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## COGNITION, MOTIVATION, ACTION
### Qu'est-ce qui nous fait agir ?
### What is it that makes us act ?

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# Taking ufological arguments seriously : a challenge addressed to pragmatical sociology.

**Prendre les arguments ufologiques au sérieux : un défi pour la sociologie pragmatique.**

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As a sociologist, I am used to present ethnographies of virtual worlds, and more precisely of web-directories construction (such as Yahoo or the Google Directory – which is indeed constructed by the Open Directory Project community). One of the more interesting and more consequences-rich part of my field is concerned with adults web-directory branch construction. We are here in the core subject of this conference. Nothing is a better example of technology-mediated contents that meet the motivation and the desire of the public and, of course, of the market. Adult contents is a big business, as everyone knows. Anyway, I have exposed my conclusions about this field many times here. And, this year, I have decided to talk about something completely different. But my talk was motivated by this peculiar well-motivated, desire-rich field. After the numerous presentations of my work, I came to the conclusion that sociology of adult websites categorization is considered as less serious than sociology of scientific websites categorisation. The subject of the study appears to guide the appreciation of the reaserch by the audience.

This raises a big issue : contrary to what Levy-Strauss argues, a scientific research on comics isn't good, rich or interesting because it deals with comics. The interest depends on its methods and results. For this reason, I decided to experiment my assumptions during this talk, choosing deliberately a subject that a majority of my colleagues judge as of non-interest (which is alien abductions and ufo sighting accounts). This choice also meets a methodological challenge for my discipline (which is known as the French pragmatic sociology).

Ethnomethodology influence on French sociology instanced lately in a this framework (called "pragmatic sociology"). One of the core policies of this research program is to follow actors and take their accounts seriously. Implemented programmaticaly in the new sociology of science, this policy gave rich results in the eighties. Anyway it still raises problems if it's applied to other fields of research. Indeed, when studying (classically-sociology-denounced) ideologies or (anthropologically-called) mythologies, a social researcher refusing to be critical become subject of jokes by colleagues and, paradoxically, appears, at the end, not serious at all. Defending that the "seriousness" policy is valid and results-rich, this contribution will argues on how to apply it in matters that a great amount of people usually judge as "not serious". It try to defuse the false inference moving the seriousness of the subject of the research to the research itself. The argument is based on a lesson of neutrality as gave Max Weber, one of the founder of the sociology. The case study chosen for this talk will be from alien abduction and ufo sighting accounts : after a presentation of the ufological landscape, I'll focus on a famous video document known as the WTC UFO. I'll account for some strong events well-known in the ufologist community and follow the analysis done on the material by members of this community. Considering the authentication process is not part of the sociological job, I'll show how we can expose these stories without judging them (as critical sociology usually do) avoiding to propose a naive point of view of the phenomenon. The big challenge of the presentation will be : does the audience will take my talk seriously ?