These analyses by no means exhaust the types of behavioural descriptions included in the account. But they are sufficient to show the kinds of analyses that can be done and to subtend the notion of the cutting out operation introduced at the beginning of this section. 'Cutting out' is done by constructing relationships between rules or definitions of situations and descriptions of K's behaviour such that the former do not properly provide for the latter. The behaviour is then exhibited as anomalous. Reading back from the anomaly gives the effect that the rule or situation which obtains isn't recognized by K *as it is*. The specification of *what it is* is entrusted to the teller of the tale, whose status as definer and witness has been sanctioned by the authorization rules. K is thereby excluded from the circle of those who know. The circle of those who know includes now—in virtue of the bridging function of the teller of the tale—both Angela *et al.* and ourselves as reader/hearers. The transition between the different logical levels is made possible by their common term, namely Angela who is both a personage in the story and the teller of the tale.

The collection as a whole

Turning from the individual items, I want to see now how the collection works as a whole. I suggest as a principle that rather than trying to identify a set of rules that are breached when people are recognized as mentally ill, or when behaviour is recognized as m.i. type behaviour, we place this indeterminacy at the heart of the problem and suggest that the phenomena of mental illness, including the organization of social action to deal with that as a problem, are concerned precisely with creating an order, a coherence, at those points where members of a cultural community have been unable or unwilling to find it in the behaviour of a particular individual.

So I want to write a rule for assembling this collection which says that 'for this collection, find that there is no rule'. There is a visual analogy to the effect I'm trying to specify. Paintings such as Ben Cunningham's combine different perspectival instructions. The looker in imagination must be continually shifting her position in relation to the events in the painting. She is never permitted to adopt a

decisive relation which resolves them into a single perspectival direction. I am looking for an analogue of that here.

There are indications from other descriptions of how people come to be categorized as mentally ill that this indeterminacy may be an essential preliminary phase to arriving at that label. The process described by the teller of the tale when 'Trudi and I found ourselves discussing (K's) foibles in her absence. I still tried to find explanations or excuses . . .' (100-101) suggests that not being able to find them may be a regular feature of the process. Compare Yarrow, Schwartz, Murphy, and Deasy's description of wives' descriptions of the process by which they came to see their husbands as mentally ill:

Initial interpretations, whatever their content, are seldom held with great confidence by the wives. Many recall their earlier reactions to their husbands' behaviour as full of puzzling confusion and uncertainty. Something is wrong, they know, but, in general, they stop short of a firm explanation. (Yarrow *et al.*, 1955).

and those wives who do not fairly early on arrive at the categorization 'mentally ill',

cast around for situationally and momentarily adequate explanations. As the situation changes or as the husband's behaviour changes, these wives find reasons and excuses but lack underlying or synthesizing theory. Successive interpretations tend to bear little relation to one another. (Yarrow *et al.*, 1955).

The kind of process I am trying to bring into focus as a fundamental feature of the account is that process described above, whereby alternative rules are sought and discarded or extenuations and excuses are sought and discarded. Treating the collection as a whole means that a rule or extenuation found for any item, must also hold for other items.

A microcosm of the process is exhibited in the passage describing K's behaviour at Angela's mother's (60-71) home. The incident of the wrong breakfast is explained first of all by Angela's mother as a misunderstanding (69). That is an extenuation rule which removes any particular significance from the episode. But that principle cannot be extended to the following episode of the teapot cover. One cannot, so to speak, misunderstand a teapot. The previous extenuation is removed once it is held that the two episodes must be treated as 'a collection' such that a rule that is found for one must also hold for the other. I think that there are probably many instances of items in this collection for which it would be easy to find extenuations or alternative rules and that it is the stipulation 'one rule for all' which messes them up when the items themselves aren't already anomalous and serves also to fix the weaker anomalies.

Take for example the household passage which runs from lines 78 through 94 of the interview. If the instructions to read the following behaviour as 'queer' are removed and if certain of the items are also removed, the passage reads as incompetence rather than mental illness. As follows:

she would wash dishes, but leave them dirty too. They would try and live within a strict budget, and take turns in cooking dinner and shopping for it, each for one week. K (frequently) overshot the budget by several dollars. She would buy the most impractical things. . . . She would burn practically everything. . . . She did not seem to absorb the simplest information regarding the working of the stove or other household implements.

This could add up to K just being a hopeless housekeeper. Adding the items which don't precisely fit that categorization, namely the bathing religiously item, the food fads, the bland denial when things go radically wrong, makes it difficult to fix the explanation under the stipulation that any explanation you find must serve for all.

Similarly weaknesses in the construction at the level of individual items are worked up by setting them into multiple constructions which just make it harder to find a simple rule which provides for the whole. For example in the above passage:

They would try and live within a strict budget, and take turns in cooking dinner and shopping for it, each for one week. K invariably overshot the budget by several dollars. She would buy the most impractical things, such as a broom, although they already had one, 6 lbs. of hamburger at one go, which they would have to eat the whole week.

This works I think by the cumulation of small things, the *invariance* of K's overshooting the budget displays a failure to recognize its strict terms, but that isn't very strong in itself, so that added to that is how it was overstepped—namely by the broom, already discussed, and the 6 lbs. of hamburger. Even so the whole item in itself is rather weak and given a different frame it would be easy to filter out the anomalies.

A different order of contrast effect is required to do the work with the following item:

It was very difficult to carry on an intelligent conversation with her, this became apparent when I wanted to discuss a particularly good movie, and she would make childish inane remarks, completely off the point.

The item fails to meet the criteria for anomalous behaviour which I have written above in that the deviant behaviour is fully provided for by the rule. The rules for doing intelligent conversation are supplied by the categories for describing K's deviance—the form of talk in an intelligent conversation is 'discussion'. Participants should sustain a serious and continuous commitment to the topic. Talk should be relevant—'to the point'. 'Childish' and 'inane' contrast with the 'intelligent' quality that is required. This passage would have to be plugged into the earlier characterization of K as a good student in order to be adequately sustained as anomalous, with perhaps then an implication of change. The possible anomaly would then be a second level one which would depend on establishing a rule for K's behaviour based on a previous categorization. This would create a first term–second–term problem like that described in c-structure analysis two where each tail

of the *c*-structure yields a rule which doesn't provide for the behaviour in the other. So if you describe K as intelligent, a good student, etc., and then describe behaviour which yields the characterization dumb-stupid, then you have the same kind of anomaly.

The local weaknesses that are presented in many items are obscured by the cumulation of items which give different sorts of renderings. They tend, like the instance with Angela's mother, to be established retroactively as instances of *m.i.* type behaviour because the straight-forwardly deviant explanation will not do for all. It is this property of the collection as a whole, as well as the structure of particular items, which gives the effect I found in my first hearing of the interview material—namely of K becoming 'more and more disorganized'. The effect of disorganization attributed thus to K is produced by the reader being unable to come to rest on any principle of organization which would generate the whole collection.

Conclusion

This conclusion points to, although it does not fully design a general procedure for the analysis of such accounts. It suggests to the reader/hearer that she might treat the foregoing analysis not just as saying something about mental illness but as having a more general sociological relevance.

The analysis of the account has dealt with two main aspects. First, its social organization. Under this term I include both the structure which relates the original events described in the text of the interview to the present of the reader/hearer and the authorization rules which instruct the reader/hearer what criteria to use in determining the adequacy of the description and credibility of the account. Such an organizational analysis could be made of any such text, including, of course, a clinical psychiatric history. Its specific features would be systematically different and would display typical features of the institutional structure which provide the general contexts of its production and uses. For example clinical histories commonly include no authorization procedures and we may take it that these instructions are otherwise known. Second, the analysis of contrast structures and of the collection as a whole brings out a procedure for constructing an account of behaviour so that it can be recognized by any member of the relevant cultural community as mentally ill type behaviour. This procedure I have called the 'cutting out' procedure. Cutting out is done by constructing relationships between rules and definitions of situations on the one hand and descriptions of K's behaviour on the other such that the former do not provide for the latter (p. 51 above). The aim of such an analysis would be to spell out this procedure as instructions for generating such descriptions. Their adequacy could then be proved (in the pudding sense) by using them to write descriptions and seeing whether others could recognize them as accounts of someone who is mentally ill. I do not think I have

succeeded in explicating the procedure to this degree, but I think I have gone far enough to justify that as a direction.

I have suggested that an alternative account of what happened is possible. In fact theoretically a number of alternative accounts are possible since the problem is only to show how in K's behaviour can be found rules and contexts which provide for them adequately. There is certainly more than one way in which this might be done. One important restriction on the reader/hearer's being able to work on the account in this way is stabilized by the authorization rules which give 'witnesses' a privileged status versus the reader/hearer. Any alternative account must be speculative. This consequence is to be understood as a product of the social organization of the account which places the reader/hearer at a disadvantage with respect to those who were members of the events. Note that some kinds of authorization rules may treat the members of the event as under-privileged. For example, news reporters maintain that the outsider can get a 'better picture' of what has happened than those who were involved, even though the outsider was not herself present but makes up her own account from the accounts of those who were.

The effect of the authorization rules here bears on another aspect of the account relevant to the making of alternative interpretations, namely the lack of sufficient information. It is a normal feature of such accounts that they do not contain irrelevant material. Irrelevant material is material which neither (a) establishes the adequacy of the authorization procedures used nor (b) is made use of in the conceptual organization. The reader/hearer cannot go back to the personages of the original to recover material which might be relevant to an alternative construction. As a feature of the social organization, this may be contrasted with situations such as a court of law in which witnesses may be questioned to recover material making possible alternative accounts.

Thus the construction of an alternative account in which K is not mentally ill is not possible on the basis of what is available. But I can briefly show for some parts how it might be done. It would involve finding rules or contexts for K's behaviour which would properly provide for the behaviour described or alternatively being able to re-describe the behaviour to the same effect. If the enterprise were successful *it would result in a description which would lack any systematic procedure for bringing these items together. The pieces of behaviour would simply be fitted back into various contexts. The present account would disintegrate. The reader/hearer would be unable to recover from them a rule under which she could see what the account 'was all about'.*

Take for example K's insisting that she had to swim 30 lengths (22-3). Earlier I fitted that back to the description of her as 'as very athletic'. This involves finding a context which motivates the act. It can be done in a rather more complex way with the following set of items. When it is done, as the reader/hearer will see, there is nothing that holds them together other than that both are about K.

Here then very sketchily. Let's go back to the instance of the second broom (84-5). And add to it a later item as follows:

Or she would ask, when is dinner ready, and when told in about 10 minutes, she would go and prepare something quite different for herself. (109–11).

This item, like the broom item, can be treated as showing that K does not share the ordinary practical knowledge of how a household is structured, i.e. that the rules are that members should eat simultaneously and that they should not or need not sweep simultaneously (or rather that it isn't one of the inventory of concerted occasions that 'doing a household' requires). These instances can be fitted to a context if we write a version of the relations among Angela, Trudi, and K which contradicts that given in the account.

It is maintained throughout that Angela and Trudi and K are friends. This is the basis on which they share an apartment. Trudi has some reservations about K but it is not suggested that these are serious; K's performance in the household doesn't meet Angela and Trudi's standards. Ordinary experience of such household arrangements suggest that difficulties often do arise. Sociological experience of three person groups suggest that these are particularly difficult to manage without trouble (Caplow, 1968). Yet nowhere is any irritation, annoyance, or dislike recorded.

The two items of behaviour that I have introduced here could be warranted by recovering a social structure which dissolves the united household presented in the text. Or put in another way K's behaviour can be read as 'recognizing' two households in one set of premises. This preliminary reading can be tied into a more general reconstruction of what is reported from then on. There are indications of a ganging up kind of process similar to that which Lemert has described in his paper on 'Paranoia and the Dynamics of Exclusion' (1962). The last sequence when things came to a head can be interpreted in this frame. Angela *et al.* are together working up an account of K as mentally ill. K is excluded from this process but yet the object of it. Angela *et al.* are involved with one another in the business of establishing that there is something wrong with K. Take K's reported utterance 'oh yes, and the little black sheep and the lambs . . .' (121–2) as recognizing this and it makes perfectly good sense.

The credibility of the account and the reader/hearer's obedience to the restrictions on search procedures as well as her authorization of the teller of the tale, depends upon accepting Angela *et al.* as K's friends. The contradictory interpretation provides a context for much of what is reported of K after Angela and Trudi had decided that 'she just could not cope' (94) and found themselves 'discussing her foibles in her absence' (100). The friendship version of their relationship depends upon successfully defining K as 'mentally ill'. Conversely defining K as 'mentally ill' depends upon preserving that version. So I take it as crucial that it is K's statement about 'the little black sheep and the lambs' which receives the gloss from the teller of the tale. 'This was really completely out of touch' (123–4). The social organization of the account can be seen as playing a crucial part of the construction of the fact that 'K is mentally ill'.

Notes

1. Accepted 30.7.77. Throughout where a general pronoun is needed, I have used 'she', 'her', etc. In default of an acceptable neutral pronoun it seemed simplest to adopt as a rule that the general pronoun follow the sex of the speaker.

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