ANNE GOFFMAN

“This little cat will go far”, her doting father is reported as having said when his last child, Anne, was born to the Muni Averback family on October 31, 1999. Prophesied Dvorah, the renowned local Kochkleffel, tealeaf reader and fortuneteller, “Annele is destined to move far across the seas and marry one of those dashing Nover Kranker fellows—in my bones I feel his name will be Max and they’ll have a couple of kids—one of each brand, and believe me, they won’t get lost in the world! She will have many relatives and friends, all of whom will look to her for leadership and love (and a little shopping). Her love for her children, her nephews and nieces, her Hadassah and her friends is absolutely guaranteed to make her The Woman of Any Year.”

Even the omniscient Dvorah could never have anticipated the heights to which the prophecies were realized. Devoted mother to Frances and Erving, Anne’s inexhaustible source of love reached out across generations and was returned exponentially. One did not have to be a relative to seek the privilege of calling her “Auntie Annie”.

Anne came to Winnipeg at the age of 13; she moved to Manville, Alberta at 18 when she married Max Goffman; later, with their two children they lived in Dauphin, Manitoba, until the subsequent move to Winnipeg in 1937. There were now six Averback siblings living in Winnipeg. Anne and Max left for California in 1952.

These are the bare statistical facts. The story of Anne Goffman can best be told by the countless friends, nephews, nieces and succeeding generations who knew the incomparable warmth of her love and generosity. There are countless Anne Goffman stories—just ask anyone lucky enough to have met her, known her, been touched by this little “cat from Kaschiakouitch”.

Even after her death in 1989, Anne Goffman remains a special presence in our lives.
Frances Bay (Goffman-Averback)
Dauphin, Manitoba, about 200 miles outside Winnipeg, was a small town of about 4,000 residents. Occasional visits to Winnipeg were exciting times during which I could visit with the Averback uncles and aunts and cousins. But it was in Dauphin that two defining events occurred which influenced my future life.

The first was when I was 8 or 9 years old and I met Chuck Bay. I pointed my finger at him in the schoolyard and announced, "That's the boy I am going to marry." Twenty years later I did. There were very few Jewish people in Dauphin. My father had a store called 'Goffman's Dept. Store' which was just two doors away from Chuck's father's store—we were really bound together through childhood. Fortunately, it continued throughout our lives.

My parents were loving, strict and warm. My mother and I went ice skating together, she baked cookies, sewed my doll’s clothes at 3 o'clock in the morning, and she and my father were forever devoted and supportive.

The second defining factor was being turned on to theater by 7th grade teacher Mary Hamilton who suggested I should be an actress. My mother made my first costume; I was a Chinese princess in a very tragic play. Since that time I wanted to be an actress.

After we moved to Winnipeg, I was so entranced with theater that I joined the liberal CCF party, this involved me with the New Theater Group, which performed a number of plays with deep social content.

I followed my dream; studied in Hollywood and New York, did a lot of radio beginning in Winnipeg and then Toronto. I was also on the stage—my first love.

When I was doing radio in Canada I feared television because I thought I was rather plain; you had to be seen in television, as opposed to radio, and I felt that would be a problem for me. However, television came through and I am grateful for that, as I am for the film and other work I have done for decades. Through a number of torturous as well as sublime years, I pursued my goal.

Chuck and I were married and traveled all over the world, primarily because of his work. His dedicated vocation was as merchantiser but he was equally interested in politics and social issues. To his family and those who knew him he was a most wonderful man. Our son Josh was the greatest blessing in our life.

My early years as a small town girl led to an eventful life, which brought us to the metropolis of New York and then Los Angeles.
Erving Goffman
(Anne Averback Goffman)

Google Erving Goffman, check the Internet, do your own research—you will come up with 552,000
references to the man called the best-known sociologist of the 2nd half of the 20th century. His dissertation and
first book, the classic “The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life” is printed in ten languages. His awards,
distinctions, his influence in his discipline are widely recognized and constant.

There are, also, innumerable books written about him and his influence on sociology and society. This page, therefore, will take the liberty of personally writing a little about Erving in his very early years.

We were born within a few months of each other. As young children and cousins, we were, to use the
term of that time, ‘sweethearts’. An enduring—and revealing of his early sentiment—memory occurred when
we visited his family in Dauphin. The morning we were to take the train ride back to Winnipeg, was one in
which there was a torrential rainstorm. Erving was not to be found...until, wet but triumphant, he returned
after a hurried visit to his father’s store to get a going-away present for his 8 year-old cousin. Probably few
necklaces received in ensuing years have more nostalgic significance.

Erving and his sister, Frances Bay

His curiosity and need to explore, to test and experiment were accounts we endlessly heard about—the
pilfering of crabapples (even though available in his own yard); taking things apart to find out what made
them work—many Erving stories which were probably not recognized for the formidable mind at their root.
The common thought amongst most in the small town of Dauphin was that Erving would grow up to be either
a genius or a gangster.

During a visit to Winnipeg, after some prodding, he would movingly recite a very sentimental poem
about “My Pal” which never failed to bring tears to the family audience.

He attended St. John’s High School in Winnipeg and while his impressive science skills were
recognized by staff and students, less evident was an irrepressible humor. Little known is that he portrayed
one of the two gravediggers in the school’s performance of Hamlet and he substituted real alcohol for the
water intended for unsuspecting and surprised cast members.

....But all that is now relevant is contained in the 552,000—and growing, references. His son, Tom
and daughter Alice (she was born after his untimely death), are successfully adding to that family’s history of
accomplishments: Tom in medicine and Alice in Sociology.