

**Sherri Cavan – Dmitri Shalin**  
**Correspondence, 2008-2010**

November 26, 2008

Dear Professor Cavan:

I am writing to you at the suggestion of Ruth Horowitz and Eviatar Zerubavel and in connection with the Erving Goffman project. Located in the Intercyberlibrary, <http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/index.html>, this web based archive collects biographical materials and interviews with Goffman's colleagues, students, and friends. I am attaching a paper on the interfaces of Goffman's life and work that I gave at the ASA meeting in Boston and that sets up the Erving Goffman project (the paper is also posted in the Intercyberlibrary, [http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/comments/shalin\\_goffman\\_intro.html](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/comments/shalin_goffman_intro.html)).

I just placed on the web the interview with Eviatar who recounts his experience of writing his dissertation with Goffman, [http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/zerubavel\\_08.html](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/zerubavel_08.html). Your name comes up in his interview as someone who took a class with Goffman. Hence my question to you.

If you have written anything on Goffman's work and life, I would be grateful for the reference. I would like to add your publications to the section that houses assessments of Goffman's scholarship. Also, I wonder if you might be willing to share your reminiscences about Erving as a teacher and scholar.

You may have neither time for nor interest in this project, but if you care to share your reminiscences – over the email, over the phone, or in person – I would be grateful. Your reminiscences, should you be willing to share them, can be off-the-record.

Under a separate cover, I send you my article "Signing in the Flesh" that lays the theoretical groundwork for this project.

With good wishes,

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November 28, 2010

Professor Shalin----

as you see, I am I receipt of your e-mail.

I transferred to UC Berkeley in 1961 from UCLA. I did a BA and MA in sociology as a student of Harold Garfinkel, which is of course a story in itself. Garfinkel had read the University of Edinburg Press edition of the Presentation of Self (which preceded the popular Anchor edition) and through a Garfinkelian rouse, I

managed to procure a copy and read it. Needless to say, I was very impressed. Garfinkel said Goffman learned all he knew about social order by breeching it, a topic that Garfinkel was very interested in. When I decided to go on for a Ph.D. Garfinkel gave me a letter of introduction to Goffman (whom he knew only slightly at that time).

As you know it was not easy to become a student of Erving Goffman but my connection with Garfinkel opened the door to him and a very select group of his students---Sacks, Schegloff, Sudnow, Roy Turner, a guy named something Elliot and probably a few others. Sometimes on Sunday evenings we would meet at Sacks apartment and talk about the various work we were doing. We also had a formal seminar with Goffman where we discussed work that would become our dissertations. In the ensuing years I took at least four courses and seminars with Goffman; he served as my thesis advisor; he sat on the committee for my prelims, and also on the defense of my dissertation. He ultimately wrote me a four line letter of recommendation to San Francisco State where I was hired despite the faint praise of his letter.

In the years before he left for Penn, we met socially on and off. He liked Ned Polsky's work on pool hall hustlers and the three of us got together one night at a pool hall on Market Street. He got to know a psychiatrist named Martin Hoffman who was looking at homosexuality in the days before Stonewall; Goffman introduced me to Hoffman (because I had observed homosexual bars -----along with a lot of other bars----for my dissertation) and the three of us got together to talk and on one occasion planned a trip to Las Vegas which never materialized. We ran into one another at various ASA meetings until his death. He liked me because I was willing to break rules although on more than one occasion he fretted that I might have gone too far.

There is probably a lot more I can dredge up from the deep regions of the person I was when all of this was relevant. I did a review of Gender Advertisements and a couple of other papers about Goffman's work; some---but probably not all---has survived various paper purges. I have long since lost my vita, and was never particularly good about keeping it current with papers presented at meeting and the like.

If you would like to explore more of this by telephone <...>, I am in SF; the best time to get me is early afternoon; early evening.

I might add that after our first contentious meetings where I threatened to cry if he picked on me he was generally gentle and continued to refer to me as "Kiddo" which I assumed meant that he could not call me "Sherri" although he was perfectly able to call male students by their first name.

hope this has been helpful  
Sherri Cavan

November 28, 2008  
Greetings, Sherri:

Thank you for getting back to me and for your fascinating memoir! What you say about Garfinkel's perception of Goffman is new to me. Given the accounts I have collected in the Goffman's archives, Erving's entire life can be seen as a trust breaching experiment, an ongoing attempt to limn the boundaries of the interaction order by violating its conventions. Your observations offer fresh fodder to this hypothesis.

I would love to hear more about your take on Garfinkel and his relationship with Goffman, both intellectual and personal. My sense is that there is a lot of hidden interchange between these two men, that they were very much aware of each other's work. This relationship is relevant for the understanding of both dramaturgy and ethnomethodology, as well as the main currents in the academic thought of the era.

To the best of my knowledge, the info about the seminar you attended with Sacks, Schegloff, and Sudnow has not been mentioned in other published accounts. You do not supply the year or the place when the seminar took place, when Erving introduced you to Hoffman. I imagine this happened at Berkeley. If you could situate these events in time, that would be helpful. The same is the case with the Polsky's work and the planned trip to Vegas that never materialized.

I would love to ask you a few more questions regarding Erving's teaching, grading, mentoring, and interactional habits. Apparently, Erving thought very highly of your ethnographic abilities, as Eviatar attests in his interview, so your take on Erving the teacher and scholar is important. Your willingness to break the rules must have fascinated the inveterate rule breaker. But then he thought even you have gone too far on some occasions (I wonder which ones). All this sheds fresh light on Erving's life project.

Earlier today I spoke with Renee Fox who supplied intriguing details on Goffman's tenure at Penn, and on Monday I am speaking to Sam Heilman. Please let me know which day would be good for me to call. How about tomorrow or Sunday? I would love to talk to you. If that is OK with you, I can record our conversation, send you the transcript, then you can edit, redact, and augment the draft as you see fit. I am tempted to call you right now, but that is probably too short a notice. Just give me a word when the most convenience time and day for you.

I want to get a hold of your writings related to Goffman and Garfinkel and place them in the section of the Goffman archives that features critical studies of his corpus.

Thank you so much for your willingness to humor me and dredge this institutional lore, which tends to sink into oblivion as the players move on to do ethnography in the world to come.

With warmest wishes,  
Dmitri

November 28, 2008  
Dmitri-----

Sunday afternoon-----5 p.m.---would be a good time for a conversation; recording is fine. Perhaps you can send me some specific questions to think about.

Also, are you familiar with the *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*? It was published by graduate students for a number of years. David Sudnow edited the 1963 v. 8 (I am pretty sure of this citation but I think I still have a copy to check) which featured papers by those of us who hung out at Harvey's; for the most part these were papers presented in part or in whole in Goffman's seminar. In addition, one of the seminars Goffman taught during this time was on Social Control (or maybe Deviance)

He co-taught it with David Matza. David is still in Berkeley <...>. You might want to talk with him; he was a new faculty along with Goffman and would have some interesting observations.

look forward to talking with you on Sunday  
Sherri

November 28, 2008

Sherri,

I will call you this Sunday at 5 p.m. The number you gave me is <...>. Should it be <...>?

Here are a few questions that come to mind. You touched upon some of them, but perhaps you can elaborate on these and related issues. I suspect that you can bring up the tangents I don't have wits to ask you about. And of course you can ignore any of the questions you find irrelevant, inapt, etc.

1. Do you recall the first impression that Goffman's ideas made on you when you discovered his writings? What in particular attracted you to his scholarship?
2. Did you choose the graduate program at Berkeley for a reason (e.g., because Goffman taught there)? How did you connect with Garfinkel and Goffman?
3. Do you know how Goffman and Garfinkel got to know each other, their views of each other's work, and the way their relationship evolved over time?
4. What impression did Erving make on you when you first met him? Anything stood out about his appearance, clothes, demeanor at that time and thereafter? What were his social skills at gatherings (parties, meetings, etc.). The same question applies to Art.
5. Did you know Erving's first wife and the circumstances surrounding her suicide?
6. How would you characterize Goffman's political preferences (assuming he had any)? What was his reaction to the student movement?
7. How well did Erving fit in with the Berkeley sociology department – did he get along with colleagues and administrators, what was his reputation around the campus? And why did he decide to leave for Penn?
8. Would love to hear more about the seminar held at Harvey's house: its participants, atmosphere, topics discussed. I understand that Harvey Sacks had a hard time convincing Goffman in the merits of his thesis. According to Manny Schegloff, Erving stepped down from Harvey's dissertation committee – can you shed light on that story?
9. What was Goffman like as a teacher – his lecturing style, classroom behavior, grading habits? How did students respond to Goffman?
10. What made you choose Goffman as a dissertation advisor? Was he sympathetic to your sociological project, how did you settle on your research topic, and what was it like to work with him during this period?
11. Did Erving favor a particular methodology, theoretical framework, research site? Were there any major mid-course corrections in your thesis, problems with finishing it?
12. Erving spoke highly about your ethnographic skills which involved the willingness on your part to take chances – can you elaborate on that? How far would Erving let you go in your ethnographic endeavors and which chances he felt you should not have taken? Do you see Erving taking chances in his own fieldwork?
13. How did Goffman react to the final product and assess your overall efforts as a Ph.D. student? Did he help you land your first job, publish your work, further your career?

14. Did you keep up with Erving after you have left the school? Any memories about the last few times you saw him or communicated with him?

15. If you look at Goffman's corpus from the vantage point of the present, do you think your perception of his scholarship has changed over time?

16. I feel that Goffman was a born participant observer (observant participant?), that he incessantly experimented with people and places, sometimes unnerving those around him. Does this take on his life make sense to you? How would you describe Erving's life project, his overall existential persona? I imagine it wasn't easy for someone like Goffman to carve out a persona for himself after he spotted conartistry at the heart of human existence.

17. Do you have any mementos related to Erving, any traces of his embodied existence – photos, letters, comments on your work?

As you can see, Sherri, I can get easily carried away in my curiosity. Please ignore any of the queries you find impertinent. And thank you so much for your willingness to join forces in preserving for posterity memories of Erving and Garfinkel – indeed, anyone from the circle you traveled in those years.

Regards,  
Dmitri

November 29, 2008  
Sherri Cavan wrote:

yes, the number is <...>.  
looking forward to talking with you tomorrow  
Sherri

November 29, 2008  
Thank you, Sherri:

It will be wonderful to touch base with you. Talk to you tomorrow.

Regards,  
Dmitri

November 30, 2008  
Sherri,

I am listening to your interview and marvel – what a powerful document, and it is nearly 3 hours long. You are not only a master ethnographer but also a splendid respondent. It was a pleasure working with you.

I will transcribe the recording, send you the transcript, so you can edit, redact, augment it as you see fit. If more stories surface in your memory, please add them on. They bring the humanity of Erving into a sharp relief.

I have just written to David Matza as you suggested. If you can think of others I can contact – Marvin Scott,

Taylor Buckner, Egon Bittner, Arlene Daniels, Lauren Weitzman (not sure about some of the spellings), please give me a word. If you know how to find those people, that would help.

Thanks for all your help!  
Dmitri

December 1, 2008

Dmitri-----and you were an excellent interviewer. I especially appreciated the fact that you let me finish a thought before you asked another question. That is probably why it lasted so long, I hope you do not have to do the transcription yourself.

And, you are in luck. When I went to put away the books I found a book review written for one of Goffman classes. It has his grade (alas, a B+) and his cryptic little comments. I will send it to you soon.

I believe "Leonore" is the proper spelling for Weitzman; Egon was a student of Garfinkel (not Goffman) and Matza's is the only address I have.

good luck on your project  
Sherri

December 1, 2008

Thanks, Sherri:

Coming from a born ethnographer, your complement has a special significance. But I must say I felt self-conscious cutting in as I tried to pursue an emergent tangent and interrupted the flow of your narrative. I am afraid I will have to transcribe the recording myself. No one else will volunteer, and there is no money to pay for such services. I have quite a backlog of interviews to transcribe (my conversations with Russian intellectuals go back to the 1990's), but yours is a priority. Hope to get to it soon.

Would love to see Erving's feedback on your paper. If it is not too much trouble, send it to me: <...>.

Thanks for correcting my spelling of the names. I will try to locate the people you mentioned as possible contacts. I would very much like to talk to David Snow but not sure how to approach him. Do you know how to reach him, which is the best way to broach the subject of an interview?

I would also like to talk to John Irwin's wife Masha. Do you know her? I wrote to her a year ago but she did not reply.

Just heard from David Matza who wrote to me that he "doesn't really want to go back into Goffman." So, that lead did not work out.

Hope to see you in San Francisco this summer and take you out for dinner.

Cheers,  
Dmitri

December 1, 2008

I will mail the paper to you via snail mail.

Sorry Matza was not willing to cooperate. Dave Sudnow (not Snow) died last year. Marsha Rosenbaum/Irwin lives here in San Francisco. I do not have an e-mail address. Why don't you try contacting her again; tell her I was very cooperative and you had a long interview with me.

She is a researcher and hopefully will be willing to extend a little time with you.

regards

Sherri

December 1, 2008

Sherri,

Thanks for the suggestions. I am sorry to hear about David Sudnow's death. The man didn't have an easy life, and his academic misfortunes must have been a thorn in his side. One more perspective on the world has been extinguished. I realize how little I know about the man and his work...

I might write to Marsha again once your interview is ready. But I feel awkward pestering people who for one reason or another chose not to reply to my inquires. There are many ways to gauge people; one I find useful is whether they acknowledge their mail. There is a chance that your message has gone astray and didn't reach its target, but this rarely happens. People have their own agendas and projects, and I hate to impose.

Thanks for sending me the paper.

Regards,

Dmitri

December 2, 2008

Dmitri----

just out of curiosity I checked Google images.

----Sherri

December 2, 2008

Many thanks, Sherri:

I believe this is the only visage Goffman approved for distribution. It is posted on the ASA site along with his presidential address, and it can be readily found on the internet. Notice that Erving is seated behind the desk, so you cannot judge his height. He sports a thoughtful expression, a manuscript in front of him, an imposing array of papers splashed over his desk... Goffman would have had a ball analyzing this staged mug and its semiotic "frame." Tom Scheff published a book about Erving a couple of years ago, titled *Goffman Unbound*, which has another image on its cover, far less flattering.

Sherri, on another subject – I realize I do not have a page for your publications in the Intercyberlibrary,

<http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/index.html>. Do you mind if I create a page for you? If so, please let me know which of your works are accessible on the web or available in digital form. I would like to add them to the e-library. If you have any parts of your dissertation/book in a digital form, perhaps I can reproduce them as well. Don't mean to lean on you, it's just a thought.

Regards,  
Dmitri

December 2, 2008  
Dmitri-----

I would be pleased to have a place in your intercyberlibrary. here are some easily accessible items; I hope these links work

<http://userwww.sfsu.edu/~kazbeki/imppol.html>  
<http://userwww.sfsu.edu/~kazbeki/Greek.html>  
<http://userwww.sfsu.edu/~kazbeki/animexper.html>  
<http://userwww.sfsu.edu/~kazbeki/NixonRehab.html>  
<http://userwww.sfsu.edu/~kazbeki/grafwars.html>

and, because after a while I wanted to try something different  
<http://userwww.sfsu.edu/~kazbeki/electronic.html>

*Twentieth Century Gothic: America's Nixon* is available through an electronic library, but right off hand I cannot remember the name of the site.

Finally, some young man in Europe liked *Liquor License* so much that he turned it into an e-book. I have appended it.

Tomorrow I will mail you my college paper. It is good to see that my writing has improved considerably.

regards,  
Sherri

December 2, 2008  
Sherri,

This is great. I am putting your work on the web. A couple of questions:

1. Is your book posted on the web somewhere? If so, I would direct the traffic to that site where it is already posted. This way we can save space on the server, as the file in question is large.
2. Do you have any off-beat projects that can be added your page – poetry, fiction, op-ads, interviews, music, etc. I am trying to highlight both professional and avocational ventures of the interactionist crowd.

Thanks, Dmitri



December 3, 2008

Sherri,

I have added your page to the e-library, check it out. For the time being, I gave the link to the article on *Liquor License*. We shall provide the link to the book later.

Do you have a list of publications posted somewhere, a web site or a page on the department site?

Best, Dmitri

December 3, 2008

Good morning, Dmitri

This vita represents my “professional” publications and research plans---still incomplete for various reasons.

<http://userwww.sfsu.edu/~kazbeki/vita.html>

the links I sent to you earlier include other writings, such as “What ever happened to Greek and Latin”, a serious contemplation on my department’s insistence on making “writing” the cornerstone of the department’s work; an extended discussion of “Impression Politics” which was presented at a San Francisco State forum; and a play, “Welcome to the Electronic Classroom” which probably marks the point where I gave up academic sociology altogether.

I never gave up the idea of being a sociologist. For the last 20 years I have been making art that embodies my analytic and political interests. I work in clay and focus on people. My art page is, like my vita, still incomplete.

<http://kazbeki.com/>

Sherri

(“Kazbeki” was a minor character in a Brecht play)

December 3, 2008

Greetings, Sherri:

Wonderful sculpture! Wish there were more pictures/catalogs of your works posted on your site. I have added “Exhibitions” link to your page, along with the “Publications” link. Let me know how it looks, <http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/index.html>. All names of interactionists in the e-library are in the alpha order.

What about the text of *Liquor License* – is it posted anywhere on the web? If so, please send me the link.

If you come up with more of your sociological and artistic works, I can add them to your page.

Regards,

Dmitri

P.S. “Kazbek” is also the name of a famous mountain in Georgia. Here are a few pictures, <http://www.peakware.com/photos.html?pk=134>.

December 3, 2008

Dmitri---

I forwarded your e-mail to my web master (aka my son). We have been talking about updating and expanding the art page; we will see if this is a motivator. I also asked him if it is possible to post *Liquor License* on my SF State homepage. We have been talking about that for a long time too.

I did have a chance to read some of the reflections on Goffman. The one I found interesting in a peculiar kind of way was Tom Scheff; I would like to read his “Goffman Unbound” to see where he goes with it.

re the Goffman picture: the two things that stick out for me are the old fashion pencil sharpener prominently displayed behind him and the object to his left with the piano hinge and curved top. Is this a piano? Did Goffman play the piano? Did Sudnow know and never say anything to me? Would Howie Becker know?

Finally, thanks for the pictures of Mt. Kazbek. The play was, of course, *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*; I didn't know about the mountain.

Sherri

December 3, 2008

Sherri,

It would make things a lot easier if you can post your book on your web site. Also, I hope you can place more images of your artwork on the web – it is worth seeing by everyone, including sociologists.

Did you read Victor Lidz's memoir? It sheds light on some historical puzzles related to Barry Schwartz and Sam Heilman, [http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/lidz\\_08.html](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/lidz_08.html).

Wish you could expand your analysis of the Erving's picture. On the subject of piano in the photo – Vladimir Shlapentokh's memoir mentions the open piano with the music sheets on top that he saw there during his visit to Goffman's house in the late 1970's. I have long wondered what Erving's taste in music was like. My query to Howard Becker on this issue went unanswered. He and I had a lively email exchange about Goffman over a year ago, but he stressed to me that he was a close friend and a confidant of Erving and his family (he is still advising his daughter who works on a Ph.D. at the Princeton sociology department) and that he felt duty-bound not to reveal privileged info. I told him I understand.

It's a shame David Sudnow's take on Goffman and his era is now lost to posterity. If you can remember anything he said about Erving, maybe we could salvage some of it for posterity.

There are interesting observations in your email to me that are not reflected in your interview. Not sure if it makes sense to you, but maybe at some point we can add an edited version of our exchange to the Dialogues' section of the Goffman archives, with whatever additional comments you may have on the Goffman project and individual memoirs.

Yours,  
Dmitri

December 5, 2008

hello, Dmitri

I finally got around to reading the Lidz reflections, so I will give you my reflection on that document.

First, the first half seems to be more about the machinations of the department than about Goffman, other than to note that he did not come to faculty meetings. The perfect job----no students, no faculty meetings; a corner office with a view? Did he have a student assistant? Who would that have been; could you interview them?

The second part was a little sad. It seems to me that Lidz was marginal in the department. I got the impression that he wanted to meet Goffman to set him straight about the importance of Durkheim and social structure and maybe even to let him know that the Chicago school had passed its zenith and functionalism was on the rise. It sounds like Goffman was very gracious on both occasions. He invited Lidz and his friend to his home, went out to eat with them (my question: who paid? how did they settle the bill?) but he was not going along with whatever agenda Lidz had when he set up the meeting. I was surprised that Goffman was willing to do this on a second occasion. When he figured out where the conversation was going, he excused himself. Considering Goffman's prodigious skills as a put-down artist, the account shows none of this----Lidz remarks that Goffman was joking and playful. So maybe Goffman was demonstrating collegiality.

I read a few other biographical reflections resulting in the following impressions. As a function of his reputation imputed by others, people came to meeting Goffman with a pre-existing idea of him as rude, as willing to breach commonsense expectations in order to see the other guy squirm, as difficult to interact with. This framework of expectations served to interpret whatever interaction occurred between them; whatever Goffman did (lean across the table to light someone's cigarette, leave a conversation which no longer interested him, whatever) became evidence of this essential character which had already been attributed to him. It reminded me of Troy Duster's dissertation where once people were assigned a "character" whatever they did, no matter how innocuous, was seen as documentary evidence of the character assumed to exist in the first place. When asked at some (much) later date to recall their interaction with Goffman what people recall is the evidence that documents what they knew about him all along and in the first place (to paraphrase my early mentor, Harold Garfinkel)

argh----my computer is doing something I can't figure out.

Dmitri, be sure to read "Gender and the Academic Experience". It has a lot of personal reflections about Goffman at Berkeley, all of them by women. I think there is a big difference between the Goffman who emerges from interaction with men and the Goffman who emerges from his interaction with women. The kind of male competitiveness which seems like a subtext of many of the men's accounts does not exist in women's accounts.

An interactionist perspective would suggest that there is not an Erving Goffman that exists independent of the context we encounter him, but that who he is emerges from the interaction between ego and alter; as alter changes, so does ego. It would be wonderful if you could get some accounts of Goffman in some role other than as an academic. And of course there is the Goffman before he became Goffman and then there is Goffman the Star. And indeed, what was the social process by which he became a sociological star.

regards  
Sherri

December 5, 2008  
Greetings, Sherri:

This is wonderful stuff, with telling observations about the people projecting on Goffman their preconceptions and the difference in the way men and women relate to Goffman. Check out Carol Gardner's moving testimony I just posted on the web, [http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/gardner\\_08.html](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/gardner_08.html). It shows that man is always more than the sum of his quirks. Wish I could add your fine observations to the comments section of the EGP.

If you see Rodney Stark's unsettling comments about Erving at Berkeley, [http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/stark\\_08.html](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/stark_08.html), maybe you can give me advice on what to do about the opinions that disparage people still active in the field. I drew his attention to the fact, asked Rod if he wanted to rephrase his remarks, but he insisted on leaving them alone. He has the right to state his views; readers can figure whatever bias he might have; and I wouldn't want him to pull out his reminiscences. The whole enterprise is shaping up a collective exercise in self-reflections juxtaposing different perspectives and producing some cathartic understanding of the limits of our comprehension. Still, I wonder if I need to exercise some editorial control in such cases. What do you think?

I am trying to contact Lee Ann Crawford (Lee Ann Draud) and Virginia Upright – do you know by any chance how to find them?

I have to write a book review, then review an article for a journal, but after that I can go back to transcribing interviews.

All best,  
Dmitri

December 6, 2008  
Greetings, Sherri:

Your term paper has arrived, and it is more than a "text" from the Erving era. This is an index with a "texture" all its own – yellowed pages, faded print, instructor's corrections. This blast from the past tells something about the class, the student, and the teacher. So far as I can tell, that was a demanding class, the studious pupil, and the attentive teacher. Goffman caught one typo but appears to have missed the other one, unless there is a word in English that I don't know – "clarify" (p. 3). He was stingy with the grades – your paper deserved an "A" in my view, or else the Berkeley standards are a cut above those applied at UNLV.

Your discussion is learned and clearheaded. I didn't realize that Schutze was assigned to students at the start of the 60's. But then, you were familiar with Garfinkel, which might explain the phenomenological bent of your discussion and the sophistication of your treatment.

The name Mary Jo Deegan came up in my exchanges as someone who took part in the Erving's meeting with the feminist sociologists. I recall you talking about this meeting in your interview, and it was apparently an important event for which Goffman wrote 3 pages where he addressed his past sexist comments and actions. Do you know anything about this text? Perhaps you can recall who else attended that gathering and

whom I could contact, besides Mary Jo Deegan. I will look up the book on the subject that you recommended, and maybe we can revisit this territory.

Tom Scheff invited me to join the Goffman Forum that he directs. Do you know anything about it? Also, have you heard about Goffman's sister, a Canadian actress who is now about 80 years old? Ditto Lee Ann Crawford (Lee Ann Draud) who worked as Erving's secretary at Penn?

Take care, Dmitri

P.S. Here is the latest addition to the Goffman Archives,  
[http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/rawls\\_whalen\\_08.html](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/rawls_whalen_08.html)

December 7, 2008

Dmitri, until I read your e-mail I did not know this but now that we know this we know where he may have first encountered the dramaturgical perspective. Certainly from the perspective of the audience there is no reason to know that a backstage exists, much less its relationship to the drama you are watching. If you have an older sister who is an actress, this is common knowledge and hence a path to Goffman's early perspective.

Have you looked up Goffman on Wikipedia.com? I know academics have little respect for it as a source of knowledge, but if you look up Goffman, in the short biography you learn

His sister, [Frances Bay](#) says that Erving "was a real prankster as a kid, and they never thought he'd amount to anything."

1. Michael Posner, "Seinfeld's marble rye lad honoured." *Toronto Globe and Mail*, Sept 6, 2008: R4. I tried to find this article but was not immediately successful; this is where she is quoted about the youthful Erving. Who knows what else is there.

There is also a Wikipedia entry for his sister, 90 and living,

Bay was inducted into [Canada's Walk of Fame](#), Sept. 6, 2008, in large part thanks to a petition with 10,000 names that was submitted. The selection committee also received personal letters from [Adam Sandler](#), [Jerry Seinfeld](#), [David Lynch](#), [Henry Winkler](#), [Monty Hall](#) and other celebrities.

This citation from the Goffman Wikipedia article seems to refer to early personal relations in Toronto Linton Freeman and Barry Wellman. "A Note on the Ancestral Toronto Home of Social Network Analysis." *Connections* 18, 3 (November, 1996): 15-19.

excuse me if you have already checked out Wikipedia long ago and I am just excitedly telling you what you already know.

Now, as to the questions you asked me; I may have missed a few. Rodney Stark was known as Rodney Snark in graduate school; he was ambitious, arrogant, and dismissive. I thought he and <...> were buddies so I was surprised at the dismissive attitude he took toward <...> in his remarks. Were these the personal remarks you were concerned with? If that is what Rodney wants to say, I would let it be. Maybe you should add a disclaimer---referring to all your documents---that these are the words of the respondent who was free to edit and approve them, and you do not take responsibility for what they contain. But certainly you cannot understand Goffman unless you also understand those who hated him as well as those who were fond of him. I would not

edit. Lee Ann Crawford I do not know. Mary Jo Deegan's name is familiar; she may have been at Berkeley after me, and if so she would be listed at the department's list of former students.

The people I remember from Goffman's slide presentation on gender ads were Barbara Rosenbloom (deceased) who wrote a scathing review of the gender ad book. Arlene Daniels (retired, living in Belmont CA). Rachel Kahn Hut (retired, living in Berkeley). You can get contact info for her through the San Francisco State Sociology department. The phone number is <...>; the secretary's name is Charlotte Canida; tell her I told you to call. Rachel will also have contact info for Arlene.

Jacqueline Wiseman, 8039 La Jolla Shores Drive, La Jolla CA 9222037, phone <...>, no e-mail info on hand

Thank you for your kind remarks on my youthful paper. I write so much better now.

good luck with your quest  
Sherri

Now I want to add another reference, Barker's *Psychological Ecology*. This is the same Barker of Barker and Wright, from that youthful book review. If I remember correctly, Barker has a theory of the absent organism; if you want to understand a role or a personality you can construct that role or personality by looking at the action that emanates from it and the action taken toward it; you need never look at the organism directly. This might provide you with a theoretical structure to explain how, by collecting these remembrances, you can know something interesting and significant about Goffman without ever knowing him directly.

December 7, 2008  
Greetings Sherri:

Good sleuthing! I have not checked Wikipedia for the references to Frances Bay. Will have to figure out how to get her address now. Writing to Jerry Seinfeld might not be the option. Someone sent me a picture of Frances (she is supposed to resemble Erving greatly), which is posted on the internet. Here is the link:  
[http://images.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://cache.daylife.com/imageserve/07N414J8n7b1O/340x.jpg&imgrefurl=http://www.daylife.com/photo/07N414J8n7b1O&usg=\\_\\_NkNg3nvZA9EgLNLWcssgfR2kqrs=&h=488&w=340&sz=56&hl=en&start=38&tbnid=9mjfpNHmFuvv0M:&tbnh=130&tbnw=91&prev=/images%3Fq%3DFrances%2BBay%26start%3D20%26gbv%3D2%26ndsp%3D20%26hl%3Den%26sa%3DN](http://images.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://cache.daylife.com/imageserve/07N414J8n7b1O/340x.jpg&imgrefurl=http://www.daylife.com/photo/07N414J8n7b1O&usg=__NkNg3nvZA9EgLNLWcssgfR2kqrs=&h=488&w=340&sz=56&hl=en&start=38&tbnid=9mjfpNHmFuvv0M:&tbnh=130&tbnw=91&prev=/images%3Fq%3DFrances%2BBay%26start%3D20%26gbv%3D2%26ndsp%3D20%26hl%3Den%26sa%3DN).

Some things run in the family, you are right – drama is in Goffman's blood. One of my correspondents alludes to Frances telling Winkin about Erving running into big troubles counting cards in Vegas casinos or doing something like that to earn animus of the local police.

Jim Chriss has written to me that in the mid-90's he discovered a cache of Erving's letters and papers at the Penn library and gave everything to Winkin. The latter deserves credit for assembling valuable bio materials on Goffman, much of it resulting from his leg work. After two decades, it is time to bring everything into the open. Jim copied some of the Goffman materials from the Penn cache before handing the trove to Yves, but he does not remember where the copies are. If Jim finds them, he will send the stuff to me.

It occurred to me that we should add a new section to the Goffman project and call it "Documents." We can place there letters, photos, certificates, term papers, contemporary newspaper accounts, etc. Once we do that, we can rename our collective endeavor "the Goffman Archives" and then abbreviate it as "GA" – a better sounding acronym than EGP. Not sure you would be thrilled to see there your paper with Goffman's grade, but I think it belongs right there.

I loved your vignette about Stark. That is what multiplying perspective does – it turns our exercise into self-corrective, ongoing endeavor that renders society transparent to itself. By intersecting diverse perspective on the same events and people we can check extreme interpretations, expose assorted biases, and counteract intellectual prurience feeding such an inquiry. Every child is a born ethnographer insofar as he or she likes to peek, to discover other people's secrets; it's just that some of us managed to turn the urge into a profession. I wish everybody who reads Rodney's account had a chance to see your vignette.

Months ago I sent a note to Weisman through her department. Not sure if the note came through to her. Once I rework and expand my paper on Goffman's bio and the IO, I will send it to the address you supplied. Will try to track Rachel and Daniels as well.

Barker's take on reconstructing the organism through its actions makes sense, reminds me of Mead. Will think about it.

Hope you will not give up on adding more samples of your art to your web site. The same goes for your book.

Regards,  
Dmitri

December 8, 2008

Dmitri, this address for Frances Bay comes from <http://www.eval8.org/staticpage?page=review&siteid=1079>, a site I got to from goggling Michael Posner, the author of the *Toronto Globe* article where she is quoted about the youthful Goffman. This site has a great picture of her and indeed, you can see a family resemblance with Goffman. You have to pay \$5 to actually look at the *Toronto Globe* article.

<...>

[this] address was printed in conjunction with sending her condolence cards after her accident a couple of years ago: the address appears to be that of her friends. Michael Posner, the author of the recent article is another possibility. He has written a few biographical books, so he might be sympathetic to helping you contact her. As best I can tell, she is still acting and she is living in southern California, so she must have an agent and there must be some path by which current contact information can be found; also there are "people tracing" services so that is another possibility.

On one of the sites for Frances Bay there is a "trivia" section, which lists her relationship to "Canadian sociologist Erving Goffman". This is an ironic statement about perspectives; we think Erving is the main character; not so from his sister's perspective.

You really should interview Jackie Wiseman sooner rather than later because none of us are getting any younger. If you would like me to I will call her, tell her about your project and ask her if she would be receptive to having you call her to explain what you are doing, who has been cooperating, etc. She has had a unique relationship with Goffman. In addition, it was at her home that Goffman made his frequent repeated remarks about her decor; it would be nice to have the hostesses take on that event.

my best  
Sherri

Hope you decide on an archive. It is an excellent idea. If it was in existence last year I would have sent you all those papers, instead of consigning them to the recycle bin.

December 8, 2008

Sherri,

I found several pictures of Frances on the internet. Here are some links:

<http://www.canadaswalkoffame.com/>

<http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0062844/bio>

I know that Winkin spoke to her at length, so her memories are preserved. We just need to find the way to pry that stuff out of Yves. The trick is to find Frances' address. The one you mention is probably not current.

John Lofland wrote to me via the Goffman forum serve list – are you a part of it? – that he welcomes my initiative and urges me to find more documents pertaining to Goffman, especially those in the ASA archives related to his presidency. I am trying to convince him to write a memoir or give me an interview. And Alan Sica wants me to print all the EGP materials and deposit them in the ASA archives at Penn.

If you can contact Jackie Wiseman or anyone else from the Berkeley crowd, it would be a great help. My message to her was not answered. You can send her links to some of the interviews and ask Jackie if she is game talking to me, sharing any materials on Goffman, etc.

Will get a hold of the article. Sounds like you don't mind having your term paper posted in the documents section – that would be among the first artifacts there.

Best,  
Dmitri

December 8, 2008

and, this is the contact for the woman (Anne Garber, Canadian journalist) who wrote the article that contained the information on Frances Bay (that I sent previously) so she might be a possible path to Goffman's sister.

<http://annegarber.com/>. There is a place on her page to contact her.

I will call Jackie.

Sherri

December 8, 2008

Thank you so much, Sherri! I will contact the journalist.

Regards,  
Dmitri

December 8, 2008

Sherri,



I have added a section titled “Documents” to the Goffman Archives, and you have the honor of having your term paper posted there as the first document – congratulations! Might not look like a vital document, but I think one can learn a lot from it. Unfortunately, Erving’s grade is too faded to read. But then, it looks like “A-” (sort of). Here is the direct link,  
[http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/documents/cavan\\_62.pdf](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/documents/cavan_62.pdf)

It is indeed a delicious irony that Erving is mentioned these days as a brother of a famous Canadian actress Frances Bay. Hope you will expound on this point, and I will cite you on that.

Yours, Dmitri

December 10, 2008

Hi Dmitri----I finally got in touch with Jackie and she said she would be “thrilled” to talk to you about Goffman. The number I sent you originally is incorrect. Her correct number is <...>. I told her you would call her and probably set up a time for an interview; she doesn’t have e-mail.

Have you had any luck finding Frances Bay? Jackie was delighted to learn Goffman had a sister; she said she had no memory of him ever talking about his family, not about his parents, sister, etc, although he did mention his son. Also, Jackie knew Skye at the survey research center.

Now, have you had any luck finding Frances Bay? I sure hope so; Jackie and I would love to do that interview, even if we had to go to Canada.

my best  
 Sherri

December 10, 2008

Greetings, Sherri:

Using your tip, I contacted Anne Garber, sent her the EGA materials, and she told me she would pass my message to Frances’ relatives. She is very interested, asked me to keep her in the loop.

Thanks for Jackie’s phone number. I just spoke to her and she is game to talk. We might have a conversation this weekend or later that week. She knew Erv, remembers lots of tales.

I also got in touch with Mary Jo Deegan. She wrote to me that she had a glowing reference letter from Erving supporting her sabbatical bid, as well as notes from a meeting with Goffman. Mary Jo planned to write a memoir for the EGA, but after looking at the interviews on our site, she decided to write an article instead.

You mentioned some other feminist sociologists who attended the ASA meeting with Erving. If I find contact info, maybe some of them will agree to share their memories.

The ASA asked my permission to deposit all EGA materials in their archives at Penn, and I said it was fine with me. Alas, they are hesitant to share with me the 1982 Goffman file in their possession. They are checking the rules to see if this material can be “declassified” (they call it “confidential”). Even if that is the case, they doubt it can be posted on the web. Apparently, not everyone follows our open-source philosophy when it comes to sharing papers and info.

Thanks for the tips and good vibes.

All best,  
Dmitri

December 11, 2008  
Hi Dmitri

sounds like you are on a roll.

I know you will enjoy interviewing Jackie; she herself is an excellent interviewer, an astute fieldworker, and indeed has lots of Goffman tales to tell. I think as you get more and more people involved in the project, this will inspire others who might have been more reluctant to participate. I forgot to ask Jackie if she was still in contact with Marv Scott, but if she is, maybe she could help you get to him, as not only does he have Goffman tales, but he was also involved with the Sunday meetings at Harvey Sacks apartment.

All of this reluctance to share information is kind of sad. Why would they (ASA, Penn) want to control it? How does that benefit anyone?

I sure hope the Frances Bay relative Anne Garber is referring to is not Gillian. It would be so wonderful to have a window into Goffman's youth, as well as whatever else Frances would share.

my best  
Sherri

December 11, 2008  
Greetings Sherri:

That is my hope – as we more people chime in, others will realize that it is more than a pastime, although it can be such as well, but that we are pulling together the kind of biographically grounded history that illuminates the society which we help perpetuate and transform through our observant participation in it. This is the way I tried to ground the Goffman Archive project:

Socrates believed that the unexamined life is not worth living and extolled *bios philosophicus* or *bios theoretikos*. What he meant was that our lives must be informed by principles and our principles embodied in our lives. I consider Goffman's life a prime example of *bios sociologicus* – a life dedicated to the science of society, with no sharp division between Goffman the scholar and Goffman the man. As the interviews and memoirs collected for the EGA suggest, Erving was a participant observer par excellence, constantly exploring, experimenting, testing social conventions, charting the boundaries of the interaction order, and unnerving those around him in the process. The biocritical inquiry I am conducting and the Goffman Archives it spawned explore the intersection between the biographical and theoretical corpus of Erving Goffman and people of his era.

I will ask Jackie how to find Marv Scott. As for the closed ASA files, it seems little more than bureaucratic inertia. There might be in those files info on the votes for different ASA presidential candidates, name of sponsors, and what not, but to my mind, 27 years later, we should be able to see the files.

John Lofland suggested that I try to locate William Gamson, Joe Gusfield, and Russ Dynes – do you know any of that folk? And David Maines brought up the name of Habenstein, and I am not sure who it is.

No news from Frances at this point. I imagine the family explores the EGA materials, mulling over whether to respond in any way. Talking to Frances could make the world of difference. Fortunately, Winkin has done this already, so he must have a lot of data.

Sherri, I feed off of your positive emotional energy. It is fun communicating, working with you.

Thanks for everything,  
Dmitri

December 11, 2008  
Hi Dmitri----

a quick note at the end of a long day

Gamson and Dynes are familiar names but I cannot place them. Joe Gusfield was at UC San Diego with Jackie, so she would probably know about his current whereabouts.

Now I have a question: Who is Winkin? When did he interview Frances; has he published anything based on/referring to that interview? While childhood experience are not determinate of adult behavior, I always think of them as a baseline, a first draft of the person. I would really be interested in knowing about his family, e.g. were his parents religious? intellectuals? supportive? What kind of hobbies did little Erv have? What exactly did Frances refer to where she is quoted as saying people (who?) didn't think he would amount to much?

my best  
Sherri

December 11, 2008  
Sherri,

I will ask Jackie's help with locating the people in the know.

Yves Winkin is a Penn graduate who worked with Erving and entertained him in France. He has a book in French, consisting mostly of translations, which also contains an extensive biographical sketch. He has two articles in English where he discusses Goffman and his bio. You will find these articles in the "Biographical Materials" section of our site. Here are the links,

<http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/winkin92.html> and  
<http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/winkin99.html>.

According to various sources, Yves has accumulated an enormous file of bio materials on Goffman, and he has been writing Erving's biography for the last 20 years, but apparently has problems finishing it. I agree that childhood experiences, moods, traumas are vital. I have some hypotheses about Erving's parents, immigrants from Russia. Need more data to validate it.

Good night,  
Dmitri

December 15, 2008  
Greetings, Dmitri

I read the Winkin's entries, especially the second post where he conceptualizes what is known about Goffman as "snapshots" I think this is a great idea. I read it a couple of times, focusing on snapshots 1 and 2, thinking about what they said and what it did not say, wondering how, like the visual analysis of a photographic snapshot, you could bring out the information that is lost in shadow. So, I started doing what I thought would be a little research and has now become a little bigger, hindered as I am by a certain electronic clumsiness.

I see snapshot 1 and 2 as being "Early Erv" what is known about his birth in a small (population 300) hamlet in western Canada. How did his father get to Canada? How did the Goffmans end up in such a remote place? When they finally get to Dauphin where he spends his boyhood, it is not much bigger than a village (pop about 4000 in 1920.) No wonder Goffman felt comfortable in the Shetlands. When you think of him going from Chicago to the Shetlands it seems like a big stretch for some urban guy. But when you discover where he grew up, things take on a different perspective. Anyway, my internet search has taken me to places like the Jewish migration to Canada in the early part of the 20th century, the growth and surprisingly virulent, open anti-Semitism that characterized Canada from about the time of Goffman's birth until after the second world war, and other interesting places.

In the course of all this I came across Skye's obituary, which through my electronic ineptness I was not able to access without great(er) frustration. However, it is located in the *Oakland Tribune*, a number of entries between April 27, 1964 and April 30 of the same year. If you have access to something like newspaper archives on line you can retrieve it. I only managed to see part of it but did get a peek at the fact that her services were held at an Episcopalian Church.

When I taught research methods I taught it as an adventure. I had forgotten what an adventure it is.

my best  
Sherri

December 15, 2008  
Greetings Sherri:

Earlier today I had a lovely talk with Jackie – thanks again for your help with locating her. She opened my eyes on several facets of Erving's life unknown to me, including his Jewishness. (He used to tell Jackie, "Between us Jews," repeating the phrase several times before Jackie told him that she was an Episcopalian). Tomorrow I am talking to Robert Habenstein who knew Erving in Chicago. I have also sent a message to Rachel Kahn Hut and Candace West. Now I am trying to locate Arlene Daniels, Marvin Scott, and Joe Gusfield. One person I also would like to talk to is Marsha Rosenbaum – do you know her by any chance? She didn't reply to the inquiry I sent to her months ago, but then neither did Jackie.

I am glad to see that you are getting into action, that the old excitement about inquiry grips you again. I think you are on the right track when it comes to the lacunae in the available info, and the info intentionally withheld, as those absences could be meaningful. The historical info about his parents is important, not much is known for sure in this area. Getting in touch with Frances and Tom would be crucial. I would like to know more about the Choates and Angelica as well. Her sister died earlier this year, I discovered, but her brother maybe

alive. What you gleaned about the Antisemitism in Canada is telling. This explains some of Erving's references to the hard times he had as a Jew in Canada (see Dell Hymes recollections).

I came across the announcement of the funeral services for Angelica published in the *Oakland Tribune* on April 30, 1964 (see attachment). I am thinking of posting it in the documents section of the EGA but would like to wait for other materials to be placed there first. I am not sure of other articles – do you have the references/titles? One should be able to order them somehow. I wrote to the Alameda County Records division to see if I can access Angelica's will, but got no reply. There must be something on Erving in Philadelphia as well.

No news from Frances, unfortunately. Plan to write again to the reporter in a week or so. Will keep you posted about the developments.

Cheers,  
Dmitri

December 15, 2008

Dmitri---the file came through. These other dates in the *Tribune* are actually news stories about her suicide; they are more detailed although *not* been able to access them. I am not sure I am comfortable with the idea of posting Goffman's first wife's obituary in the documents. The fact that she was Episcopalian is interesting, but the document itself, I don't know. Jackie should know about Gusfield and Scott. I will try to contact Marsha. Sherri

--

**Erving Goffman** city of California professor of sociology leaped to her death from the upper deck of the Rafael Bridge today The California Highway patrol said Mrs Goffman abandoned her car about midway across the span left two note and instructions to notify her husband then leaped to the water below. Her empty car was by bridge painter Clyde right 31 of 983 Frederick Road San Leandro. He found the notes in her purse inside the car Mrs body was recovered about 10 by a bridge crew in a small

[Monday, April 27, 1964 Oakland, California](#)

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**Erving Goffman** parked her car opposite Red Rock Island early yesterday and jumped from the upper deck of the span. Two notes were found in the to her husband and son Thomas saying I'm sorry. The other to her attorney Allen G Kline of San cisco included instructions about a property purchase and directions to her jewels hidden in a family file cabinet Mrs Goffman a native of ton Mass lived with her husband and son at 2805 Hilgard Ave Berkeley She also leaves two sisters Mrs Sylvia Whitman

[Tuesday, April 28, 1964 Oakland, California](#)

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**Erving Goffman** Mrs Goffman a native of Boston Mass leaves her band and son Thomas at 2805 Hilgard Ave Berkeley. Survivors also include two sisters Mrs Sylvia Whitman of and Mrs Elizabeth Morgan of Danvers Mass and a brother Robert Choate of Phoenix Ariz Services were held at St Clement's Episcopal Church

[Thursday, April 30, 1964 Oakland, California](#)

Thanks,  
Sherri:

December 15, 2008

I will hold on to the obit piece. It does contain some valuable info about Skye's relatives, but I don't want to start this section with that kind of material. We shall see what's what later. It might be prudent to withhold the piece.

Jackie tells me that she has two sets of class notes from Erving's classes she took. That could be interesting.

Sent for the info on the *Oakland Trib* articles.

Regards,  
Dmitri

December 15, 2008

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/transactions/3/jewishpolitics.shtml>

There have been many times when the Jewish community of Winnipeg had cause to feel both anxiety and concern when hostility was directed towards it—following the arrival of Russian Jewish refugees in 1882; through the official discouragement of Jewish immigration to Canada, later resulting in the limitations of a quota system; through the contemptuous parodying of Jews in the Winnipeg press; through the hatred and anger aimed at “foreigners,” including Jews, in the latter stages of World War I and in the wake of the Winnipeg General Strike; through the revival of a nativist sentiment which saw the spread of the Ku Klux Klan onto the Canadian prairies, including Manitoba, in the late 1920s; through the Depression 1930s which saw the assumption of power by the Nazis in Germany, the growth and activities of pro-Nazi organizations in Canada, including Winnipeg, and the increasing concern of provincial and federal governments about incipient revolution, which placed many political organizations and individuals, including Jews, under official suspicion.

almost continual anxiety and insecurity on the part of the Jewish community

December 15, 2008

Thanks Sherri.

Interesting. That helps explain the anxiety attacks that Erving appears to have experienced at times.

Best,  
Dmitri

December 16, 2008

Sherri,

I meant to say that you have a golden touch but instead wrote that I have a golden touch. Wonder what was going through my unconscious. Too many messages crossing their pathways lately. Sorry about that.

Regards,  
Dmitri

December 16, 2008

hi Dmitri---

when you get a chance to contact Frances Bay (as I know you will) these are some questions I hope she could answer

1. Did Max Goffman have a car? (I am curious as to how far up the status ladder he went)
2. Erving's boyhood friends in Dauphin and in Winnipeg. Was he a loner; did he have a buddy or two; did he hang out with a gang. Did he have any hobbies, such as...; what kind of trouble did he get into; what kinds of things earned him praise. Did he have a girlfriend?
3. Family reading practices----did they read a newspaper; Max, Anna, Frances, Erving----did they read books; can she remember titles or kinds, e.g. adventure, biography, fiction, etc.
4. Max and Anne-----temperament;
5. The relations between Max and Erving. Were they close; how did they express affection; did they fight over anything. The relations between Erving and his mother; between Frances and her younger brother
6. religious observances; were they observant; what kind of practices did observe; did they go to, belong to a temple? Did Erving have a bar mitzvah? (I would also like to know if he was circumcised. After all he was born in a tiny hamlet in the middle of nowhere; what efforts did his parents make to make him a Jew. however, this is much too personal to ask, alas.)
7. Was teasing a family practice? Did Max tease; did Erving tease.

maybe if you send her contact the kind of questions you want to ask it would encourage them.

good luck

Sherri

December 16, 2008

Sherri,

Good questions, some of these are on my list as well. I will contact Anne before long and see if she had heard from the family.

Best,

Dmitri

Dec 19, 2008

Hi Dmitri----

I was trying to find out if there was a synagogue in Dauphin, Manitoba when Goffman was living there as a boy, to discover if there was a Jewish community, etc. Anyway, as is the case on the internet one thing leads to

another and I came up with Frances Bay's relative's name, Anrea Zaslov. And a couple of contact numbers for her which I have attached as two word documents.

good luck  
Sherri

December 19, 2008  
Greetings Sherri:

Might be a good lead, but no attachment has arrived with your message. Try again please.

You are onto something important with your search of Erving's Jewish roots. I hope you consider writing about that, an article or something. What you have already come up with on Jewish immigrants in Canada would fit nicely in the Comments section.

I had a nice talk with Joe Gusfield earlier today who filled me on Erving at U of C. Yesterday I finished transcribing an interview with Renée Fox (who had some observations on Goffman's Judaism), and tomorrow I start working on your interview.

All best,  
Dmitri

December 19, 2008

Many thanks for the lead. I have sent inquiries to both Andrea Zaslov and Morley Walker. We shall see if they are willing to respond.

Best,  
Dmitri

P.S. Just got the book on Gender and the academic experience. Look forward to reading your essay.

December 20, 2008  
HOORAY!!!!

Anrea sounds like the perfect person to work with; I hope you can put together a set of questions Frances could answer (leaving out my impertinent ones). Is Frances still living in southern California? Maybe Jackie and I could go and interview her in person; no kidding.

And yes, I did decide to write a paper which will probably go into the commentary segment. The working title is "Early Erving: Reflections on Winkin's Snapshots 1 and 2"

I have attached the intro so you can see where I am going; I have had more success than I expected but there are a lot of questions Frances could answer. About, among other things, their mom.

again, HOOORAY!!!!



Sherri

December 20, 2008

Sherri,

That's just great. Happy to see you on board big time. I would like the EGA to become a collective enterprise, with all of us sharing info, writing papers, offering comments, engaging in dialogues, serving as a sounding board for each other. This promises to be a different kind of history and study of society, an inquiry that transgresses the line separating the subject and object of research, where we can not only do justice to our teachers, colleagues, and friends, but also settle some old accounts in the spirit of charity and fairness, do a bit of collectively-festive therapy, and exorcise the ghosts of academic years past.

Hope you don't mind my sharing this note with Jackie. I would like to see her involved as well. Two of you would be perfect to conduct an interview with Frances.

Cheers,  
Dmitri

December 20, 2008

dear Anrea-----

Dmitri forwarded the recent email exchange between the two of you and I was so excited by the enthusiasm in your replies.

I was a student of Erving Goffman in the 1960; he was my major advisor and my thesis advisor. After I got my Ph.D. we saw one another on and off before he left for Pennsylvania; then at professional meetings and an occasional telephone call before his death. When Dmitri recently contacted me about sharing my recollections I was enthusiastic; and the more I thought about it after our conversations the more enthusiastic I became in this whole project.

I was excited to learn that he had a sister and that she had such an outstanding career of her own, what stellar stories for siblings who started out in such a tiny hamlet as Manville. So I began searching the various internet connections and in the process, came across your name and your relationship to Frances and Erving.

I am not sure what kind of family tribute you are planning on but I want to help you in any way I can. I have begun to put together a file of clippings such as an ad for the sale of Max's store in Dauphin, Max's obituary, a delightful account of a wedding Frances and her mother attended where Frances was the maid of honor and Ann the matron of honor. Are you interested in collecting these kinds of documents? Can I forward copies to you?

Anyway I am so happy that Dmitri and I found you. I hope Frances will be interested in sharing her memories. Is she still living in southern California? If so, Jacqueline Wiseman (another one of Erving's students) and I could do the interview with her in person.

Again, I am so very glad you are interested in helping us untangle and uncover this little bit of history.

my best  
Sherri

December 20, 2008  
 Sherri,

Anrea urged me to call her mom, Marly. I left a message on her answering machine.

The Intercyberlibrary page is getting very heavy. I kept the EGA materials there but added a separate page for the EGA. Here is the direct link: <http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/index.html>.

A question: Would you care to be an EGA co-director? This way we can join forces and you will get the recognition you deserve.

Best,  
 Dmitri

December 20, 2008

Dmitri-----I would be happy to help out; I don't know if I need any kind of position. I am attaching two word documents, pasted from newspaper clippings. It has taken me a while to figure out how to enlarge and copy just what I want, but getting a whole page tells a lot too, for example, a page from the Winnipeg paper from the 1930s shows over thirty movies playing in the city. Was Erving a movie goer as a young man? I have some others clippings, including an ad for the sale of the Goffman clothing shop, and a wonderful description of what Mrs. Max Goffman wore to a wedding where she was matron of honor. I will send these as soon as I clean them up so it is easily readable. I will also go back and recopy the Manitoba grad address.

These clippings all come from [www.newspaperarchives.com](http://www.newspaperarchives.com). A great source

Sherri

December 20, 2008  
 Sherri,

I converted both documents to the PDF format and placed them on the web, along with the update on our co-directing the EGA site. Check it out: <http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/index.html>

Thanks for lending me a helping hand.

Yours, Dmitri

December 22, 2008

Dmitri---the date on the Max Goffman obituary is incorrect, but I cannot immediately find the new date---I think it is 196 something but definitely not the one I wrote on the document so I would hold that document until I can correct it.

While I am correcting, two things-----it is "Alvin" Gouldner, not what you have; also, I see you referring to "Jeffery Sacks" in different interviews; it should be "Harvey Sacks." I have never heard of him being referred to as Jeffery, but oddly no one corrects you. I had a colleague named Andrew Peter; his intimates knew him as "Pete" but students and other pretenders would always say "Andy". But I think it is Harvey.

take care  
Sherri

December 21, 2008  
Hi Sherri:

Let's try to find the right date for Max's death. You need not redo the whole page. I will correct the date myself in the MS document and create a new PDF file once the right date is known.

I changed "Alwn" to "Alvin." Found two texts with the botched name – Goldfarb's and Rawls's interviews – and corrected "Jeffrey" to "Harvey."

Good catch, thanks for attentive reading.

Regards,  
Dmitri

December 22, 2008  
Sherri,

I found this factoid that would fit Max's case:

Name: Max Goffman  
Birth: 26 Feb 1890 – Other Country  
Death: 1 Jun 1954 – Los Angeles

Since Max died at the age of 64 and moved to California in 1952, that might be the case.

Do you know Max's date of birth?

Best,  
Dmitri

December 22, 2008  
Sherri,

I think you inverted "1954" into "1945" in the Max's obit MS file. Otherwise, Max Goffman I found on the web seems to be the right person: He died in 1954 at the age of 64, which means he was born in 1890. He moved to CA in 1952 and died 2 years later, in 1954. *The Winnipeg Free Press* reported the death on June 3, 1954.

What do you think?  
Dmitri

December 22, 2008

Dmitri---thanks; this sounds like the correct date, although I cannot figure out why I cannot find it again myself---which I was just doing when I received your e-mail. One problem is that when I started out I was just curious and now I am serious; in the beginning I wrote down close to nothing; now I feel I need to keep a better record. So I need to go back and retrieve urls etc which I will do today and hope to finish the first draft in the next few days. Like my sculpture I can see the form and a lot of the details but actually doing it---moving the clay, moving the words---takes a certain amount of serious work.

I have another problematic date I wanted to ask you about: Winkin gives Max date of arrival in Winnipeg “about 1917”, Ann Auerbach's arrival in 1912 and their marriage as 1915 Something is wrong but since he doesn't cite a source I have not been able to clarify it. I have not been able to get much on Ann---which may be spelled Auer back.

I think I am having fun  
Sherri

December 22, 2008  
Sherri,

We shall figure it out in time. I am waiting for Anrea's mother, Marly, to contact me. Anrea urged me to call her in Canada, I left the message on her answering machine, but no one got back to me. Anrea says her mother will contact me, but nothing's happened yet. I suspect there might be trepidations as to whether Fran's and Erv's relatives really want to get involved with the EGA people. I don't want to press the issue. Will wait a bit then check with Anrea regarding the dates and places of birth, etc.

Keeping track of URLs is wise. I have also failed to retrace some sites that I located earlier without saving bookmarks. It would be good if you can find URL's for the Angelica's death notices you sent me earlier. I ordered the *Oakland Tribune* reels for April 1964 through the interlibrary loan department but was told that the newspaper does not have reels to share. Will have to find other ways to access those clippings.

Take a look at “Happy Gilmore” when you have a chance. I wouldn't normally bother with that kind of movie, but Fran's acting made a difference. That film could be a fine teaching tool for a class on Goffman.

Best,  
Dmitri

December 22, 2008  
Sherri,

I found this info on “Anne Goffman” that fits Erving's mother descriptions:

Name:	<b>Anne Goffman</b> <b>[Anne Averbach]</b>
Social Security #:	549586714
Sex:	FEMALE
Birth Date:	31 Oct 1899

Birthplace:	Other Country
Death Date:	18 Feb 1989
Death Place:	Los Angeles
FATHER'S SURNAME:	Averbach

I think the game is on.

Best,  
Dmitri

December 22, 2008

Dmitri----is Anrea's mother "Marly" (instead of "Morly")?

If so, this is how she is related to the Goffmans-----Marly's parents are Percy Buckwold and Gertrude (Goldie) Silvert.

Percy's sister Sybil married Jack Bay, Charles Bay's brother, who is of course, married to Frances Goffman. Ann Goffman and her daughter Frances were matron of honor and maid of honor at the Buckwold-Silvert wedding (*Winnipeg Free Press*, Oct. 17, 1936, p. 12)

The Buckwolds, the Bays and the Goffmans are linked by intermarriages, buying and selling each other businesses, and various social occasions that took place in Dauphin; it suggests a rather tight knit Jewish community.

Percy's father Jacob was born in Shumsk, Ukraine. I wonder if that is a lead to where Max Goffman was born. However, Eli Bay was born in Kiev, so who knows where Max came from.

Sherri

December 22, 2008

Good job, Dmitri

I see the spelling is Averbach and that She outlived Erving. One of the things I have been thinking about is that after his wife died in 1964 Erving was a single parent; he does not remarry until his son (b. 1953) is an adult.

I have been thinking about this a lot; it explains----in part---why he chose to work at home. I keep wondering if he had help. Perhaps his mother was living with him.

That is not something a student was likely to know; perhaps also he had a live-in housekeeper but anyway, the fact that he was a single parent is not to be overlooked.

my best  
Sherri

December 22, 2008  
 Sherri,

Anrea's mother is Marly Zaslov. Anrea is Fran's third cousin. Does this info fit in with your Jewish family network data?

Indeed, Goffman was a bachelor between 1964 and 1980/1981, and his single parenting commitment might have been a factor. Renée Fox told me how Erving queried her about the best way to secure a place in the medical school for his son.

Did Erv's mother live with her? Not sure about that. Both Anne and Max lived and died in LA. Erving came to CA in 1958, after his father's death, and left for Penn in 1968. Erv and mom must have seen each other on occasion, but the word would have gotten out if she lived in the same house. No report confirms that hypothesis.

Best,  
 Dmitri

December 25, 2008  
 Greetings Sherri:

First a bit of good news. Marly Zaslov called me, and we had a nice chat. She told me that Fran and another relative plan to call me, and if I did not hear from them, I should call. No one called me on the designated day, so I did place calls myself and left a message. Let's see what happens there, but things look promising.

I didn't have a chance to talk about you and Jackie interviewing Fran (she lives in Studio City in LA), but I will find the right moment to bring up the question. Meanwhile, I have a list of your questions about the Goffmans in Canada, anti-Semitism, etc., in case I speak to Fran first.

Marly is trying to locate a booklet (she called it "Album") published on the occasion of the Auerbach's reunion that recently took place. Lots of bio data there, I understand. She has passed on the info about our site to Tom Goffman. She didn't hear from him yet. I wish I had more interviews with Goffman's students processed first, but that is how things evolved.

I would like to speed up the work on your interview. Attached you will find the transcript of the first hour of our conversation. The process is slow, as you can imagine, and I have an hour and forty five more minutes of recording to transcribe. The more I delve into the text, however, the more excited I feel – this stuff is golden. You have a narrative gift that comes across in the interview. Its rough edges only enhance the impact.

I would appreciate your starting the editing process as soon as you can. I hope to send you the next hour of transcripts in two-three days. Please edit and augment text as you see fit. If memory flashes bring back more episodes, however trivial, please add them up. If you have a substantial insert – say, a paragraph or longer – you can place the addition in {} brackets to mark the newly added text. I realized from several interviews I have conducted and processed so far that the final text should be seen as a cross between an interview and a memoir (memoview or intervoir).

Several topics in particular invite elaboration. I would like to hear a bit more about your experience with and impressions of Garfinkel, reasons guys preferred to work with him rather than Goffman. Maybe you can jog a

few more memories of Goffman's meeting with women sociologists in SF. Did Goffman smoke or drink? What did he like to eat? Did he have any pronounced taste in music? Anything that sheds light on his worldly, bodily pleasures. I wonder if your choice of the research topic (bar culture, drinking) may have an autobiographical tangent.

You need not go into any of that, these are just things that crossed my mind. Many thanks for being part of this project!

With warm wishes,  
Dmitri

December 26, 2008

Dmitri----this is great news. I just had a feeling when Arnea answered your inquiry and referred to "the siblings" that they would like to be involved. The internet spawned a gazillion data bases and people began to become serious biographers. Indeed a lot of what I learned about the Averbachs I learned from various family blogs.

I am so glad you found the proper spelling of Ann's maiden name; it opened up an entire window on Dauphin and Winnipeg society and the place of the Goffman family.

Of course, I have a lot of new additional questions that Frances could answer.

specifically-----did Goffman watch movies; was he a fan of vaudeville----which preceded most movies when he was a boy; did they speak Yiddish at home? read the Yiddish paper? what was the relationship between Erving and his mother; his relatives; were did his grandparents come from and were they living and accessible when he was a boy; was there a special bond between Erving and his Grandparents?

also, after his wife's death did his mother come to help her widower son and her grandson? (and if not, who helped him?)

I will probably think of some more questions.

In the meantime, I am sending the incomplete draft of "Early Erving" so you can see the kind of family, and community information I (happily) uncovered and so you can see where these observations, so far, have led me and also questions they suggest to you. **PLEASE DO NOT POST THESE AT THIS TIME.**

In the meantime, as soon as I have breakfast I will start on editing the copy you sent.

Again, I think this is wonderful news; and would be even more wonderful still if you could interview his son; my guess is that Erving was a good father, even if he hid this from his public.

it is very exciting to be part of this project  
Sherri.

December 26, 2008

Greetings Sherri:

Thanks for your paper on the Goffmans. I see that it is evolving nicely.

You say that “Max Goffman (b. 1900) arrived in Winnipeg...” But the obit says he died in 1954 at the age of 64, which means he was born in 1890. The info I found states that he was born on February 26, 1890. I will postpone posting your paper till you give me the word to do so. Meanwhile, I am transcribing your interview. Looking forward to your edits.

All best,  
Dmitri

December 26, 2008  
Greetings to you, Dmitri

I was very impressed by your transcript. The worse part was my constant use of “yeah” and “like” and if you removed them I would not look like such a dork.

I tried to keep my editing to a minimum; mainly to make sense. In a couple of places I was so garbled that I had no idea where it was going and I suggested those parts be eliminated. Somehow I managed to mess up the formatting and so odd fonts and peculiar spacing appear, but I know you can properly reformat the whole document.

I saved it as a word ‘97, which I think is what you sent but if you cannot open it I will re-save it as something else.

Anyway, you did a great job transcribing. I have done it and it is difficult. I used to make my research method students do it just to get the experience----they all wanted to use recording devices and I wanted them to have the complete experience; they soon succumbed to note taking.

I will look forward to the second part.

cheers  
Sherri

p.s. I know you will tell me as soon as you hear from the relatives.

December 26, 2008  
Sherri,

Of course you can get rid of all the “yeah,” “like,” and similar verbal ticks. Ours is not an exercise in conversation analysis, so I don’t see a problem with editing the final version to your satisfaction. Indeed, why don’t you do it yourself?

Also, there is no need to put in square brackets every minor change or substitute you make. Take this example from the edited text you sent me:

“...and they still had a copy on the shelf for the guy from psychiatry. [So I bought it.]”

Here we have a minor stylistic correction that does not change the substance of what was originally said, nor does it introduce a substantially new point. I would reproduce this sequence as follows:



“...and they still had a copy on the shelf for the guy from psychiatry. So I bought it.”

The same is the case with the garbled material you decided to delete – just get rid of it without any marking. Occasionally there is a sensitive segment in the transcript that the interviewee or the interviewer wants to keep confidential. For instance, Renée Fox dictated to me Winkin’s email address during our conversation. I did not know whether Winkin would have liked to have his address posted on the internet, so I redacted it. Such a deletion containing sensitive info can be marked as <...>.

We can use square brackets to provide supplementary info (e.g., the full name of the person mentioned only by the first or last name), or to mark a substantial elaboration introduced during the editing process – especially when it is longer than a sentence. For example:

“That must have been in 64, 65. [I think it was 1963; it took me two years to finish my dissertation and I got my degree in 1965.]” That works fine. Readers can see that you have offered a post factum clarification.

Let me know if these editorial guidelines make sense to you. Not sure if you want to go over the text and incorporate these suggestions (don’t worry about the fonts and formatting). If not, I will do further editing myself.

Will let you know when and if I hear from the EG relatives.

Regards,  
Dmitri

December 27, 2008  
Hi Dmitri---

I was amused by your reference to conversational analysis. I took the opportunity to follow your guidelines and re-edit the interview. In a couple of places I thought a thought ended abruptly and added a sentence to complete the idea (for example, the reason I was surprised that the guys had not done their exams with Goffman was because they were always bragging about how they got the better of him in their exams. So I added a sentence that I think clarifies it.) In two places I added a paragraph and left the brackets in place. The first is the story about the snails and the irises; the second clarified why he was complaining about the lighting when he presented his gender advertisement slides. I think I also tried to clarify the neon-cocktail glass story.

I thought I could reformat the document and while I got the type and the margins organized I managed to lose your indentation and boldface. I did manage to figure out what I was doing to mess it up in the first place and how now to do that.

take care  
Sherri

December 27, 2008  
Sherri,

That’s exactly what I needed. It looks great now, and your additions are very helpful. I’ll just have to bold your and my names again, and then the text is ready. I will incorporate your changes into the draft I am

working on.

Things are moving along, even though distractions abound (my wife's sister's family is in town). Hope to send you more transcripts by the end of the day.

Yours, Dmitri

December 27, 2008  
Sherri,

Here is the next installment of the transcript. I have about one more hour to transcribe. You will see that I have converted the text to the "docx" format and used your edits. You can edit the new material, along the old one, as needed.

I realize I need to talk to you about Alvin Gouldner, his relationship with Erving, etc. He is an important figure from that era. You might want to insert your take on the man, or we can talk first and then I will transcribe our conversation (Part II).

I've got to run. Will be back in a couple of hours.

Thanks,  
Dmitri

December 28, 2008  
Dmitri

You must be walking on air!!!!

I got your phone message----thank you for calling. So now I am so excited too.

I am resending my wish list of questions with a few new ones, especially about Goffman's mother; I know you have a thousand questions too but anything you can find out about these early years before Goffman leaves Winnipeg for Toronto is so important, especially if you believe that the boy is the first draft of the man. When you get a chance to contact Frances Bay (as I know you will--and now you did!) these are some questions I hope she could answer

---when did Ann Averback come to Winnipeg; did she have a big family? Did her family live in Dauphin as well as Winnipeg; were Goffman's grandparents living and accessible when he was growing up?

1. did Max Goffman have a car? (I am curious as to how far up the status ladder the family went). The family, as best I can tell, sailed through the depression; they bought a house, Frances went to fancy dress balls, reported in the Winnipeg paper; Mrs. Goffman was involved with Haddasah (did I spell this right?) also reported in the paper.

2. Erving's boyhood friends in Dauphin and in Winnipeg. Was he a loner; did he have a buddy or two; did he hang out with a gang. Did he have any hobbies, such as...; what kind of trouble did he get into; what kinds of things earned him praise. Did he have a girl friend?

2.5 Did he have any interests in politics? (I have a newspaper clipping from 1937 which describes an incident at St. Johns Technical School (the very school Erving was going to and the very year---I think---that he started high school. The incident involves 15 Jewish students who boycotted the school in response to a teacher's antisemitic remarks in class. Unfortunately the paper does not give the names of the boys, but does suggest political activity on the part of Jewish youth in Winnipeg and the question is was Erving among them and if not how did he respond to this kind of political action.

3. Family reading practices----did they read a newspaper; Max, Anna, Frances, Erving----did they read books; can she remember titles or kinds, e.g. adventure, biography, fiction, etc.

3.5 Did Erving go to the movies as a boy; a lot? did he enjoy vaudeville; did he have any favorite vaudeville acts?

4. Max and Anne-----temperament; relationship (was his mother the more dominant figure in the family)

5. The relations between Max and Erving. Were they close; how did they express affection; did they fight over anything?

5.5. *The relations between Erving and his mother*; between Frances and her younger brother; how did his mother respond when he married a gentile

6. religious observances; were they observant; what kind of practices did observe; did they go to, belong to a temple? Did Erving have a bar mitzvah?

7. Was teasing a family practice? Did Max tease; did Erving tease; did the family use nicknames; what was Erving's nickname as a boy

good luck and be sure to call me as soon as you have spoken to HER!

Sherri

p.s. yes, I received two more parts of the interview and will attend to them tomorrow (Did you do a preliminary "yeah-ectomy" on them?)

December 28, 2008

Sherri,

I will go over your list and raise the questions with Fran.

Knowing that you are not fond of the yeahs and the likes, I edited those out. By the way, I see why "likes" are pests, but "yeahs" sound rather harmless to my ear. Anyhow, the jugged contour of the story (up to a point) has its charms.

I thought it should be "conversation analysis," you say "conversational analysis" – is this how the term was used in the past?

My brain is getting numb with listening and transcribing, so I am pressing on to get it over with and hope to finish your interview tonight.

Perhaps you can insert a paragraph on Harvey's death and its impact on the ethnomethodology scene. Not many know what happened.

I would like to have your take on Gouldner whom you knew rather well, I understand (just planting seeds). Perhaps someday you can reflect on your research interests and see if they may have a biographical connection.

Did Erving smoke?

I would like to contact Schegloff, Cicourel, Garfinkle and others familiar with Harvey's seminar and Goffman. Your interview, once it is ready, could offer an excuse to make contact and solicit comments/clarifications. I can do it myself, but the email message I sent a while ago to these folks remained unanswered. Would you feel comfortable emailing the guys? If not, I will do it myself. Maybe we can find other intermediaries.

All best,  
Dmitri

December 29, 2008

Dmitri---after the winter break ends I will try to contact Manny and Aaron. Was Jackie any help in contacting Marv Scott?

Sherri

December 29, 2008

Greetings, Sherri:

I am trying to remember what Jackie told me about Marv. I think she said that he'd taught at Hunter, but I am not sure if she knows his address or telephone number. I did call Hunter and asked the department secretary to forward my message to Marvin (he retired a while ago, and they wouldn't give me his address). If we find Marv's address, then we can send him your interview and see if he is willing to join the game.

Cheers,  
Dmitri

December 29, 2008

Dmitri---here is part 1 & 2---I hope

I will not chronicle my computer issues. I will try to finish up part 3 and 4 this evening.

my best  
Sherri

December 29, 2008

Greetings Sherri:

Your edits look fine. Now is the time for me to ask your permission to cite your interview and add it to the

Goffman archives. I would appreciate a word from you on that. Once I hear from you, I can start formatting the document for the web.

I am excited at the prospect of sharing your memories with the Goffman scholars. This is the most extensive and illuminating statement on Goffman's years at Berkeley in our collection – thank you, thank you!

With warm wishes,  
Dmitri

December 30, 2008

okay, Dmitri---this is the last part. Again, I tried to complete ideas that I felt were left hanging, removed repetition and irrelevances and rambling words that seemed to go nowhere. I removed most of the snide, gratuitous remarks.

please understand that you have my permission to further edit as you feel is necessary, to cite, to quote and to add this document to the Goffman archives. I will be interested to see how others respond. Hopefully they will be eager to add their insights and experiences as well.

However, I think your most important document in the archives will be your interview with Frances Bay.

Good luck  
Sherri

p.s. in reading over the whole interview I am impressed again with your skills and your insights. Great interview, Dmitri

December 30, 2008

Greetings, Sherri:

Your interview is posted on the web. Here is the link, [http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/cavan\\_08.html](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/cavan_08.html). You can edit it and make further changes as needed.

I think this is a wonderful document. It makes you hear the noise of time, it is suffused with emotions – it breathes. Thank you for a good word about my work. We both worked hard (I loved your inserts!), and I hope it shows.

Maybe you can add a sentence or two on how Harvey died, and at some point speak to me or write a memoir about Al Gouldner. I wonder, also, if you have heard anything on how Erving faced his death, how he lived in the last few months with the knowledge of impending death.

Would like to post on the web your *AJS* review of *Gender Advertisements*, as well as your chapter in the book on Berkeley women sociologists. Do you have them in digital form by any chance? If not, we should try to get a PDF file.

Thanks for everything,  
Dmitri

December 30, 2008

I cannot imagine that you do not know of this already but it seems to go over some of the territory we covered in our conversation. Psathas wrote a Goffmanesque piece a long time ago called "On Shortness in Everyday life" (hard to forget that title)

Sherri

**Psathas, G.**, 2008-07-31 "Why Goffman was Not an Ethnomethodologist" *Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, Sheraton Boston and the Boston Marriott Copley Place, Boston, MA Online <PDF>*. 2008-12-16 from [http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p237181\\_index.html](http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p237181_index.html)

Publication Type: Conference Paper/Unpublished Manuscript

Abstract: This paper examines Goffman and Garfinkel's relationship to determine in what way Goffman came, by some, to be considered an ethnomethodologist. Although he had conversation analysts, such as Sacks, Schegloff and Sudnow in his classes and read their work, he directly criticized it and did not consider it a model to follow.

Goffman developed his own approach in sociology as did Garfinkel and although they were familiar with each other and with the work that each was doing, Goffman rarely commented directly on such work. Some exceptions are cited and quoted, including both Goffman and Garfinkel, to show the extent of their acquaintance and familiarity.

My conclusion about the lack of intersection or overlap of their work is based on the analysis of their works and their writings about one another's approach.

December 30, 2008

Sherri,

Hope you got the phone message about my conversation with Frances.

Haven't seen the article, thanks for the heads-up. I have added it to the EGA.

I have gotten nice feedback on your interview.

Best,  
Dmitri

December 31, 2008

Dmitri, I did get your phone message and was so sorry to have missed you. First, congratulations on the Bay interview. Without even hearing any more than you left in your message I am confident that this document will recast much of our understandings about Goffman. It is very important for your project and you should be commended for securing it. Right On!!! (I had a hunch that there was much to explore with regards to Goffman's mother. Winkin takes his snapshots from a male perspective; not only is Goffman's father the focus of attention, but even his mother's maiden name is misspelled, thereby obscuring that whole line of inquiry.)

I too have secured a minor success. I found an antiquarian book seller on line who had a copy of a small local history of Dauphin, Manitoba. It has lots of ethnographic data from the 1920s and 1930s, the years of Goffman's boyhood. There is a lot of information about the school system extant at that time, the business district, the character of social life and how Dauphin survived the Depression. There is also contradictory information about the Goffman store, and no information on any synagogue; in fact, if there was a Jewish community in Dauphin you couldn't tell that from that book.

I am going to take good care of this book----I usually destroy books in the process of reading/devouring them---so you can send it as a gift to the relatives who maintain the archives.

I am at home (which is to say not traveling) but I am in and out on no regular schedule and even when I am in the house, I only have one functioning telephone (no mobile phone) so I frequently do not hear it ring. I do check my e-mail frequently so if you post me a note we can make a time when I can answer the phone.

If we do not connect before the New Years, let me wish you a happy and productive new year.

Sherri

December 31, 2008

Good morning, Sherri:

I am at home, can you call me any time when it is good for you. Or you can call me at <...>. Let me know what works for you.

Best, Dmitri

P.S. Just got a note from Gary Marx – called your interview “great.” Gary may contact you soon.

December 31, 2008

good morning, Dmitri

I will call you at 2 p.m. my time, if that works. I have a long distance service that shows a number in Pennsylvania or something, but that will be me

Sherri

December 31, 2008

Good, Sherri:

I will expect your call.

Regards, ds

December 31, 2008

Dmitri----

[http://revolutionaryviews.com/obama\\_poster.html](http://revolutionaryviews.com/obama_poster.html)

“Photomosaic” (which I mistakenly called photomontage) seems like a good metaphor for what you are doing. You are collecting bits and pieces of knowledge about Goffman stored in the memories of those who knew him at different times and places and in different relations and from these bits and pieces, composing an image of “Erving Goffman, the man”.

The only difference from the photomosaic example is you do not have the master image. Instead of reproducing an image you are creating one; it is like the emergent properties that Mead and Blumer used to talk about, inductive rather than deductive.

As I read about Winnipeg I think of Louis Wirth’s work on the ghetto and on the growth of urbanism as a way of life. I know Wirth was associated with the Chicago school. Do you know if he was a part of Goffman’s world when he was there?

so again, Happy New Year  
Sherri

Dec 31, 2008  
Sherri,

The metaphor is apt. It is a kind of mosaic or Lego that I work with, except that you can use the bits and pieces to assemble different figures that might seem to be unrelated to each other, yet expressing the human agency in it full stochastic flight.

Do not know about Wirth and Erving. E. Hughes would be the intermediary, I suspect.

Hope the New Year will bring more excitement to your life.

Dmitri

January 1, 2009  
Greetings, Sherri:

Hope the year has begun auspiciously for you. Just want to say hello and to let you know about a moving exchange I had with Esther Besbris, Erving’s cousin and a close friend of Anne Averbach and Frances Bay. We spoke for about two and a half hours. Lot’s of good lore to share with you. On January 25 the family assembles for Fran’s 90th birthday in LA and I am invited. I feel awkward, as this is supposed to be a family affair and I would feel like interloper, but Marly and Ether insist that I come. I probably should, if not for the actual event then on the eve of it, or right after to pay tribute to Fran.

Esther will try to contact a few people in Canada who knew Erving in early years.

All best,  
Dmitri

January 1, 2009



Well, I guess if you get your points recognized by the lecturer there is discussion; if not, not enough. I assume Rachel sent you a contact number for Arlene. It would be great for you to talk to Joan Emerson. I seem to remember that she was at Harvey's on at least one occasion. She did her dissertation on laughter in the hospital. She had a brilliant analysis of the gynecological exam titled "Nothing Unusual is Happening."

If this works for you I will call you at 2 p.m. Pacific time. I still have your number

January 1, 2009

Thank you for your new year's greeting, Dmitri. Year One of the Age of Obama, as I like to think of it.

It is a great complement for you, as the biographer, to be made an honorary member of the family. You must go of course, and I am envious. You will get to meet Goffman's sister, his extended clan (which says something in and of itself), stories will be told to you by those who know, pictures shared. Possibly Tom will be there and you would have a comfortable way to make contact with him. You can't beat face-to-face.

again, this is fabulous news and I can hardly wait to hear what Ester told you.

my best  
Sherri

January 1, 2009

Dmitri--

I was thinking about your good fortune and remembering all of the anthropological accounts where the field worker is made an honorary member of a tribe or a family or, in *Return to Laughter*, made an honorary member of the opposite sex. (In anthro fieldwork classes we had a joke, "What is the definition of an Inuit family? A father, a mother, children, grandparents and an anthropologist.")

Looking for something else I thought I would look for a copy of my dissertation, realizing it would have Erving's signature on it. Well, I didn't find the dissertation but I did find the box of old term papers that I thought I had discarded. It was full of carbon copies for the most part. There was one original paper. It was for Goffman.

It was the final exam that I had described to you.

how auspicious  
Sherri

January 1, 2009

Sherri,

The exam you mention is a find. Would you mind having it posted on the web? Even the old carbon copies can be digitized, I think. See what else might be there.

Also, do you have your chapter in the Berkeley women book in a digital file?

Best, Dmitri

January 1, 2008

I should have added William Foote Whyte, *Street Corner Society*, as a classic sociological example of participant observation where “Doc” played a role and his role was described.

Sherri

January 1, 2008

Greetings, Sherri:

I just received this nice vignetter from Rachel Kahn-Hut (see below). She offers her recollections that appear to differ from your in some respects – which is all for the better, as you know. Rachel mentions several people who might be contacted, and you probably know some of those. Let’s talk so I can give you a summary of my talk with Esther. You can call me or I can call you when it is convenient.

Thanks for the funny tidbit on the honorary membership. I am a late arrival to the ethnographic shores; much of its lore is unknown to me; I appreciate your brining me up to speed.

Will do all I can to arrange your and Jackie’s visit with Fran.

Yours, Dmitri

January 1, 2008

Sherri,

Let’s talk at 2 p.m. as you suggested.

Rachel does not know Joan’s address but she gave me an email for Arlene Daniels who might know how to reach Joan – talking of a snowballing sample! Do you know Barrie Thorne?

Talk to you soon.

Best,  
Dmitri

January 2, 2009

Hi Dmitri-----

Since I thought these papers were lost forever I will send them to you. You will see that they seem almost purposefully devoid of identifying information.

For example, one ten page (the customary assignment length), typed with no cross-outs so obviously intended to be handed in merely says “The Underlife of a Public Bar. S. Cavan, 4/26/62.” It addresses the underlife of the bar in terms of secondary rewards, or what might be called working the system. There is a big bracket on the side which most likely was made by me. It might have been intended as a seminar paper, but the copy is way to clean to just be a working copy for a verbal presentation.

The next one, a year later (5/29/63), is a 25 page carbon copy. From the number of the class, Soc. 290, it could have been a seminar paper. It is titled "The Public Drinking Place as a Work Setting" and seems to develop some of the ideas in the paper from a year before.

There are three or four fat papers on roles, role conflict, role debauchery, which could have been written for Goffman, but who knows. I will send you the exam and these two papers I have described, and that is enough. I will also send you a copy of Barbara Rosenblum's scathing review of Gender Advertisements (although I have not found my gentler review) I mentioned to you that Barbara was one of the women at the SWS presentation, and that she is now deceased.

I do not know Barrie Thorn. As you will soon discover, if you have not already, the woman's movement was not a unified sisterhood even in the beginning. There was a lot of pressure on women to join close ranks. This frequently involved the ritual denunciation of men (cf Andrea Dworkin) and for women sociologists, a purposeful focus on women's issues in your work. Neither one of these interested me. The fact that SWS held the gender presentation in my house was due only to the fact that I knew Goffman and I had a big house.

talk to you soon  
Sherri

January 2, 2009  
Harvey's Death:

Harvey died about ten years after I left Berkeley. David Matza called me to tell me the sad news soon after it happened. He said Harvey was in Southern California (I surmised around Laguna Beach where he was living while he was teaching at Irvine.) Harvey was the only person in his car. It was a head on collision. Matza may have said the collision was with a truck, or maybe he thought that was what happened. A few years later David Sudnow told me that Harvey was not killed immediately but was taken to the hospital and put on life support. Sudnow, Schegloff and Garfinkel were at the hospital. These were excruciating days, three or four days, maybe five. Harvey was brain dead and the decision had to be made to take him off life support. It must have been particularly difficult for Sudnow whose ethnographic doctoral dissertation focused on the social organization of death and dying, on how these kinds of decisions were socially constructed in the hospital. Now, instead of being the observer he was a participant. There is a vagueness to my memory here; the conversations were very emotional; I remember the emotion more than the facts. David spoke as though the decision was one that had to be made by himself, by Manny and by Harold. But certainly there must have been relatives there who were there and they had this responsibility. David (Sudnow) also told me that they had found Harvey's personal papers on his desk, in a neat pile, with his insurance policy on the top. David didn't say what would have come next in the conversation. Neither did I. I don't think Sudnow and I ever talked about Harvey's death again.

(that was heavy.....)

Three little ethnographic essays written for the American Sociological Association 1989 meetings in San Francisco

what ever happened to the Haight Ashbury  
<http://www.asanet.org/footnotes/1989/ASA.02.1989.pdf>

tenderloin mosaic

<http://www.asanet.org/footnotes/1989/ASA.03.1989.pdf>

art, food and politics in the city by the bay

<http://www.asanet.org/footnotes/1989/ASA.06.1989.pdf>

### Biography

**Marvin B. Scott** received his Ph.D. in 1966 at the University of California, Berkeley, where he was a founding member of the ethnomethodology movement. Trained as an actor, psychoanalyst, and family therapist, he uses these perspectives to teach courses in interpersonal behavior, mental health, and family.

(from the hunter college web site)

I enjoyed our continuing conversation

Sherri

January 2, 2009

Thank you, Sherri:

I added your sad note on Harvey's death to your interview. Gary Marx offered a slightly different account, mentioning the seizure that Harvey experienced while driving...

Thanks for the excerpt from the Hunter College web site. Hope we can track Marvin. Three easy pieces from the Footnotes are posted in your section of the Intercyberlibrary.

Best,  
Dmitri

January 2, 2009

Dmitri---let me just change the end of my note on Harvey's death to read... I don't think Sudnow and I ever talked directly about Harvey's death again. But it remained as a marker in our conversations, "Before Harvey's death" [and] "after Harvey died"

I would be interested in seeing Gary's account. Of course, the most intimate account would be Manny's, if he would give it. Maybe he has written of it, but perhaps not in any detail.

my best  
Sherri

January 2, 2009

It's done, Sherri:

Check it out. I have been planting seeds with Gary regarding an interview or a memoir. He might well come to that. If so, I will query him on Harvey's death. Once he contacts you, you might want to ask him directly.

Regards, Dmitri

January 3, 2009  
 Hey David (and Dmitri)

I must have been thinking of *Becoming Deviant*, but *Delinquency and Drift* was significant in it's own right.

Wilinsky was on the committee. The study you were asking about in my exams was Albert Cohen, *Delinquent Boys*. (How can we remember this stuff; what are the neural pathways that get us from a question asked in 2009 and an answer retrieved from 1965?)

You may have told me what you were trying to do; you may have told me two or three times, but I was so devastated that it never sunk in. Nonetheless, David, somehow we have remained friends for a long time and we have shared a lot of experiences since then. I know we will continue, although I think our rate of new experiences has slowed down considerably.

Thanks for making the corrections.

Maybe the Age of Obama will bring an opening of our hearts and a new way of being

love  
 Sherri

January 4, 2009

Dmitri--I was touched by the exchange with Matza, that he made an extra effort to get a link that worked, and that he was willing to read the piece and comment. We often have e-mail conversations about what we are reading and his usual reading fare is heady political theory. But then in truth we like each other.

I spent a little time looking at the newspaper archive.com while playing scrabble with my grandson (a mistake, he won) I thought I would come across the various *NYT* references you found and maybe something else. I did not find the *NY Times* (apparently it is not one of the papers they archive. Just lucky that that had such a complete set of the Winnipeg Free Press.) I did find a variety of other things from small newspapers; most of them consisted of references to some concept or book by Goffman, and often the same article was reprinted in a variety of different places. I made copies of two of them but think I will go back and look some more. One article referenced a slide show presentation Goffman made at Gettysburg College. It was interesting in that it juxtaposed the Free Speech Movement at Berkeley with his eight books, giving the impression that Goffman the FSM were joined in some positive fashion. It was just curious. The second was more disturbing. From the *Santa Fe Times*, it is a review of a book about sociology and business. The reviewer mentions Goffman and presentation of self, and then goes on to an aside claiming that his (the reviewer's) linguistic teacher at Berkeley came across Goffman rifling his (the linguistic prof's) papers. Someplace else in the archives I read an account of Goffman purposefully spilling a glass of water on someone. It bothers me; I don't think it is true, or at least I find it hard to believe. While Goffman had no hesitancy to bend, break, besmirch rules of social interaction, the idea that he would break the law (breaking and entering, assault) just doesn't ring true. Besides actually messing with someone's stuff or physical self is grounds in a lot of circles for physical retribution.

A couple of other articles which I will go back to retrieve have do with different conferences on mental illness that Goffman attended. These meeting seemed advocatorial (is this a word? pertaining to advocacy) It made me think that there is another Goffman side, one that is not so easily seen by students or people who have short exchanges with him, a professional world outside associations like the ASA and such. Perhaps he was political

in a way that is not so obvious. I also think he served on some editorial boards for journals. All of this needs to be documented. You might even think about another section in the archives for this.

Two more possible contacts: Goffman often mentioned Ervin-Tripps work and I think they may have been friends at Berkeley. Skolnick was in the cohort of new professors that included Goffman.

*SUSAN M. ERVIN-TRIPP*. Professor of Psychology, Emerita Psychology Department, 3210 Tolman Hall, University of California, Berkeley CA 94720-16

In the fall of 1996, Professor *Jerome Skolnick* became Co-Director of the Center. *Skolnick*, the leading American scholar on policing, came to NYU after more ...

[www.law.nyu.edu/centers/crimejustice/index.htm](http://www.law.nyu.edu/centers/crimejustice/index.htm) - 62k

ciao for now  
Sherri

January 4, 2009  
Greetings, Sherri:

I just got off the phone with the 96 year old mother of Marly Zaslov who shared with me bits and pieces of family lore, received mostly second-hand, yet valuable. Will talk to Marly Zaslov tonight.

The articles you found are familiar to me. A few days back I posted them, along with a bunch of other news accounts, on the web in the "Goffman in the News." Check out this section in the EGA archives, <http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/index.html>. You will see that I chose to reproduce the entire page, which means that the reader needs to magnify the relevant article.

You will not find the *NYT* articles on the Newspaperarchie.com unless they were reprinted locally. But you can access most of the articles citing Erving directly on the *NYT* web site (some require payment for access). I have compiled a list of some 60 relevant articles, along with the URLS, published in *NYT* between 1961-2008. Here is the link to this post: [http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/news/nyt\\_goffman.pdf](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/news/nyt_goffman.pdf). I think this is a goldmine. One can make an interesting study of how Goffman's ideas penetrated popular culture.

Yes, I also found the reference to Goffman rifling through his colleagues' belonging startling. Cannot say I am completely surprised, but the narrative arch of this story is too smooth; it might reflect some heavy editing. Still, it is quite a tidbit. Wish we could track its source.

I am about to post Renée Fox's interview, have finished transcribing the interview with Habenstein, and am halfway through the Gusfield interview. Next in line are interviews with Wiseman and Heilman, then Frances and Esther, assuming my brain still functions.

Will try to track the possible new contacts. One more person I am looking for is Egon Bittner. He retired from Brandeis, but contact info is listed there.

All best,  
Dmitri

January 6, 2009

I remember when you first raised the question of the Stark interview and I insisted that if Rodney did not want to retract what he said about <...> after you gave him the opportunity, then those were his words and he chose to stand by them.

He describes <...> as a <...> but I have certainly heard academics call one another much worse.

The next exchange is probably more cutting as it goes to <...>'s stature of a student of Goffman and as a qualitative researcher. You ask for clarification and Stark's comeback is rather weak "I kind of concluded..." But again, these are Rodney's words and he had the opportunity to retract them.

For example, I think he thought that <...> wasn't nearly good enough; he didn't want him going around claiming that he was trained by Erving Goffman.

<...>

well I can see how <...> might be sensitive to such a remark, but it is something he needs to bring up with Rodney; you are just the messenger.

I am sure Marv Scott will want to contest my remarks about "Revolt of the Students" once he reads them, but I do not see that this has anything to do with your work; you asked the question, I was the one who answered it. Same with Stark.

Your letter to Basilio was excellent, but it is too bad that you have to waste time with such matters when you could be conversing and transcribing and doing something that is productive and not just protecting your back. However, you must admit, things have gotten interesting.

I am going to read the Fox conversation; I am not going to call it an interview because, while it has certain things in common an interview, the respondent of an interview is not usually given the opportunity to reread and repair, add and subtract what they said. What you are doing is much more collaborative

Sherri

p.s here is the Ervin-Tripp e-mail Susan Ervin-Tripp <...>

"Kafka did not fundamentally believe in progress but only the same things recurring forever. Brecht believed that new things must arise against all odds." E. Fischer, *The Necessity of Art*.

January 6, 2009

Thank you, Sherri:

Your note is reassuring.

One thing I believe might help us to fend off future complaints is to institutionalize the EGA advisory board. Would appreciate your input on that and possible candidates. Of people who took great interest in the project and whom we could approach are Gary Marx, Renée Fox, Ruth Horowitz, Jackie Wiseman, Norm Denzin, Kathy Charmaz, Carol Gardner, Ira Cohen, and, well – John Lofland (Maybe we can "pull an Obama" on him). I am also thinking of someone from the Goffman family (Esther Besbris, Marly Zaslov).

Any thoughts?

There are more things to talk about but I am gearing up for an interview with Kurt Lang that starts in a minute, so will have to sign off.

P.S. Thanks for the email address. After you are done with Renee's interview, check Victor Lidz's take on it in the Comments' section. [Below is my exchange with Lofland].

Thanks.

Hello Dimitri Shalin:

I finally got around to reading the interviews on Goffman you have posted on your web site and I write now to convey my disappointment with the quality of some of the research material I find there.

What you are doing on your web site has led me to change my mind about not writing any more about Goffman. The amount of false and irrelevant and gratuitously insulting material you publish forces me to make an at least modest effort to try to set the record straight.

I attach a pdf file of what I have drafted and not yet make public. I am sending it to you in advance of publication with the request that you suggest any changes you would like to see. I will take all your suggestions for changes very seriously in advance of publication and, if you like, enter into a conversation with you about alternative courses of action.

On a different but related topic, I would appreciate you sending me a copy of the request for approval of your Goffman research you made to your UNLV Office for the Protection of Research Subjects and, also, a copy of the approval of your project you received from that office (from Brenda Durosinmi, I would guess).

Many, many thanks to your attention to these two requests.

Cordially

John Lofland

--

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<http://www.davishistoryresearch.org/>, <http://www.oldnorthdavishistory.org/>

January 7, 2009  
 Sherri,

Here is my reply to Lofland.

Yours, Dimitri



Greetings John:

It has been one of those exceptionally busy days that played havoc with my plans and threatened to thwart my writing commitments. It is 10 p.m. now, and I am finally ready to join issues with you. Let me start with the UNLV Office for the Protection of Human Subjects (OPHS) and the ethical issues raised in your communication. After that, I will give you my feedback on your memoir as you requested.

The UNLV Center for Democratic Culture (CDC) that I direct has a Board of Directors that oversees all center's projects. It includes prominent social scientists, judges, lawyers and members of Southern Nevada community. When we started the International Biography Initiatives (IBI), the CDC board reviewed the project and offered its approval. I submitted a request to the ORHS to review some of the related projects and received its approval. Since much of the initial interviewing happened to be in Russian and most of the postings were in a foreign language, the extensive review process occurred in the Russian Academy of Science rather than in the US. The IBI has a formal structure that includes co-directorship, editorial board, and a group of consultants, <http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/programs/bios.html>.

The IBI initiatives encompass several projects, including archives of prominent Russian and American scholars. Examples are the Yuri Levada Archives, <http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/yla/index.html>, and the Erving Goffman Archives, <http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/index.html>.

When the EGA was proposed, the project went through several review stages. After the CDC board gave its approval, I have consulted with SI community members regarding the ethical safeguards that must be built into the project. An informal advisory board was formed in the process that included Ruth Horowitz, Gary Marx, Peter Manning, and a few other people. The consensus that emerged in the course of discussion was that much of the materials gathered in the EGA were already published elsewhere and that contributors offering new memoirs and interviews did not constitute "human subjects" under the OPRS guidelines. The authors were distinguished members of the sociological community, officers in various professional societies, who had the right to express their opinions and publish their views. However, there was a concern that when we put their recollections together on the EGA site, their collective views might acquire a different status.

About a year and a half ago I wrote a sabbatical proposal outlining the project where I described the safeguard procedures covering the new memoirs – a formal inquiry asking the would-contributors to review the project, letters of consent for web posting the materials, the author's right to withdraw and revise their memoirs at any time, the review process involving the EGA advisory board. The UNLV Sabbatical Leave Committee reviewed my proposal and approved the project.

I have sought an input from the Erving Goffman's family who examined the EGA postings. Several family members liked the idea of archiving Goffman's materials and provided documents that will be digitized and posted in the "Documents and Papers" section. In some cases Erving's relatives wrote their own memoirs and gave interviews waiting to be transcribed.

I should add that the ASA main office had a chance to review the EGA materials and found them valuable enough to request my permission to deposit the materials in the permanent ASA archives as a core of the planned ASA history project

After I received your complaint, I have contacted the OPRS office and asked it to review the memoirs and interviews posted on the EGA site with an eye to making sure that it is in compliance with the existing regulations. I expect the review process to be completed soon and will inform you about the outcome. Meanwhile Sherri Cavan, who co-directs the EGA project with me, and I took steps to strengthen the oversight of the materials posted in the EGA. We have moved to institutionalize the EGA advisory board and with that

goal in mind contacted several prominent scholars in our field, asking them to join the advisory board. About half of the people we have contacted so far already responded and agreed to serve on the board and oversee the EGA initiatives. Once the board is formed, it will review the full range of EGA activities and examine the EGA postings to make sure they meet the standards of our discipline. I will inform you about the EGA advisory board composition once the process is completed.

As you know, John, I have made several attempts to solicit your input at the early stages of the EGA. My initial inquiry brought back a reply where you expressed your doubt about the project's capacity to generate new insights. All of my subsequent inquiries to you – about four in total – remained unanswered. I suspect you find my advances oversolicitous, yet I hope you do not confuse my soft touch with flabbiness. I will go an extra mile to learn from my opponents and stand corrected and mend my ways if necessary. But I will not shrink from taking a stance in defense of the right cause.

Now I move to your memoir. I want to make it clear what I think about your scholarship, including your memoir – I find both to be outstanding. Your 1984 article immediately caught my eye. I see it as a key resource for anyone studying Goffman's scholarship and biography. This is why I sought your council on the EGA. The memoir you have sent me confirms my initial impression – it is clearheaded, judicious, steeped in finely observed and well articulated details. Whatever our stylistic-affective differences, they cannot overshadow this fact.

The irony of it all is that your memoir is exactly the kind of document I hoped to collect for the EGA. Sherri and I will raise the question with the EGA advisory board about the wisdom of redacting the passages from the memoirs that you disapprove, and if the board decides that this is a proper course of action, such passages will be deleted, even if the author pulls off the censored interview as a result. But would you really want this to happen, even with the accounts that are clearly biased? Imagine us informing EGA users that a particular interview is no longer available because a particular member of the SI community found it objectionable. This is certain to raise more questions than will be settled.

There is a better way, it seems to me, and it is to let our community weigh on the discussion, offer alternative interpretations, and let the truth or whatever passes for it in our community emerge on the intersection of conflicting perspectives. You may think I give too much rope to the respondents. I beg to differ. Those who try to hang someone else with the rope I give them may find themselves hanging in the eyes of the community. The process of collective inquiry, as Charles Peirce taught us, is self-correcting. It works better than the method of authority that designates some individual or expert to determine where the truth lies, who has the right to express an opinion and who should be censured.

A few illustrations.

Eviatar Zerubavel depicts Goffman in his interview as a capricious, prickly mentor who nearly ruined his career. Carol Gardner posts a memoir that shows the world of difference that Erving made in her professional life. Renée Fox, chair of the sociology department who knows all the players, offers a nuanced account that places things in yet another perspective. Now, Victor Lidz has just posted his comment that sheds more light on the situation and provides missing details. None of these accounts is dispositive; taken together they bring us closer to the truth pragmatically understood.

Sherri Cavan and a few other memoirists suggest that Goffman did not like to keep office hours at Berkeley, making students drive to his house for an appointment. Your memoir adds a new wrinkle: for a while there were no offices at Berkeley and Goffman had to share the space with other faculty members, hence meeting students at his home might have given him a chance to do better mentoring.

You mention the class where Goffman played off-the-wall music and asked students to analyze the event. I have an exam written by a student who attended this class. Separately, these takes on Goffman's ways are incomplete, even misleading; together they reconstruct the situation and give a better idea of Goffman's teaching methods.

The EGA is more than a place of gathering for Goffman accolades and singing praise to the master (although I do consider myself a Goffman junkie). Nor is it focused exclusively on biographical data. I see it as an attempt to examine in a systematic fashion how real time events come to language; how the situation presents itself to different participants; how the memory works within a particular cultural space. Ethnographers have to work with hearsay, multiply perspectives, and cross-reference conflicting verbal accounts. Errors are productive; they constitute valuable data. The emergent facts are inseparable from the editorial conventions of the era – there is no such thing as an unedited social reality. The latter must be enselved, emplotted and enframed in order to become objective and meaningful. The master narrative is always heavily edited, and it invites what I call “reverse editing” designed to salvage from oblivion the particulars that never got to be universalized, the enselvements that were left out and that suggest alternative possibilities of narrative construction and paradigmatic renderings.

Contrary to the notion that social facts are things, is the precept that things are social facts endlessly constructed and reconstructed by the participants (Durkheim acknowledged that much when he moved away from *The Rules of Sociological Methods* and toward *Elementary Forms of Religious Life*). The goal of pragmatist hermeneutics, as I understand it, is not a skeptical deconstruction aimed at proving that reality is fiction, but the ongoing pragmatic reconstruction that salvages the possibilities of being.

You end your memoir with what seems like a non sequitur to me. You say that many accounts posted in the EGA are little more than gossip and hearsay. Such biased accounts would never meet the rules of evidence accepted in the court of law, and consequently, they should have never been made public. Your own memories, you readily acknowledge, are also biased and selective, and then – you ask my feedback on your memoir before it is published. Perhaps I misconstrue your argument but that is what you appear to be doing.

Why should you hold others to the higher standards supposedly held in the court of law – I hasten to add that lawyers routinely disagree on what counts as facts and how they ought to be constructed – and reserve for yourself the right to publish admittedly biased recollections? I did take note of the judicious way in which you cite Goffman – “this is just a paraphrase,” “my memories are hazy on that,” etc. (forgive me for paraphrasing rather than citing you because of the late hour). I appreciate your hermeneutical honesty, your willingness to look for second opinion, but that does not exempt your memoir from the same strictures you apply to other materials posted on the EGA site.

John, I do not dredge this stuff to score points and win the argument, although it is hard to disentangle the impulses driving my narrative. I realize, also, that you are one of the Goffman's best-known students while I am a Jonny-come late (although the Russian roots I share with Goffman might give me a perspective of my own). The point I want to make is that what unite us – the fascination with Erving's quirky brilliance, the desire to keep the flame alive – is more important than our differences. Indeed, I would have invited you to join the EGA advisory board if I didn't think you might find such an offer insulting.

Be this as it may, I urge you to make your memoirs public. I also want to ask your permission to cite your reminiscences in my work. Hope someday to have your memoir added to the Erving Goffman Archives – in whole, in excerpts, or just as a reference. The SI community is fortunate that you have put together your memories. If the EGA has moved you to do so, as you have indicated to me, then this alone justifies its existence.

It is five minutes before 2 p.m. I feel brain-dead. Please forgive typos and other glitches.

With good wishes,  
Dmitri

Greetings, John:

I thought I would finish tonight my feedback on your superb memoir and respond to your query regarding the UNLV Research with human subjects permit, but it looks like I will not be able to complete my work until tomorrow. Please bear with me and you will have my detailed reply soon. I am on sabbatical leave this year, don't go to the office, so some of the relevant documents are not at my disposal. I hope that my forthcoming communication will help straighten things up, and that we shall find the way to make amends.

All best,  
Dmitri

Dimitri Shalin,

Thanks for your rapid response. I did not notice the UNLV Office for the Protection of Human Subjects application and its approval form. Did I miss those? If so, I am sorry. Please send them again, or give me a url where I can find them.

January 7, 2008  
Great letter, Dmitri!

“Kafka did not fundamentally believe in progress but only the same things recurring forever. Brecht believed that new things must arise against all odds.” E. Fischer, *The Necessity of Art*.

January 7, 2009  
Greetings, Sherri:

Thanks for the feedback. Just got off the phone with Saul Mendlowitz. He shared great lore and offered interesting interpretations of Erv and people around him.

I have heard from several people whom we invited to join the ad board – Fox, Horowitz, Manning, and Scheff. So far, everybody is on board. Have not heard from Jackie, Gary and Carol yet. If you speak to Jackie, please alert her to the invitation.

Below is the message from Peter Manning regarding your interview (he told me I could share it with you). He also asked for your email address, so he should be writing to you directly.

All best,  
Dmitri

<...>

I really enjoyed the interview because it “sounded” like Sherri-witty and insightful and honest. By the way,

Sherri's mention of Donald Ball is important. He was a genius; witty; clever; a first rate sociologist.....student of Ralph Turner at UCLA..... more or less committed suicide by traffic accident I think. He was until his death my closest friend (he asked me to teach at U of Victoria BC where I taught in the summer of 1968).

Happy New Year  
Peter

January 7, 2009

Dmitri, when you get a chance would you make some small corrections on my document.

When you did the transcription you transcribed; David (as in Sudnow) as Dave I don't think I have ever referred to Sudnow as Dave. I thought I had caught them all in the editing, but looking over it again, I missed some. Also, this line "The last time I saw David Sudnow, it was about a year ago" should read "The last time I saw David Sudnow was about a year before he died."

Finally, the title of the third footnotes essay is just "Art, Food and Politics in the City by the Bay".

thanks  
Sherri

January 7, 2009

It's done, Sherri.

Are you home? If so, maybe we can have a quick chat.

Best,  
Dmitri

January 7, 2008

Sherri,

Here is Aaron's email address I have (not sure if it current, though): <...>

Best,  
Dmitri

January 7, 2009

while we were chatting, this reply came from Becker.

Dear Sherri,

Thanks for your message. Long time.

To tell the truth, but briefly (because I don't want to start up about this again), I'm not in sympathy with Shalin's project (or with Scheff's either, for that matter). Shalin seems to me--maybe I'm wrong but I looked at his interview with Rod Stark recently and it confirmed this impression--to be looking for "dirt" about Erving.

God knows enough people have stories about Erving acting badly, and it's true that he often did. I'm not interested in protecting his reputation.

But two things make me say no to this enterprise. The first is simple and straightforward. I'm friends with Erving's second wife and with his daughter from that marriage and, as a friend (I don't claim any great moral or ethical thing here), I'm not interested in having material like that around to embarrass or distress either of them. I don't know what Erving would have wanted done but I suppose that if he left any instructions, they are ones that Gillian is carrying out by not answering inquiries from people.

The second thing is arguable (though I don't want to argue it). I don't think much of the idea of "explaining" or "understanding" people's work by referring to the details of their personality or personal life. I understand that others think this is an important and worthwhile thing to do. So, I don't try to prevent them from doing it (if I thought I knew how to do that I might want to do it but there's no practical way), I don't help them do it. Simple as that. In line with that thought, I have over the years, for a very long time, thrown away my "papers," that is, drafts of things I've published, correspondence (including correspondence with Erving), etc., etc. I have, so as to facilitate the work of people who might be interested in the data I used in earlier studies, placed a lot of interviews and fieldnotes in the Special Collections of the Northwestern University Library, where they will become available to scholars fifty years after I die. Other than that, I tell stories to people who want to interview me about the past, and I use a lot of autobiographical material in what I write.

I think this will let you see that it would be contradictory to help the Shalin thing in any way, such as serving on the advisory board. Sorry to be uncooperative, but I've gotten to an age where I do what I think is best.

Hope things are going well for you. I suppose you must have retired by now and I hope you're enjoying that situation as much as I do. We take advantage of the freed-up time to spend three months or so a year in Paris, and I do a lot of writing and all that. The Art Institute is still around the corner from me and I drop in occasionally, although like all ex-students I think that the time that I was there was The Golden Age and ever since it's been downhill.

Best,  
Howie

January 7, 2009

Dear Howie---thanks for getting back to me. I agree that digging dirt is a dead end, and I do not think this is what Shalin has in mind. It certainly is not what I have in mind. But I do believe that understanding the social context of ideas---the biography of the thinker, his social, historical and cultural milieu---has a value in and of itself. While it is true that some may want to link some particular event to some particular idea or writing, my objectives are much more limited: an ethnographic account of the life of a particular, influential thinker---who also happened to be my teacher.

Please do not take the Stark document as representing the body of recollections. In fact we have had a lot of discussions as to what to do about it; while Shalin has asked Rodney if he wanted to edit and redact what he had presented, he declined. The Stark document is what has led us to seek an advisory board to help decide what to do in such cases.

Yes, I have been retired for quite a while now. I started sculpting about ten or fifteen years before I retired and now that is mainly what I do, with great passion. I've exhibited in a number of local and national shows and sold a few pieces, but not enough to keep them from filling my garage. I've attached a picture of one, "The Delicate Balance of Heterosexuality." Happily, it sold.

Anyway, please be assured that the objective of the Archive is not to gather dirt or achieve any kind of expose. And of course, I respect your position.

my best  
Sherri

January 7, 2009  
Thanks, Sherri:

Nice letters. You didn't seem to provide Howe with the web link to the EGA site. I think he might want to see where we are at this point. I would provide a direct link to the EGA page, which has more relevant materials than the Intercyberlibrary site, which has grown too heavy for its own good. Here is the link, <http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/index.html>.

It might be a good idea to offer a sample of interviews and memoirs as well, along with the links attached. Here is one possible sample:

Carol Gardner, [http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/gardner\\_08.html](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/gardner_08.html)  
John Irwin, [http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/irwin\\_08.html](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/irwin_08.html)  
Eviatar Zerubavel, [http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/zerubavel\\_08.html](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/zerubavel_08.html)  
Renee Fox, [http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/fox\\_08.html](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/fox_08.html)  
Charles Glock, [http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/glock\\_08.html](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/glock_08.html)  
Sherri Cavan, [http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/cavan\\_08.html](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/cavan_08.html)

Things are shaping nicely. Will give a summary of my talk with Saul Mendlowitz.

Regards,  
Dmitri

January 7, 2009  
Sherri,

I understand Howe's position. No hard feelings on my part. It is unfortunate, though, if Rod's interview will be seen as representative of our goals and the general tenor of the EGA materials. But then, there is enough stuff there, including your own interview, that is unflattering to Erving without being gratuitous.

Interesting that he looked up the interview. It was posted on November 25, 2008, months since our last communication. He must be following the EGA postings, which would not surprise me. Or else, someone ratted on us, using Rod's statement as a goad. I wouldn't be surprised if that someone is trying to stir up trouble.

Thanks for trying. Now we know. My suspicions proved correct.

Regards,  
Dmitri

P.S. Liked the photo – is there more?

January 7, 2009

Sherri,

The family reunion albums have arrived. I think you will love this stuff. Wish we could reproduce the materials on our site. I will ask the machers,

Best,  
Dmitri

January 7, 2009

Dmitri---I am glad we contacted Howie. I am surprised that he does not acknowledge the legitimacy of classic culture/personality theory which underlies any attempt to link a thinker, or an artist, or a politician, or Joe the Plumber to their historic moment in time and space. I believe culture/personality theory began in Chicago, but I may be wrong about that part. Whatever. It did give us an opportunity to address his doubts.

Do you think that <...> contacted Becker to complain?

Sherri

January 7, 2009

Sheri,

<...>

As for Howe, his argument doesn't convince me. Linking ideas to their social origins is a standard tack in social science. Also, he might be ambivalent about the negative views concerning his close friend, for these opinions tangentially implicate Howe's own judgment. Being a family confidant may add to his discomfort. Note, though, that Becker is no <...>. He is not going to enmesh himself into a brawl and make a spectacle in the process.

Yours, Dmitri

P.S. Hope we can reproduce the photos from the Averbuch's album.

January 9, 2009

Sherri,

It was good talking to you, as ever. We need one more voice to reach the decision that will salvage Rodney's interview. Hope you can talk to Jackie.

Below are the links to my ASA paper on Goffman's bio and the interaction order and an article on pragmatist hermeneutics and biocritique that sets up the EGA project.

Be well,  
Dmitri



<http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/bios.html>  
<http://www.asanet.org/galleries/default-file/Sept07STFeature.pdf>

January 10, 2009

Dmitri---this is a very positive letter to John; I hope he appreciates it. We (collectively) really do have to decide on a policy and then be brave. Meanwhile, guess where the following comes from:

And another story is about <...> [who] was from Delaware. He got his undergraduate degree, went out to Berkeley – very intense, middle class, judgmental guy... He goes there and Goffman says: “You want to talk to me? Come on to my house.” So he comes out to the house – Berkeley Hills, or wherever it is. He comes to the house, knocks on the door – nothing happens. He knocks on the door – again nothing happens. He was waiting, looking at the windows. He knocks again. Suddenly Goffman from upstairs, “Who is it? What do you want?” The point is that <...> had to persist to get Goffman’s attention, and he finally did. “Yes, I am here to talk with you, as you told me.” Goffman: “OK, I’ll let you in.” Then he says: “What is this that you are doing, anyway? Why did you come here?” Meanwhile, <...> was there like for a year. Anyway, your perception is quite interesting,

ciao for now  
 Sherri

January 10. 2009  
 Hello --

I thought you might be interested in this comment by Freud’s granddaughter. The original is in the Toronto Star’s archives, Judy Gerstel’s column, November 14, 2003, [[https://cdclv.unlv.edu/ega/news/sfreud\\_03.html](https://cdclv.unlv.edu/ega/news/sfreud_03.html)].

Eli Bay

January 10, 2009  
 [Dear] Eli Bay

Thanks for forwarding the article; it is certainly one that I have not seen. I am not sure why Dmitri’s link didn't work.

When I went to open my e-mail account and saw a message from “Eli Bay” I had to catch my breath as I have been immersed in reading about Dauphin in the 1920s and 1930s and indeed had just come across this quote from Adam Little, From Dogtown to Dauphin, p.173

Three Bay brothers---Eli, Aaron and Abraham, brothers sold out to Eli who established the Eli Bay Company Ltd, “a name associated with men’s styles for the next sixty years.”

Dmitri has told me what a pleasure it has been to work with the family. I hope it will be a productive, ongoing association.

my best  
 Sherri

Jan 10, 2009  
Hi Sherri,

Indeed, there is more stuff subject to redaction <...>. Yes, I would hate to tinker with <...> reminiscences. It is time to dust off my taxonomy of hearsay-anecdote-encounter-transaction, etc. Perhaps it will help us sort out the types of testimony we are dealing with and place the right disclaimers to the site.

Gary Marx joined our board, sent me this note on the issue of the date:

My quick response is – fine but I think if you interviewed Stark with the understanding that what he said would be posted then you should inform him of the decision to delete references to <...> and implicitly give him the option to say “ok, but then I don’t want it posted.” In doing this I would not directly offer <...>’s protest as the reason but would treat it as a matter of policy. I recall my ambivalence in seeing that section of his interview and it brought back some memories of my interaction with Rod over 5 or 6 years in Berkeley.

In the future perhaps we need some waffling written language disclaimer to permit those who agree to be interviewed to be edited such that the public posting is consistent with the general standards and expectations of a university community – keeping vague just what that is. But it would surely include gratuitously uncivil single-party observations that do not centrally drive an argument relevant to the topic at hand. I appreciated the careful Talmudic reflections in your response to John. If appropriate, certainly communicate this to the other board members, colleagues in long and of good standing!

Best, Gary

I had a nice chat with Jackie earlier today about Lofland and beyond which she let me record as a kind of a second part of our conversation. She raised an interesting question: “What would Goffman do?” under the circumstances. Her recollection is that Goffman told the class that we should not leave the footprints in the snow – let the field we observe stay undisturbed. Whether it can or even should be our goal is problematic, but that is one more perspective we can bring to bear on the problem. By the way, Jackie has notes of Erving’s lectures someplace. Would be great to reconstruct those.

Glad to see you are in touch with Eli. Marly gave me his email and phone number, but I didn’t have time to make contact. I called Eli earlier today and left a message on his answering machine.

Regards,  
Dmitri

January 12, 2009  
Dear Dmitri---

I am going to have to stop reading my e-mail first thing in the morning. <...>

Most disturbing in your e-mail was the suggestion that <...> did not feel this site was “Goffman friendly”. I certainly didn’t ask whether this site was going to be friendly or not when I agreed to join forces with you. I thought it would be what it would be and it would be open-source, as a collection of conversations the site would be open to anyone who wanted to use them, and then such readers/researcher would make a judgment of whether the site or individual entries in it were friendly or not, and whoever wanted to publish rejoinders to what was published would do so also. Actually, I think Wikipedia is a good example of this kind of model; it is

constantly being revised by users and at the same time, it maintains a history of the revisions; along with other things that it does that I admire.

Erving Goffman was my major advisor at Berkeley. He was involved with every stage of my work toward a Ph.D., from my language exam to the defense of my thesis.

In the course of this relationship he did things which were very painful to me, especially his refusal to help me find a job, the tiny, little note that he sent as a letter of recommendation when I did find a job, and afterward, his willingness to leave me abandoned in Berkeley, at night, with injuries, with a totaled car. Despite all of this he was one of the most influential people in this history of my own ideas, he was an intellectual of merit and respect and I was honored to have been his student. I am envious of the warm student relationship Gardner had with Goffman (as is Wiseman) but I don't think expressing the problems I had in my relationship with him make me "Goffman-unfriendly".

For obvious reasons I have addressed this note to you directly, rather than to the board. I will send something to the board as a whole eventually, after I have had a good walk and a think.

ciao for now  
Sherri

January 12, 2009  
Greetings

Dmitri's e-mail exposes some interesting conundrums in this project.

I think the first thing that has to be decided is if the Goffman Archives is an ethnography in the classic sense or if it is an open-source data base in a more recent sense.

If it is a classic ethnography, then the rules of confidentiality would be applicable. We would owe it to our "respondents" to disguise their identity and if, in our primary respondents' accounts, other names are named, we would be expected to disguise them as well. So, in my case, Dmitri would refrain from identifying me as his respondent, using only the most general terms, she came from UCLA, she had a letter from Garfinkel (oops, is this naming names?) he read her language exam, etc. That would be fine until it came time to talk about my dissertation---she studied bars. Now the gig is up. Anyone who knows anything knows whose account this is, and anyone who does not know anything does not care. Same thing, when I mention a fellow student and say he studied horse racing, it is not hard to figure out who that is. So people in the know, to use Goffman's phrase, will know and people who are not wise will be none the wiser even if actual names were named.

If this is an open source data base, and hence more useful to future researchers than an ethnographic account, names are named to the extent that the namer is willing to express those opinions. When names are named, they can be presented as an active link, their rebuttal, different recollection, or the same recollection, or their entire biography itself is just a click away. I really do think Wikipedia is a good model for this more 21st century process.

So, these are my early morning thoughts and I will be looking forward to what others on the advisory board think. It is a serious problem and I do not think I appreciated it before it began to be revealed. Even so, I am glad to be a part of the process.

my best,

Sherri

January 12, 2009

Good Morning, Sherri:

My day started earlier than usual as I went for a pit stop with the intent to catch some more sleep, glanced at my email box, saw four messages from Tom Goffman, and did not go back. Things are a-happening.

On the controversy confronting us, I think we can handle it. <...> I am not sure it is prudent to give you the exact wording of <...>'s communication, but the gist of it is that she finds some EGA postings scurrilous <...>. I suggested that we approach <...> and ask her clean up her language, and that she might write a comment, but she would have none of that. Like <...> in the early stages of the controversy, <...> wants to have anything to do with the project (even as <...> is working his way back into the project and sounds friendly).

This is not the first time <...> asked me to pull down her memoir. <...> It is a loss, but not as big as it would have been a few months ago. Now that our sample has grown (we have nearly two dozen conversations and memoirs, with about as many waiting to be transcribed and more scheduled for the future), we have covered some of the bases relevant to <...>'s case. For instance, in my yesterday's talk with Ruth Wallace she spoke about the other-worldly kindness that Goffman showed to her "difference" – a perceived disability as a nun.

<...>

Those upset with the diversity of EGA postings might want to start their own site that would reflect their views and accommodate a particular kind of memoirs. Meanwhile, ours is an open-source project; the participants are not "human subjects" requiring special protection; the views they express are protected by the first amendment. Those affected are free to reply and set the record straight according to their measure. The story about <...> is important as it hints at subterranean currents and hidden rivalries which deserve to be brought into the daylight. Sanitizing the accounts would be an endless process and a futile one as well. We shall practice prudence and strive for integrity without sacrificing honesty and frankness.

I am glad we are on the same page.

Yours, Dmitri

P.S. Had an interesting chat with Eli Bay.

January 12, 2009

Sounds like you have had a full day, Dmitri. Nice note from MacCannell; how differently we all respond; he is full of appreciation; that's good.

The two studios I work in are part of the community college, so my life is still governed by the academic calendar. Today was the first day of the new semester; I am in heaven. I am sending you a picture of the companion piece to "the delicate balance of heterosexuality" that I sent earlier. This piece is called "Tension without Conflict". Both of these pieces are about 27" on the horizontal or the vertical. I have been trying to organize my work for my web page and it seemed appropriate for the moment.

Sherri

January 12, 2009  
 Sherri,

<...>

I will be heading out of town for a week, return around January 22, and leave the following day for LAS to celebrate Frances 90<sup>th</sup> birthday and, I hope, to see some family archives. I will try to send you the album and the DVD before I leave.

We have heard so far from Jackie and Tom on the policy debate. Hope more people chime in tomorrow. Perhaps you can weigh in as well. After that I will send a memo sharing the latest news and looking ahead. Would be nice to see your sculptures in the flesh. Maybe in August during the ASA meeting.

Best,  
 Dmitri

January 12, 2009  
 Greetings, Sherri:

Here is the A-Reunion Album and the DVD. Hope you will enjoy it as much as I did.

With warm wishes,  
 Dmitri

January 13, 2009

I actually sent an e-mail to the board this morning after my walk. I will resend it to you. Renée makes reference to it in her letter. The story of the story is getting to be a complex narrative.

Sherri

Dmitri----I do not have her address, but I am sure Rachel Kahn Hut does.  
 Sherri

January 13, 2009  
 Sherri,

Just came back from the department where I made copies and sent out several packages – to Hymes, Somers, Alameda Superior Court, and you. After I sealed your package with the album, DVD, and a couple of articles, I realized that I forgot to insert my letter to you. Didn't want to start it all over, so the letter is not there. But there was nothing much in it really. Hope you will enjoy the family album and DVD.

Tomorrow I will put together a memo with some more news, thoughts about EGA policies, and plans for the future. I like to think that we shall persevere and continue to gain momentum.

<...>

Cheers,  
Dmitri

January 13, 2009  
Greeting----

I thought Renée Fox's suggestion that we look to oral histories as a model for the Goffman Archives an excellent idea, especially addressing how they handle the problem of confidentiality and their respective office of human research protection requirements.

the following quote seems to sum up the issue at least for historians:

As many *Perspectives* readers will remember, in September 2003, staff at the federal Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) seemed to agree that oral history should generally be excluded from Institutional Research Board (IRB) review (see the articles in the March and December 2004 *Perspectives*). But as many academic historians have discovered, the IRBs at many colleges and universities are ignoring or rejecting the agreement, <http://www.historians.org/Perspectives/issues/2006/0602/0602new1.cfm>

here are a couple of more links that I looked at; [http://www.luc.edu/ors/irb\\_XV.shtml](http://www.luc.edu/ors/irb_XV.shtml) gives guidelines from Loyola University; they seem say oral histories are probably exempt from standard reviews

<http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2008/01/03/history> addresses the conflict that exists for historians. the letter from the American Historical Association noted instances in which scholars proposing oral history interviews were told that they would be approved only if the subjects were anonymous — even though the very reason for the interviews was that the subjects were particular people whose individual stories merited attention. The sense I get from these articles is that historians agree that oral histories are not the same as other kinds of research methods and should be exempted from the standard research restrictions such as anonymity while the various university research boards are divided on the topic.

Anthropologists also weigh in on the topic, see for example, <http://www.unhistory.org/CD/methodology.htm> We also made another fundamental decision at the outset, and one that distinguishes this oral history from many others. We not only rejected the anthropological and sociological convention of anonymity for interviewees; we also insisted that everything in the approved transcripts could be used immediately by us and other researchers. We believed that much would have been lost in hiding identities or in closing what was available until after the deaths of those interviewed.

No decision comes without a price. Without the shield of anonymity or of confidentiality only dropped at some distant date, it is certainly likely that some elements of frankness were sacrificed in the voices that appear here. Readers should also be aware that, paradoxically, the definitive “oral” history is what appears in the approved and revised written transcripts rather than what originally was recorded during interviews. Because we insisted that no material would be sequestered even temporarily from public scrutiny, there is occasionally, although not all that frequently, a substantial discrepancy between what was recorded and what is found in the approved transcription.

there is a lot out there, but this small sample seems to suggest that our methods are shared by other practicing professional if not by all of the review boards

Sherri

January 15, 2009

Arlene Daniels address <...>.

no phone listing (for either her or her husband)

January 15, 2009

The first address I just sent is an old one. However, this one should be correct.

Sherri

<...>

January 20, 2009

Greetings, Sherri:

I just got a word from <...> who asked me to restore her memoir on the EGA site. If only we can convince <...> to release his remembrances of Erving, we would be in fine shape.

Hope this note finds you well.

Warmly,

Dmitri

P.S. If you have a chance, please give a word to Jackie on this auspicious development.

January 20, 2009

Good morning, Dmitri.

And it is a good morning; the air is charged with something palpable, it feels like hope. I was so excited to hear Obama include nonbelievers as a principled position, along with Christian, Muslim, Hindu and Jew (although I don't know why he skipped Buddhist)

This is good news about Carol. What shall I tell Jackie when she asks why Carol changed her mind???

The package of papers arrived a few days ago. My general impression is to be impressed with this family, which in the face of urban, industrial forces managed to maintain a sense of gemeinschaft over numerous generations. The work and effort it took to put the album and CD together is a labor of love in and of itself.

<...>

Of the pictures of Erving. The one which must have been his high school graduation reveals what I take as a reserved, maybe even sullen, adolescent. He is actually quite beautiful (although this is not a characteristic that has much weight for adolescent males, it would be one of the things that appealed to his female relatives) His face has not yet taken it's mature proportions; his eyes are still relatively open, his lips are still soft and full. But his neck is very strong and made me think of the build of a wrestler. I have to admit that I have never

entertained the idea of what he looked like without artifice and cover of clothing, but now I wonder about the backstage of the body. How did he see himself when he got out of the shower?

Of course, the picture that I cannot take my eyes off is the one of Erving and Frances mugging for the camera; a cute couple of kids in a neat neighborhood with lawns and picket fences; she is so graceful and dramatic, he so cocky and assertive.

Dmitri, please ask the relatives what they meant when they said he would be a “genius or a gangster”. What kinds of things did he do, what kind of examples can they remember that led to this judgment. Especially the idea of seeing him as a “gangster”.

Finally, I read the surface of “Signing in the Flesh”, no deeper because it is connected to a literature I am not connected with. More later.

<...>

ciao for now  
Sherri

January 21, 2009  
Hi, Sherri:

I will be taking off shortly for the airport, then on to Vegas and later to LA for Frans’s birthday party. <...>

Some of the questions you raise about EG I have already raised with the relatives and have some preliminary answers. Fran, Esther, Marly, and I are planning to brainstorm in LA, with more answers and conjectures to work with.

Got to run. Look forward to talking to you before long. Hope is in the air, indeed.

Dmitri

January 27, 2009  
Manny---I thought, well, either you didn’t get my first message or alternatively, you have chosen to ignore it. So just on the odd chance that it was the former, I am sending it again.

The reason I am contacting you seemingly out of nowhere is to let you know about the Goffman Archives and ask if you are interested in contributing your recollections. The archives are co-directed by me and Dmitri Shalin of the University of Nevada, <http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/index.html>.

The objective is to bring together writings, critiques, recollections, and other traces of Erving as an electronic data base that would document the man, his times, and the people who have been a part of that complex. It began rather slowly, but the contributions---particularly personal recollections---have increased in number and substance and we have been in contact with Goffman's relatives, including his 90 year old sister, an actress---Frances Bay---living and still working in Studio City. The relatives are very enthusiastic about the project and have provided a wealth of information about Goffman before he became Goffman.



It's a familiar story. Everyone's recollections are unique; different people have a different takes on the same events. You and Harvey and David were an important part of those years in Berkeley, and now you are the only voice left.

Dmitri is doing the interviews, which are actually more like conversations; they can be as short or as long as you like. I hope you would agree to participate.

I am not one for dwelling in the past; much of what happened in graduate school had become vague and indistinct. Having a opportunity to review that part of the past was just what I needed at this time of my life,

Again, please think about participating. If you agree I will give your e-mail----or even better a phone number---to Dmitri and he will contact you.

my best  
Sherri

January 27, 2009  
while we were talking, this arrived:

Sherri

Sherri, Neither of the above; just frazzled teaching two courses, serving on the admissions committee, supervising 3 dissertations, and trying to meet writing obligations. Sure, I'll participate, though I've said a lot of what I have to say in my paper on Goffman in the Drew/Wooton book. Still, give my reachables to Dmitri and we'll take it from there.

All best,

Manny  
<...>  
UCLA Department of Sociology  
264 Haines Hall - Box 951551  
Los Angeles, CA 90095-1551

January 27, 2009  
Dmitri---it was Pleasant Hill

Egon Bittner  
Home <...>.

January 27, 2009  
the cat made me hit the send button before I reviewed everything. Egon is listed as 86 and not as I wrote.

Sherri

January 27, 2009

Greetings, Sherri:

It was good talking to you earlier today. It looks like Manny might be willing to participate. I hope he checks a few conversations to get an idea what we are doing, then shares his thoughts. I am sending him a follow-up note.

Do you feel like calling Eagon? If there is nothing in my dept. mailbox, he probably got the package.

All best,  
Dmitri

P.S. The hours I spent in Kinko scanning the pictures appear to be wasted – the CD turned up blank.

January 30, 2009

Dmitri---I received this note from Aaron today. It is nice and descriptive, but I do not get the sense that he is particularly interested in an interview. What do you think? I would like to write him back, thank him for his reminiscences and ask him if we can post it in the archives. I thought I might also inquire about Harvey's dissertation. If that sounds like a plan send me a few notes of what you would like me to ask.

ciao for now  
Sherri

January 30, 2009

Hi Sherri,

Nice to hear from you. It has probably been at least 30 years since we last saw each other. I don't have much to say about Erving despite knowing him since first meeting him at Harold Garfinkel's house on New Year's eve, 1957. He was visiting his mother before going to Berkeley.

I was in Berkeley for two weeks in January, 1958 giving some lectures to graduate students in nursing from the Bay area and had dinner with Erving almost every evening. His family had not arrived and mine was in Los Angeles where I was a post-doctoral fellow in the UCLA Medical Center. We spent a lot of time together during 1965-66 semester in Berkeley when I was a visiting professor in sociology and also working at Phil Selznick's new Law and Society Center. In the spring of 1966, Erving attended my graduate seminar regularly.

Erving, Shelly Messinger, David Matza, Ed Lemert, Ruth Kornhauser, Carl Werthman, Jerry Skolnick, and a few others were also participants in the regular meetings of the Center. Erving and I met at different conferences around the world and I was in Philadelphia attending a group meeting for a book that was subsequently published. Erving was supposed to be at the conference, but was in the hospital. We were all to see him but he died the night before we could see him.

We disagreed about several things, but I do not think I could go into details. He was a wonderful writer and his prose made readers think that he was describing actual interaction. He was not, of course, and I always believed that too many people treated his descriptions as "data." The closest he came to describing actual events was in his dissertation. Whenever he was being nasty, I would threaten to describe his dissertation to others, something that would annoy him but effectively cut him off. He could be difficult socially but we maintained

fairly consistent good relations and he was part of a small group at Penn that asked me if I wanted to move there. I hope the above is useful.

Best,  
Aaron

January 26, 2009  
Greetings, Aaron

The reason I am contacting you seemingly out of nowhere is to let you know about the Goffman Archives and ask if you are interested in contributing your recollections. The archives are co-directed by me and Dmitri Shalin of the University of Nevada, <http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/index.html>.

The objective is to bring together writings, critiques, recollections, and other traces of Erving as an electronic data base that would document the man, his times, and the people who have been a part of that complex. It began rather slowly, but the contributions---particularly personal recollections---have increased in number and substance and we have been in contact with Goffman's relatives, including his 90 year old sister, an actress---Frances Bay---living and still working in Studio City. The relatives are very enthusiastic about the project and have provided a wealth of information about Goffman before he became Goffman.

It's a familiar story. Everyone's recollections are unique; different people have a different takes on the same events. Yet the subject is unique.

Dmitri is doing the interviews, which are actually more like conversations; they can be as short or as long as you like. I hope you would agree to participate.

I am not one for dwelling in the past and so much of what happened in graduate school had become vague and indistinct. Having a opportunity to review that part of the past was not as painful as I thought it might be. The data base Dmitri is putting together is invaluable.

Again, please think about participating. If you agree I will give your e-mail----or even better a phone number---to Dmitri and he will contact you.

my best  
Sherri

January 30, 2009  
Greetings, Sherri:

Just came back from the Red Rock Mountains where I had a sumptuous hike (found a fresh detour on an old trail). Hope you can come visit me and Janet some day and I can show you some of my favorite haunts. You can bring along a friend. Perhaps Jackie could join you as well. You can stay at my house in Vegas.

I read your very nice letter to Aaron and his informative, if brief, answer. I would like to write him a brief note thanking him for his reminiscences and asking if a version of his note could be added to the site. If the answer turns out to be yes, I will follow up with a few questions. What would be really great is to query him about Garfinkel. Not sure if he is game to do that.

I had exchanged a few messages with Manny, who sent me PDF files of two articles and an interview where he talks about Goffman. I asked him if I could add them to the critical assessment section of our site, but got no reply. Perhaps he did not notice my request. If you talk to him, see if he wants his pieces added to the EGA. Manny is busy right now but we agreed that I would write him in mid-March if he does not contact me earlier.

Now that we have commitments and one preliminary statement from Aaron and Manny, we need to contact Garfinkel. Ideally, we would wait for their statements to be posted on the web and then reach out to Harold, but given his age, that might not be the best approach. We need to ask Aaron and Manny on which route to follow in this case.

With warm wishes,  
Dmitri

P.S. I keep forgetting to pass on the link to my review of a book about Russian Jews that has nice ethnography. Here it is in case you want to check it:  
[http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/pragmatism/shalin\\_r\\_remennick.html](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/pragmatism/shalin_r_remennick.html)

January 30, 2009  
Dmitri---here is the note I sent to Aaron.

Sherri

dear Aaron---thanks for getting back to me.I am endlessly amazed at the details that are stored who knows where in our brain/mind and how effortlessly at least some of them are retrieved.

At first I saw this project as a kind of mosaic; each person's memories providing a tile, the tiles taken together providing a portrait. Now I am more into thinking of it as a tapestry, each person's memories of Goffman a segment on a thread of their own biography; woven together, a portrait of Goffman emerges, long, unexplored fringes at either end.

Dmitri will get in touch with you to ask if we can post your notes in the archive. I hope the answer will be yes.

my best,  
Sherri

January 30, 2009  
Sherri,

I sent my note to Aaron. Check these two additions to the EGA documents section.

<http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/documents/averbakh.pdf>  
<http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/documents/annegoffman.pdf>

Cheers,  
Dmitri

January 31, 2009

Dmitri---I am glad you were able to post some of the Averbach album. Did you send out the links to the advisory board? If no, I will let Jackie know about them, although I had already Xeroxed the pages on Ann and Erving and sent them to her. I will also ask her whether she has contacted Marv Scott yet.

Thanks for your (earlier) invite to Las Vegas. My first (and last trip) there took place about thirty years ago. The high point was having a ringside seat to watch Muhammad Ali fight. I was not/am not a boxing fan, but I was always a great fan of Ali's politics, and of course the social scene surrounding the fight was something else. It must have called out every black player west of the Mississippi. When Ali entered the ring it was electric; he really did float above the mat. And I learned the meaning of "no sweat". Ali's opponent was drenched in sweat from the first round on, while Ali remained so dry you would think he was dusted with baby powder.

ciao for now  
Sherri

January 31, 2009

Greetings Sherri:

I hope to have Joe Gusfield's interview posted soon, and then I can send a word to the board about several developments. By all means, let Jackie know, and see if she had a chance to write to Marv. Did you try to call Eagon? Haven't heard from Aaron yet.

I stopped watching boxing many years ago. Tennis is my game, and today we can see the women's final in Australia.

All best,  
Dmitri

February 3, 2009

Greetings, Sherri:

I got a call from the daughter of Eagon Bittner who declined to participate the EG project. The reason mentioned was that Eagon did not have much to say. He thanked me for the materials I sent him. I mentioned to Eagon's daughter that Manny and Aaron plan to contribute, and that they might be talking about Harold Garfinkel. She said she would pass a word to her father.

I did not hear from Aaron yet. Did he reply to your inquiry?

All best, Dmitri

February 3, 2009

Hi Dmitri

No, I haven't heard from Aaron; I expected he would get back to you.

I wasn't too hopeful about Egon. I didn't think he spent much time with Goffman; maybe just a chance

encounter; he was very close to Garfinkel, however.

ciao  
Sherri

p.s. it is "egon"

February 3, 2009  
Sherri,

I spoke to Fran and Esther who agreed to serve as the EGA consultants. Their names are now added to the site. It is a good thing to have EG family reps on board.

We'll see what Aaron does. My guess is that he is perusing the EG site and trying to figure out if he wishes to weigh in on the discussion, and if so, how.

Best,  
Dmitri

February 4, 2009  
good morning, Dmitri

I am happy to see the Goffman relatives as part of the project. I hope eventually you will be able to recoup the pictures you scanned and lost.

ciao for now  
Sherri

February 5, 2009  
Hi, Sherri:

I just had a chat with Arlene Daniels who offered fresh food for thought. Yesterday, I talked to Russell Dynes who was the ASA chief executive officer when Erving was elected ASA president. Still face a few chores that I need to move out of my way to restart the work on recordings.

Best,  
Dmitri

February 12, 2009  
Hi, Sherri:

Just got a word from Aaron who responded to me second mailing (see below).

All best,  
Dmitri

Hi Dmitri,

I am sorry for the delay. I have been preparing for 2 lectures I must give at UCSF over the next two weeks. I will try to edit what I sent you next week.

Best,  
Aaron

February 19, 2009

Dear Aaron---thank you so much for taking time to contribute to the Goffman Archives. As we collect more and more accounts the portrait of Erving becomes more complex, more nuanced. Of course, we expected as much. I have suggested to Dmitri that we develop a chronology to order these various observations (which now are just organized alphabetically and by the year they were collected). The accounts from his relatives provide us with a starting point; some, like yours, cover a long time period; others are just one point in time, a glance but remembered as an event to be recounted. I think that being able to look at different accounts focused on a single time period can enhance our understanding of the man, his times, and his work.

Again, thank you for your help.

sincerely,  
Sherri

p.s. I secured a copy of Goffman's dissertation while I was a graduate student at Berkeley, doing my own field work. I am sorry I do not have it any longer. From the beginning I recognized his language as a conceptual framework, useful for addressing the observable world but not observations in their own right. Gender Advertisements comes close to an empirical study as an analysis of what he described as "commercial realism" But while it portrays how relations between the (heterosexual) sexes are portrayed in (for the most part) middle class magazines, it does not go into how those images are produced by the editors, etc. Nonetheless, it has been invaluable for motivating people to look at how gender and gender relationships are constructed.

February 20, 2009

Sheppard Fairey, a well know graffiti artist, designed the Obama Hope poster which became iconic during the campaign. He made some money off it, but also donated a lot of money to the Obama campaign. He is now under indictment in Boston for tagging (a charge unrelated to this particular poster) and in addition the AP is suing him saying that they had the copyright on the original photograph which Fairey transformed into the poster. Actually, Manny Garcia was the photographer who sold the image to AP, but AP says the original is "theirs" because they paid for it; Garcia is not bothered by Fairey's work, and in fact said he admired it and would like to have an autographed copy! AP is less than generous; there is a lot of unresolved questions about copyright and intellectual property rights; what is fair use, what is enough of a transformation to make the original only an inspiration and not an integral part of the new work, etc.

In the midst of all this some enterprising programmer developed a program that allowed anyone to take a photograph and transform it into the iconic Obama style; which is what I did with the Goffman image. Then, this company allowed you to print the transformed image on a number of objects. I chose the coffee cup and I liked it so well that I ordered three, keeping one and sending one to you and one to Dmitri.

so that is the back-story of the cup!

my best  
Sherri

Dear Sherri,

The “Goffman Cup” is simply great! How did you ever transfer his likeness from a photograph to ceramic? Or did you copy the photograph in some way onto the cup? I noted that the shading on his features is more distinct than in the photograph and that could mean that you painted it on. Anyway, it is a wonderful cup a great likeness, and you are very talented, and I shall treasure it.

Thank you so much.

Love,  
Jackie

P.S. No word from Marv as yet, but he often took a while to answer my letters (but not as long as I took.) Of course, he may just skip writing me and move directly to phoning Dmetri.

February 20, 2009  
Greetings, Sherri:

Glad to hear from you. I like the cup very much, wish it came in different sizes. I can envision a series of cups with the Goffman theme that presents his likeness from different periods, starting from his Appalachian dancer mug. Given Fairey’s troubles, such an undertaking is likely to land us in a quandary, unless the GE family is on board. Better that you go easy on to the wholesale circulation of your artistic fancy, which I love. I got a note from Horst Heller today. He will try to locate a letter from Goffman he has and send it here for posting in the EGA. Tom Scheff chimed in with the offer to share Goffman’s letters in his possession. Jackie Wiseman, who is now working on the transcripts of our conversation, tells me she has a fine set of notes from Erving’s class that she is trying to locate. So, the documents section is expanding.

Yesterday I sent a letter to Aaron, asking him to clarify a few things in his memoir (see below).

All best,  
Dmitri

Greetings, Aaron:

I posted your memoir in the Goffman archive. Here is the web link, [http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/cicourel\\_09.html](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/cicourel_09.html). You can edit and augment the text at any time.

I have identified you in the intro as “Professor Emeritus of Sociology at the University of California San Diego.” If you would like to see a different description, please give me a word.

You mention that you used Goffman in your graduate work at Cornell in 1957-1958. If you have any publications or papers that touch on Goffman’s views or reflect his influence, I would like to cite them (or even post them) in the EGA section that collects works about Goffman’s scholarship. Perhaps you can pass the reference(s) to me.



You point out that Erving was likely to cease his abrasive behavior when you “threaten to describe his dissertation to others.” This observation is as intriguing as it is cryptic. I am not sure what it is about Erving’s dissertation that he wouldn’t want to come up and that was likely to silence him. Maybe you can clarify that. You comment on the paucity of actual fieldwork reporting in Goffman’s publications. I find this remark theoretically very interesting. From talking to other contributors, I discovered that no one ever saw a single page of Erving’s field notes. Since he instructed to seal his archives after his death, we may never know for sure whether he kept such notes or what they looked like (although there is apparently an unfinished manuscript about gambling stemming from his field work in Vegas). It would be interesting to talk to you about the common tendency to view Erving’s reports as data whereas they were likely to be a product of elaborate reflection.

You say that Erving arrived in LA and Berkeley before his family. According to Mel Kohn, who knew Erving when he did his work at St. Elizabeth’s, Skye stayed behind on the East coast for months, possibly as long as a year, after Erving moved to Berkeley before joining him. Your comment does not necessarily contradict Mel’s recollections, but it makes me wonder how long Erving was by himself at Berkeley.

In his preface to Harvey Sacks’s *Lectures*, Manny Schegloff recounts a story of Harvey’s dissertation and the role Erving played in delaying the dissertation defense. (I discuss Harvey’s recollections in my ASA paper where I suggest that Erving’s writings might be crypto-autobiographical, <http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/bios.html>. According to Manny, you were instrumental in persuading Goffman to step down from Harvey’s dissertation committee and let the defense proceed. I am curious if your recollections of this episode are similar to Manny’s.

It is possible, Aaron, that you wouldn’t care to go into any of this, and that is fine with me. But I would be grateful if you could clarify some of these points. Should you find it possible to converse about these issues, our talk can remain confidential.

In any event, I would like to take you out for lunch or dinner someday to thank you for your willingness to preserve the disciplinary lore. One possibility would be the next ASA meeting, which will be in San Francisco. Once again, thank you for heeding Sherri’s and my request.

With warmest wishes,  
Dmitri

February 24, 2009  
Jackie & Dmitri----

What about sending the letter to Marv addressed at Hunter College sociology department and ask them to please forward? Surely he has not cut all his ties completely. Another possibility is Jerry Mandel. If I remember correctly when Jerry was sick (quite a while ago) Marv did some caretaking with him. I will contact David Matza who is in contact with Mandel and see if I can get anything.

Yes, the mug is dishwasher safe, for a while at least.

so, my best  
Sherri

February 24, 2009

Sherri,

We can try to forward the letter via Hunter, but I doubt the issue is where the letter comes from. More likely there have been changes in his status and/or address. We can try to go through some web-based people locator, but the best bet is to find someone who might be in contact with Marv or knows how to track him.

Best,  
Dmitri

February 24, 2009

Dmitri---I sent off a note to David Matza to see what I can find. What I was thinking of in writing to Marv c/o Hunter is that they would forward the letter from Jackie, or from me, to Marv. I know my department doesn't give out my home address, but when someone mails something to me at the Department, they forward it. Anyway, let's see what happens with Matza.

Sherri

February 24, 2009

Jackie----was the address you sent Marv's letter to <...>?

Sherri

February 28, 2009

Hi Dmitri----

well, it took a while but Liquor License is now up on my sf state web page; the direct link is <http://userwww.sfsu.edu/~kazbeki/liquorLicense/index.html>

also, this may be of interest:

Obama and the New Age of Candor – New York Magazine. Erving Goffman, the famous mid-century sociologist, would have said that what the audience magically witnessed at that moment was Obama's backstage persona, rather than his front-stage one. He pulled the mask off, let us see a glimmer ...  
nymag.com: Best Bets Daily – <http://nymag.com/>

ciao for now  
Sherri

February 28, 2009

Good to hear from you, Sherri:

I have added the new link to your book in the Intercyberlibrary. Wish the "Contents" link was displayed more centrally – I missed it at first. Hope others will be able to spot it. If there is any sustained discussion of Goffman in your book, I would like to reproduce that portion in the EGA section devoted to critical assessments.

Thanks for the heads-up on Senior's article. I have added the link to the EG in the News section.

Michael Delaney, who is finishing a book on Goffman that offers transcripts of two for his classes at Penn, is sending me a bunch of articles on Goffman along with the syllabi and reading lists for his classes.

Didn't hear from Aaron in response to my inquiry. Jackie has been working on her intervoir for some time now. Hope to see it before long.

Best,  
Dmitri

March 2, 2009  
Good morning, Dmitri

yes, the "contents" is not immediately obvious. This was the way it was originally created; changing it is more complex than cut and paste, as it is involved in the operating code---this according to my son who knows everything. Other than the acknowledgement and footnotes, there is no discussion of Goffman.

I am looking forward to seeing the relatives' interviews posted.

my best  
Sherri

March 2, 3009  
Greetings, Sherri:

Most visitors will figure out how to access your text. I looked it up, focusing on to the Goffman cites, found plenty of instructive references, but no sustained discussion of Erving. You will have a lot to say once you flesh out your thoughts on Goffman's childhood and the origins of Goffman's dramaturgy.

Wish the transcripts of my talks with Erving's family members were ready, but the process is maddeningly slow, and I have other conversations to work with first. Then, there are petty chores, writerly and the other kind, that keep getting in my way and distracting me from the business of transcription.

I have a query for you related to Skye's friend Stewart Perry, the man she was apparently close to before she died. He lived in San Francisco at 2070 Pacific Avenue. The name is rather common, and it is hard to say which one is the man to contact. I wonder if there is a way to look up the SF telephone book and see if the man is still listed as living there.

With warm wishes,  
Dmitri

March 2, 3009  
Sherri,

I called Perry's number, and it is no longer in service.

Thanks for the Goffman tale penned by Scher. It belongs to our site. I tried to track the man, found his former office phone, but it is no longer in service. Apparently, the man's medical license was suspended in 2006 for some record keeping infraction.

God knows how many people are out there with tales of Goffman to regale. Identifying and tracking them is the problem.

Best,  
Dmitri

March 2, 2009

Dmitri---I tried to remember why Perry's name was familiar. He was married to Helen Swick Perry, who was a biographer of Harry Stack Sullivan and I think also an editor, or the editor of the journal *Psychiatry*. When I knew them they lived in Pacific Heights (which is congruent with the address you had) and gave parties, which is the context I knew them. She died a few years ago, but he was younger (considerably?) than she, so he might still be alive.

ciao  
Sherri

March 2, 2009

Thank you, Sherri:

Both Perry and Jordan would be important contacts. Jordan published in *Psychiatry*, I think. Someone in NYC might help track him. Not sure about Perry, though.

Regards,  
Dmitri

March 2, 2009

Sherri,

Take a look at this article about John Cheever and his private journals published yesterday in the *NYT Magazine*. It raises the issues of privacy that are key to our project.

Best, Dmitri

March 2, 2009

Sorry, Sherri:

Here is the link, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/01/magazine/01cheever-t.html>

March 2, 2009

I am not hopeful about Tom, as he seemed flustered by the update on my visit with Fran. It is unlikely I will write him in a foreseeable future.

I knew Skye saw a psychiatrist but not about her suicide attempts on the east coast. Tracking Jordan is our best hope to get more details.

Best,  
Dmitri

March 3, 2009  
Sherri,

The email address you gave me – <...> seems inactive. I looked for the contact info on the site and wrote to the organization head – <...>. Not sure if that will help our case, but it is worth trying.

Best,  
Dmitri

March 3, 2009  
Greetings, Sherri:

I placed on the web your exam – [http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/documents/cavan\\_soc\\_204.pdf](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/documents/cavan_soc_204.pdf). Some new materials from Michael Delaney are also on the web.

Regards,  
Dmitri

March 5, 2009  
Dmitri---I tried to call you.

I just got a kind of piss-ant note from Marv, which after a pleasant opening says, in part, “watching Joyce search the Goffman site and then fail repeatedly to ‘open a page,’ turned me off the project...your Goffman website is the functional equivalent of the Hopi raindance ritual”. Parenthetically, the note was written on a manual typewriter so maybe they just have a dialup connection.

I have no idea what he means, but it sounds like he has declined. I will think about what to do next,

Sherri

March 6, 2009  
Sherri,

Just mailed you a package with the two folders, each one containing four memoirs. You can send one to Marv and hold on to the other one. You might use it for Joan Emerson.

Earlier today I spoke to Jordan Scher who seems willing to talk. I sent him a package as well.

All best,  
Dmitri

March 6, 2009  
Hi Dmitri

I am going to contact Robert Emerson, Joan's brother. Then I realized that he might have some Goffman memories to contribute----he is a well known field worker, and although he did not go to Berkeley, it is quite likely that his path crossed Goffman's----maybe more than once. Also, Joan might have spoken to him about her experiences (although knowing Joan, maybe not)

What I would like to do is extend an invitation to him to submit a memoir and/or be interviewed *and* ask about Joan's contact number, especially so he will not be slighted if I only ask for Joan's particulars. Also, he taught at UCLA for over 30 years (including a stint at being chair) until he retired recently so he may also be someone to talk to about Garfinkel.

let me know what you think

ciao for now  
Sherri

p.s. how did you find Jordan Sher's phone number?

March 6, 2009  
Greetings, Sherri:

Just cam back from the mountains, found your message, and yes, of course you should ask Robert as well as Joan. There must be dozens, perhaps hundreds of people out there with a tale to tell, and the way to find them is via snowball sampling and networking. I usually ask my informants if they can recommend other potential contacts. Robert may come up with suggestions, and it would be great if he could talk about Garfinkel.

Best,  
Dmitri

P.S. Ruth Horowitz serves on the NY state medical board and used her contacts to locate Jordan.

March 12, 2009  
Hi Dmitri---

Here is the response from Bob Emerson, who is also having a problem accessing the site. What can I tell him?

Sherri

March 10, 2009  
Dear Bob:

I hope this finds you well and as happy as one can be as the society goes through this breath-taking cycle of change. The reason I am contacting you seemingly out of nowhere is to let you know about the Goffman Archives and ask if you are interested in contributing your recollections. The archives are co-directed by me and Dmitri Shalin of the University of Nevada, <http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/index.html>.

The objective is to bring together writings, critiques, recollections, and other traces of Erving as an electronic data base that would document the man, his times, and the people who have been a part of that complex. It began rather slowly, but the contributions---particularly personal recollections---have increased in number and substance. We have been in contact with Goffman's relatives, including his 90 year old sister, an actress---Frances Bay---living and still working in Studio City and a cousin who was close to him in their youth. They are very enthusiastic about the project and have provided a wealth of information about Goffman before he became Goffman. We have been able to interview people who were with him at Chicago, at NIMH, in Berkeley, in Philadelphia and others whose encounters were in the context of the ASA. As you can see, it has become a very rich data base, and with each additional contribution, it becomes richer.

It's a familiar story. Everyone's recollections are unique; different people have a different take on the same events. Hopefully from the accumulation of accounts a nuanced portrait of the man will emerge. I hope you are interested in contributing some observations or accounts of your experiences---which, given your place in the world of qualitative research, I am sure you have had either directly or indirectly.

Perhaps you already have some writings about Goffman that you would be interested in linking with the site. Perhaps you would be willing to become a participant in an oral-history interview which would be transcribed and posted. Dmitri is doing the interviews, which are actually more like conversations; they can be as short or as long as you like. Dmitri will provide you with a transcript for you to edit, add, excise, whatever and it will be posted in the archive; although at any time you would be free to add, subtract, remove. Or, if you would prefer, write a memoir specifically for the archive.

I hope you would agree to participate. In addition, I hope I can contact Joan and invite her to participate as she was an important part of Goffman's years at Berkeley. If possible I would like a contact number for her: e-mail? telephone? snail-mail address?

Please take a moment to look at the archives as they exist right now and let me know if this is something you are interested in doing.

my best,  
Sherri

Sherri,

Good to hear from you and to learn about this archive. (But I can't seem to access it; everything is a TMP file? how do you open these?) It is a really great idea, something that I look forward to spending some time looking over.

I will be pleased to contribute what I can, but it is not much. I really did not have much direct contact with Erving, and so have no good stories. I do have several letters he sent me about things I was writing or had published, and some sketchy notes on two lectures he gave at Brandeis in 1967 on frame analysis and field work. I will send these along in a bit when I can dig them out.

I actually want to begin working on something along these same lines with regard to the UCLA Soc Dept in the

1950s and 60s, focusing both on work on deviance (esp. Lemert and Cressey) and the group that formed around Garfinkel in the early development of ethnomethodology. So maybe I will be contacting you as an informant!

I am not sure how Joan will feel about this project, but I have emailed her about it and will get back to you when I hear from her.

Best,  
Bob

March 12, 2009  
Greetings, Sherri:

Not sure how to explain the difficulty with accessing EGA files. Can you open them? On my end everything seems OK. Some of the files are quite big, so the loading process might be slow, but they are all accessible, whether they are in HTML or PDF format (not sure what TMP stands for). You might want to send to Robert the links to specific files and see if that works. Here is the sample of memoirs and conversations about EG:

[http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/gardner\\_08.html](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/gardner_08.html)  
[http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/zerubavel\\_08.html](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/zerubavel_08.html)  
[http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/fox\\_08.html](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/fox_08.html)  
[http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/cavan\\_08.html](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/cavan_08.html)  
[http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/lidz\\_08.html](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/lidz_08.html)

Good thing Robert is willing to talk. Let's pursue this lead. Hope his wife will be game as well.

Did you receive the package with the hard copies of memoirs that I sent you last week?

Regards,  
Dmitri

March 12, 2009

Dmitri----I don't seem to have any problem opening the main page or most of the sub-parts (the Delaney links are problematic), either from the link I sent Bob or from googling it although for some reason when I paste it in, a second dot appears where only one dot should be. Anyway, I will send him the links you sent to look at.

two points: Joan Emerson is his sister (not wife) and this needs a correction, I think it is "New Age"

[J. Senior, Obama and the New Age of Candor, 2009](#)

I have not received the papers you mailed yet, but did write to Marv and tell him that I was sending them.

Sherri

March 12, 2009  
Sherri,



Can you open any of the Delaney's files? They are big, the PDF loading might be slow; sometimes I have to click more than once on the link, but I can access them.

I put the package for you in the mail last Thursday, it should have gone out on Friday, the latest on Monday. If it does not reach you by the end of this week, there might be a problem.

I meant Robert's sister, Joan. The "New Age" in the title is now spelled correctly (I hope).

All best,  
Dmitri

March 12, 2009

Dmitri----did you read about this? What a terrible catastrophe; enough to bring tears to an archivist's eyes

Sherri

<http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/0,1518,612129,00.html>

the two Delaney papers open easy enough but the reading list are giving me a lot of trouble

ciao for now  
Sherri

p.s. have you heard from Schegloff yet? or Cicourel?

March 12, 2009

Sherri,

A horror story indeed, and a reminder to us all that digitizing the archival materials offers extra safeguards. Aaron sent us his memoir, which is on the web. He didn't reply to my follow-up inquiry. Manny was busy when I got in touch with him last month. He said to contact him in mid-March if I don't hear from him beforehand. I will contact Manny later this month.

I just clicked on the EG reading lists and they are on my screen. But PDF files take time to load, and the process stalls at times.

All best,  
Dmitri

March 12, 2009

But what about when the electric current goes out? Are you keeping a hard copy file?

The papers came in this afternoon's mail (with a postmark of March 10). I am going to repackage a set for Marvin and get them in the mail either later today or tomorrow morning.

and I will see what I can do about finding some contact numbers as soon as I can.

ciao

Sherri

March 12, 2009

Sherri,

So, the package has arrived. Let's hope Marvin reconsiders his participation once he sees the EGA materials. The EGA files exist on the remote server, as well as on my computer. There is always a chance for the UNLV server to go down; it can also be closed for maintenance, but those are temporary outings. If something major happens to the server or the site is wiped out, then the files will have to be uploaded once again – a lengthy, unpleasant, but doable procedure.

The biggest problem would be reproducing the links that connect to outside servers (journals, web sites). Such sites may go out of business permanently, along with their content. I sure would not want to regenerate, link by link, the Intercyberlibrary materials, including articles on Goffman. It took months to research and post that stuff on the web.

We have some backup capabilities, though. It may or may not be a good idea for you to resend my follow-up inquiry to Aaron and ask if it had reached him. The idea is to confirm that he received it, not to press for a reply.

Good luck contacting Joan.

Best,  
Dmitri

March 12, 2009

*BROWNSTONE*, Meyer Professor Emeritus, E-mail: <...>.

hope this works; I got the papers off in the mail to Scott; I have to get to the studio now so I'll work on Ludwig later.

Sherri

March 21, 2009

Thank you, Sherri:

I dispatched out an inquiry to Meyer Brownstone.

Best,  
Dmitri

March 13, 2009

Hi Dmitri

Heard back from Bob Emerson; he said the materials he accessed were very interesting; that he would be putting together something to send in to us; he contacted Joan and “she does not want to be contacted”---which, knowing Joan, is pretty much what I expected.

Still have not had any luck with Jack Ludwig although I have found a lot about his relationship with Saul Bellow’s wife.

Tell Esther that her information has been invaluable; I was able to find Brownstone with just a couple of clicks of the mouse. I will keep after Ludwig.

Sherri

March 13, 2009

Greetings, Sherri:

I saw the articles on Ludwig and his ties to Saul Bellow, just could not find any contact info. Same with Brownstone.

Sorry to hear Joan is unwilling to aid our effort. It is her call, she must have reasons. Something appears to have transpired between her and Erving that was out of the ordinary even for Erving’s propensity to harass. But it is a good thing Bob is willing to write about Erving.

Best,  
Dmitri

March 16, 2009

hi Dmitri

I received this note from Bob Emerson,

“A quick look at my files shows that I have a copy of EG’s “Draft of PhD thesis statement”, May 1952. I don’t remember where I got it. Is there any problem, copyright or whatever, posting this on a website?”

I also have some course syllabi and typed notes of class lectures (21 pp) from Joan’s files. The syllabi are no problem, but I am thinking I should check with Joan about the notes (on Soc. 30, Society and Personality), even though she abandoned them.”

looks interesting; what shall we tell him re posting Goffman's draft of his PhD thesis statement?

best  
Sherri

March 16, 2009

Greetings, Sherri:

That would be unique a find. Tell Bob we would love to have those materials added to the EG archives. I don't see problems with copyright issues here. The info about the EG dissertation statement drat has been discussed

in some publications. So, please invite Bob to send us those materials. You can tell him also that if he has a choice of penning a memoir and then take up follow-up questions or having a conversation first and then work with the draft.

Tomorrow I will chat with Jordan Sher, who saw EGA materials and found them interesting. If you speak to Jackie, you might want to see how the work on her memoir is going. It's been two months since she had the transcript of our conversation. She might need some encouragement, as well as the reassurance that she can always revise and augment her story after it is posted on the web.

All best,  
Dmitri

March 17, 2009

Dmitri---these are wonderful documents, especially the soc 175 which preserves the purple mimeograph ink, so familiar I can almost smell the fluid. It would be interesting to compare these two syllabi from the 1960's with the ones from the 1970s that Delaney sent.

Cheers  
Sherri

Sherri,

Here are two course syllabi from 1960.

March 17, 2009  
Sherri,

Here is a pdf copy of the "thesis statement"

Bob

March 17, 2009  
Greetings, Sherri:

I added the materials to the EGA. This is a marvelous time capsule inviting all sorts of comparisons and observations. The patina of time is startlingly fresh. Please extend my gratitude to Bob Emerson.

With good wishes,  
Dmitri

March 20, 2009  
Hi Dmitri

I finally read Goffman's thesis proposal---what a great addition to the archive. All his lifelong issues are in it, but the style is so different---very youthful, very deferential ("he student") and lacking any of the acerbic wit we so associate with him. Anyway, I decided to see what could be found re: the dissertational, available at the U

Chicago Library, although not digitized. Yet it might be nice to add this link in case anyone wanted to follow up on it:

Author:

[Goffman, Erving.](#)

Title: Communication conduct in an island community.

Imprint: 1953.

Description: 368 l.

Notes: Thesis (Ph.D.)--University of Chicago, Department of Sociology.

Includes bibliographical references.

Subject(s):

[Social interaction.](#)

[Language and languages.](#)

Sherri

March 20, 2009

Greetings, Sherri:

I agree that the EG thesis statement is a find. Not sure I have seen any references to it. There are references to his Ph.D. thesis, as well as his masters' thesis. Hope someday we can digitize both documents.

Not sure how to display the library reference. The EG publications might be proper section. I have sent an inquiry to the UC registrar's office requesting transcripts for Erving and Schuyler. I am also checking what else is there at the UC archives that might interest us. I know that Hughes and Goffman exchanged letters that are held in Everett's archives.

It looks like Jackie is not making much progress on her memoir. We'll just have to wait. I am sidetracked by the chores as well. My daughter is in town on a spring break, so we hike and hang out together. She is driving back to LA in a couple of day, which should and I hope to speed up my work.

Best,  
Dmitri

P.S. The links related to EG thesis are inactive.

March 20, 2009

Dmitri---it seems to me that reference to the dissertation would go in the publication section. I think the links move you around in the UC Library site. This adds the call number (there is only one copy!!!) and location which would be useful, even if it is not an active link.

Do you have any idea who the "D. Horton" on the thesis committee was?

No word from Marv; no idea why Jackie is so reluctant to finish her memoir; she is usually Ms. Punctuality.

Sherri

March 20, 2009

Dmitri---it seems to me that reference to the dissertation would go in the publication section. I think the links move you around in the UC Library site. This adds the call number (there is only one copy!!!) and location which would be useful, even if it is not an active link.

Do you have any idea who the “D. Horton” on the thesis committee was?

No word from Marv; no idea why Jackie is so reluctant to finish her memoir; she is usually Ms. Punctuality.

Sherri

March 20, 2009

Sherri,

I hope to get a hold of the EG dissertation and then post it on our site. I am working with the Regenstein Library to see how to obtain a copy of the document. So, let’s wait a little and ponder their reply.

Not sure who is Horton, but we’ll find out. Anselm Strauss might have replaced him on the dissertation committee when Erving came up for the deference. Didn’t hear from Brownstone, and am curious if Perry is going to join the fray (see below his note to me). Maybe you can call Marv in a couple of weeks to check if he got your package with EG conversations.

Did you see an article about EG written in 1982 by Marshall Ledger that I digitized for our archives? It is quite interesting. I sent an inquiry about him to the Pennsylvania Gazette, the editor told me he left the publications many years ago, and I then asked the editor to pass my note to Ledger. No news on that front.

A few weeks back Tom Scheff offered to send me EG letters and other materials. Did not hear from that quarter yet. As for Jackie, I am not sure what holds her back. There were a couple of places where she told me things about GE she was not certain belong in public domain. Maybe she is weighing the wisdom of editing that stuff. More likely, she is trying her best to make her statement comprehensive and balanced. With Erving, this is not an easy task, as you know.

All best,  
Dmitri

March 3, 2009

Dear Dimitri Shalin:

When I got your email, I read it instantly, and then immediately read the several reminiscences you provided (although for some tech reason the Stark was inaccessible). I will hope to read more of these.

I have not as yet read your piece (for some, I’m not sure why, reluctance to peruse an examination, as contrasted to a memoir). So much of what people have told you rings very true to me, and yet there is in some pieces a strong element that is simply unfamiliar (an awful unpleasantness that, despite our having some tiffs from time to time, I never experienced). Difficult he was, but he was an enjoyable, close, and good friend (and simply impossible too) – until the period after Sky died: After that, my wife (Helen Swick Perry) and I rarely saw him, and he was not much of a correspondent, and so we were not really much connected, despite the fact that, as trustees (under Sky’s will) for Tom, he and I had a few telephone conversations. And then one day, at a

social gathering, someone talked of him as no longer living, and I was shocked to know that someone so alive was no longer.

I will in time overcome my strange reluctance, I'm sure, to read your piece: Erving is endlessly fascinating, as we (my wife and I and a common colleague, Erwin Linn) used to complain, after we had spent much of an evening talking about him – mainly in the mid-1950s, when we were all at NIMH (where Jordan and I, for a time, shared an office, as he recalls). And I will be very glad then to participate in an interview, being then better oriented to your interests.

All the best wishes,  
Stewart E.P.

March 21, 2009  
Hi, Sherri:

I got a note from my colleague, Simon Gottschalk, who remembers you fondly. Here is an excerpt:

“There are a few names on the list of the EGA project advisors I do not recognize but Sheri Cavan!! She was one of my heroes in grad school for having published a great ethnography (/Hippies of the Haight/) – Weberian analysis if I recall. Last I checked, she was still living in that neighborhood.

You seem to have accomplished a monumental work during your sabbatical leave. Congratulations. I will definitely check those sites out.”

All best,  
Dmitri

March 22, 2009  
Hi Dmitri----

I sure hope you are able to post the dissertation to our site; it will certainly generate a lot of gravitas.

I did a little research on Horton:

---Donald Horton, 1943 theory of drinking as anxiety reduction in all societies  
Chicago----social anthropology

Anselm Strauss and the sociological study of chronic illness: a ... and anthropology. In this work Strauss presented a view of chronic ..... Strauss, A. (with Donald Horton) (1957) Interaction in audience participation .... Strauss, A. (1991) The Chicago tradition ongoing theory of action/interaction, [www.blackwell-synergy.com/doi/abs/10.1111/1467-9566.00058](http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/doi/abs/10.1111/1467-9566.00058) – (I don't know if this link will work and now I don't remember where I found it)

So there is some link between Horton and Strauss, re your note that Strauss may have replaced him between the proposal and the dissertation.

I hope you hear from Brownstone. I still haven't gotten very far with Jack (Jacob?) Ludwig, b. 1922; No obituary in the *NY Times* (I haven't searched in Canada yet, so I am assuming he is still alive. His wife is (or

was) named Lega Lauer; he has two children and he is a UCLA alumni (no luck with Stony Brook or U Toronto). My daughter-in-law is studying to be a librarian; she recommended that I contact the reference librarian at UCLA, which I will do early next week.

I read the Ledger piece, which was very revealing in its ethnographic detail (less interesting to me in its analysis of Goffman's analysis.) It did make me want to see those tiles in Goffman's house. Have you also posted new entries in the critical assessments section?

I will call Jackie in a few days (I see my nudge did result in her note that she had to organize her taxes first) I will see if I can convince her to think of the document as a draft, and for her to hold back on anything that she is worried about; she can make a final decision later. I'll call Marvin in a week or so if I haven't heard from him before that.

Finally, I really appreciated Gottschalk's comments, especially the fact that he remembered Hippies of the Haight as a Weberian analysis----which was my goal, but I think that because I was a student of Goffman most people think of me as a symbolic interactionist. Yet always had a bigger goal in mind.

Anyway, tell him thanks for the thoughtful thought.

ciao for now  
Sherri

March 22, 2009  
Greetings Sherri:

One unhoped for consequence of building the EGA is that it shows we are not laboring in vain. Some generous souls are even willing to share kind words about our scholarship, past and present. A good deal of that would have escaped us if we didn't lend ourselves to this project.

Not sure if you know Simon's work on alternative youth cultures that is featured in the Intercyberlibrary. He is a fine ethnographer. Below are a few links to his articles:

[\*Uncomfortably Numb: Countercultural Impulses in the Postmodern Era\*](#)  
[\*Speed Culture: Fast Strategies in Televised Commercial Ads\*](#)  
[\*Ethnographic Fragments in Postmodern Spaces\*](#)  
[\*Reli\(e\)ving the Past: Emotion Work in the Holocaust's Second Generation\*](#)

I left a message on an answering machine of one Marshall Ledger residing in Philadelphia. Hard to say if this is the right person. I will ask Esther to prod Fran regarding Brownstone.

I hold back on contacting several people who knew Goffman until after I post Jackie's memoir (Rosenbaum, MacCannell, Lemert, Frank). As a student of Erving, she enjoyed an unusually close relationship with Erving as her statement shows; her memoir reveals Goffman's kinder side without glossing over his abrasive self. Thanks for your work and good cheer, Sherri. It is a pleasure working with you.

All best,  
Dmitri



March 23, 2009

Greetings, Sherri:

A couple of new additions to EGA: the EG 1982 letter to Horst Helle, [http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/documents/eg\\_helle\\_82.pdf](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/documents/eg_helle_82.pdf), and the exchange between Goffman and Levine occasioned by the UC honorary degree, [http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/documents/levine\\_eg\\_79.pdf](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/documents/levine_eg_79.pdf), and [http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/documents/eg\\_levine\\_80.pdf](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/documents/eg_levine_80.pdf).

I have asked Donald Levine about Horton.

All best,  
Dmitri

March 24, 2009

Hi Dmitri, and Jackie----the new documents all opened; the letter to Helle was very poignant. It is probably the most intimate document we have.

No word from Marv; I will call him next week, but it would be a good idea for Jackie to mention our desire for him to add his recollections to what is becoming a very impressive archive.

my best  
Sherri

April 6, 2009

Greetings Dmitri

Although this has been a beautiful spring day, the news is not good. I had a long conversation with Jackie and a short one with Marvin.

Jackie is still working on her income taxes; she expects that it will take her at least five days more to finish them; maybe more; possibly until the 15th. Then she will begin to work on her document; I tried to get some kind of commitment when she would be finished, but all she would say was that it would take her at least 10 days as she needs to correct grammar, etc. Maybe it will take more.

Nonetheless, she wrote a very enthusiastic letter to Marv to invite him to participate in the project. I got a short note from him acknowledging that he had received the papers I sent him (no word as to whether he read them) and saying that Jackie was very enthusiastic about the project and he wished us well.

After a lot of evasive action in our conversation the non-negotiable line for him was "Goffman would not approve of the project" that Erving would consider any and all accounts about him as a betrayal of trust. He said Goffman told him that he considered the fact that Gouldner had used an observation of his behavior in the *Coming Crises* as a betrayal of trust. I'm sure he had many other criticisms of Gouldner.

So that is where we are. Scott is out and Jackie is dragging her heels.

my best  
Sherri

April 7, 2009

Greetings, Sherri:

I have posted on our site a letter from EG to Tom Scheff. Here is the link: [http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/documents/eg\\_scheff\\_73.pdf](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/documents/eg_scheff_73.pdf)

All best,  
Dmitri

April 20, 2009

Greetings, Sherri and Jackie:

Just as I was beginning to despair ever having back an edited version of my talk with Joe Gusfield, he sent me the final version of our conversation about Goffman. And it is a good one. Here is the link: [http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/gusfield\\_08.html](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/gusfield_08.html)

Hope this note finds you all in good shape.

All best  
Dmitri

April 20, 2009

Dmitri I am so glad you have finally got to finish the Gusfield interview. Yes, it is very good; wonderful descriptions of young Goffman as a graduate student. As far as I know (I have not seen Jackie's interview yet) Joe is the first to say, at the end of his interview, that he loved Erving. I found that particularly touching.

A couple of points. The woman from Temple is usually known as "Magali" Larsen; the other name may be her formal name, but she is published (and known) as Magali.

Mendlovitz or Mendlowitz---Gusfield spells it with a v; but you have it with a w also.

There seems to be an interesting pattern of Erving avoiding teaching, the classroom. Really, is there a better a setting for the presentation of self than the classroom? I am beginning to wonder why he disliked teaching. Something to think about.

well, keep in touch.  
Sherri

April 20, 2009

Sherri,

Good to hear from you. Yes, I was relieved to have someone express an unadulterated admiration for Erving. There is enough in the conversation to see that Joe is struggling to reconcile his experience with what he knows from other sources. By the way, Joe spoke highly about your interview and book. This memoir offers the kind of account that should be more palatable to EGA detractors.

Jackie liked Joe's text. Her story is similar in tone. She wrote to me that she was done with taxes and ready to go back to our conversation.

Next intervior to be posted should be Sam Heilman's. I also got a note from Mary Jo Deegan who wrote to me that she was done with her paper on Goffman based on her recollections and EGA materials. Before she sends it to a journal, she wants me to read it.

Another interesting tidbit might come from J. Verhoven who interviewed Erving in the early 1980s. He might share his recollections. One more thing – I had a good chat with Esther the other day who gave me an earful on anti-Semitism in Canada. I will see her and Fran in mid-May when I attend my daughter's graduation.

All best,  
Dmitri

P.S. Thanks for the heads-up. I made corrections.

May 4, 2009  
greetings, Dmitri

just a note to let you know that I will be gone from May 13 to June 9. I am going to Spain and Morocco, just to get out of my comfort zone. That is a joke----I have not seen my comfort zone since December, when the renovations on the kitchen began. It's done but it took 4 1/2 months and I have not had the courage to total up the checks I wrote. In the meantime rats have invaded the garden and destroyed my plums, my palms, and my wisteria and then a ferocious wind blew the ancient roses off the fence, enshrouding my camellias and hydrangeas and threatening their blooms. I do have a wonderful field of foxglove, but the rats will probably do them in while I am gone. We have a serious rat problem in the bay area. Everyone I talk to has a rat story.

I will be purposefully without e-mail or internet access. Hopefully, when I return I will be able to read Jackie's memoir. Before I leave I will check back with Bob Emerson to see if he has written anything.

my best  
Sherri

May 4, 2009  
Greetings, Sherri:

What a calamity befell you. I hope your travel will take your mind off the misfortune with your house. I will be leaving town for my daughter's graduation next Monday, May 11, and stay a week in and around LA. Will visit with Fran and Esther, try to get more photos. Before I leave, I will send out an update to the EGA board. Several new important conversations are about to be placed on our site, along with some documents. Jackie told me she will try to come up with a draft of her memoir in a few days. She was not certain she could complete it.

If I don't talk to you before I leave town, please have a safe, fun trip.

All best,  
Dmitri

May 10, 2009

Dmitri---each addition makes the archive richer. I am so glad you were able to include Goffman's MA and PHD thesis. I assume the U of Chicago transcript was available to you as part of a publically available record and if so, it is already part of the public domain. Are you reluctant to post it because he was not a straight A student? Doubtless, Erving would not want it posted---no matter what the transcript included; but then he probably would not have wanted any of the archive to exist as a comprehensive record of the man and his works. I spent a lot of time this afternoon thinking about this. I thought, well if this was the Alvin Gouldner Archive, how would Erving feel about posting Gouldner's transcripts? I would like to see you include the transcript as it is obviously a part of his intellectual development, and, if he was not a straight A student, it will give testimony to how one can have a less than stellar academic career and then go on and have a stellar professional career.

I will look forward to reading all the new additions when I get back in June.  
until then

my best  
Sherri

May 10, 2009

Thanks for the feedback, Sherri:

Indeed, EG's grades are not uniformly stellar (he got "C" for quantitative methods), but I agree with you on the transcripts. Let's see what others think.

I am leaving for LA tomorrow. Hope you have a jolly good time in Europe.

With warm wishes,  
Dmitri

P.S. Just emailed the transcripts to Arlene Daniels.

June 2, 2009

Greetings, Sherri:

I hope you enjoyed your trip to Europe and came back with the new energy and zest for living. I mentioned to you Erving's Will, which I am enclosing here. A good deal could be gleaned from this document. I have also managed to get a hold of the correspondence between Hughes and Erving and will be posting it on our site soon.

A few more memoirs and conversations are posted on our site, including those of Smelser, Daniels, and Dynes. Not sure what Jackie is up to but hope she continues to work on her memoir.

All best,  
Dmitri

June 8, 2009  
Greetings Dmitri---

Just got back from a month traveling from Madrid to Marrakech. The single most vivid memory is driving along endless miles of the Spanish countryside and seeing mile after mile after mile of mature olive groves, growing on steep barren hillsides that could never be profitable for a growing anything else. So of course, being a sociologist, I thought a lot about the role of oil in the ancient world---specifically oil for their lamps and oil for their cuisine. Ate a lot of olives too!

The most unexpected moment was being led to Ibn Chaldean's house in Fez by a Moroccan woman who had studied French linguistics at the University in Rabat and could speak as knowledgeably about Noam Chomsky as about the history of Fez and argan oil (yet another oil with a curious culture.)

I did very little shopping, with the exception of many kilo's of rocks for my grandson. The Sahara was once a great sea bed so there are many many fossils in the area and fossil is one of the local industries---finding and selling. In addition to a weighty sampler of all the rocks and minerals of Morocco, there were two perfect geodes, one like nothing I had ever seen before---lava on the outside; pyrite on the inside and a perfect ring of what looks like opaque white quartz around the inside perimeter. Finally, I got the most beautiful crinoide fossil specimen of a perfect creature that lived 5.2 to 2.2 million years ago. It has what looks like a forearm, differentiating into five articulated digits, and ending with a fan of fine filaments. It's a knockout, and makes you wonder at how early the five digit appendage appeared and how wide spread it is as an adaptation of a mobile organism.

Well, I could go on at length-----the moment of stillness at the top of a sand dune in the Sahara, watching the sun set behind distant dunes, a break from a camel ride to and from the spot at the bottom of the dune and a sweaty, clumsy climb to the top. The amount of Tuareg artifacts there were in markets. Of course, the Tuareg are traders and so they move sub-Saharan artifacts (carvings, jewelry, leather work) to markets across the Sahara from Mali to Marrakech. (I have seen them going south, taking salt slabs to the Niger river with camel caravans of over a hundred animals, each with four large slabs of salt on each side of the saddle.) I have a great love of everything Tuareg, and in particular jewelry (traditional and modern) so I was in heaven; although I used enormous restraint. (Stanford University recently held a show of traditional and modern Tuareg jewelry at their museum.)

I just got in last night which was yesterday morning according to my operating inner clock so I am easing myself back into ordinary life.

I glanced at the documents you mailed me (and will have more to say after a good look)

my best  
Sherri

damn my spell checker!

June 11, 2009  
Hi Dmitri----

I had a chance to look at Goffman's will and though I do not know a lot about wills and estates and stuff like that, there were some things that stood out to me.

This will was dated August 3, 1982; his death was Nov. 20 of that year; so he must have been aware that he was in fact writing his last will, the last opportunity to present himself, as it were. This fact alone gives gravitas to the document.

How modest his estate was, about \$500,000 in 1982 which according to the on line inflation calculator would be about \$1,200,000 in today's dollars. That's not much in today's money, but in the intervening 25 years (had he lived) he might well have increased his rate of return. But perhaps he really was not interested in the accumulation of wealth per se.

I was surprised that his house and property was not held jointly with his wife. Although she is named as beneficiary and executor, it looks like the title to the house and its contents and his royalties, etc. were held in his name alone.

His beneficiaries are small in number: his wife, his daughter, his mother, his sister, and after everyone else, his son. No mention of the extended family his mother linked him to.

His stocks look pretty ordinary (e.g. gold, oil etc), with the exception of the large number of shares of the Dunes Hotels and Casinos

I would like to know what the 5 partnerships (all at 12410 Burbank Blvd, No. Hollywood, 91607) were. It was not a lot of money but it was obviously something that caught his interest.

I was amazed at the low value his publications were appraised at \$18,500 (about \$40,000 in today's dollars) and it is interesting that *Gender Advertisements* is appraised much much higher than his other works.

And I was surprised that his tangible personal property (appraised by J. E. Buckley of the Fine Arts Co of Philadelphia) was only \$7,500. Surprised because I knew in Berkeley he was seriously interested in antique furniture and I read (in one of the archive documents) that he had gone to Europe with a buyer the summer before he died (which might account for the money in banks in England, France and the Netherlands) I would like to see this appraisal for the description of the contents it lists. Is it possible to get this, as it was filed with the will?

Finally---and most glaring---was the total absence of any charitable contributions.

I would love to hear your take on this  
Sherri

June 11, 2009

Greetings, Sherri:

It's been a long day, as I am teaching this summer, but now I am back home and can respond to your note and interesting observations. You raise several points that crossed my mind when I read EG's will. Yes, he must have written it when he knew that the end must be near. Gillian told me that Alice was born a few months before Erving died. I wonder when his marriage was registered. He must have thought carefully how to apportion his estate, which, I agree, wasn't that big. Part of the reason is that much of his first wife's estate went directly to Tom. That may also explain why his son's portion was relatively modest.

I was puzzled by the assessment of his literary estate. I thought it would be far more sizable, with the *Presentation of Self* being the most valuable item in his corpus. Gillian and her husband still live in Erving's house.

One thing that caught my eye is a note about the memorandum that Erving planned to write about his papers. It is unclear if the instructions were oral or written, but they must have been delivered. Wish I knew what they were.

I hope you are getting over your jet lag and settling into SF routines.

Regards,  
Dmitri

P.S. I enjoyed your travelogue. Maybe someday you can expand it and we can place it in your section of the Intercyberlibrary.

June 13, 2000

Dmitri, please let me know the source of the Skye letters you sent along with Erving's will. How did they come to be archived at the UC library? At first I just glanced at them, and then I started reading them more closely, first trying to put them in chronological order, then looking for what kind of categories might emerge. I will write in detail later, (there are only a few short documents but they are very revealing about her life, Erving's backstage, their relationship, etc.) In the course of looking at one thing and another, I decided to Google Angelica Goffman, which, if you do, you come up with interesting things. Among them

#### OF DRINKING IN A METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY

GENEVIEVE KNUPFER, M.D. and ROBIN ROOM. Department of Public Health, State of California ....  
Walter Clark, and Angelica Goffman, Fac- ...

[www.jstor.org/stable/798984](http://www.jstor.org/stable/798984) - Similar by G Knupfer - 1964 - Cited by 46 - Related articles - All 3 versions

In one of her letters Skye mentions Knupfer as her boss. Knupfer is now deceased but Robin Room is (1) alive and (2) I know him. Are you interested in talking to Room to see what you might learn about Skye? Let me know.

I will not say anything about these letters to anyone, as you have requested, but they are very important since we know so little about Skye and since they provide such rich ethnographic detail about her, him and them.

Did you look up David Schneider? He was an anthropologist who studied kinship; he was teaching at Berkeley before he went to Chicago. Skye is very fond of him, and his wife, and their son who is about the same age as Tom, maybe a little older. I get the impression the Schneiders and the Goffmans met one another in Berkeley as neighbors, they became friendly. Schneider went on to be chair of the anthro department at Chicago. Do you think there is an archive of Schneider's letters, etc there? and if so there might be letters from Goffman, perhaps even a letter from Erving telling the Schneiders of Skye's death.

more latter  
Sherri

June 13, 2009  
Hello Dmitri----

Yes, Delaney's letter was very emotional but since Heilman (which I read) and Bershady (which I have not yet read) will amend their documents, it is probably good that Delaney's letter not be posted as is (I see he cc. Renée Fox and Victor Lidz).

Delaney might want to write a little note on the problem of memory for the comments section. Also, he makes some corrections in the record---e.g. the topic of puppets----which probably should be noted someplace.

my best  
Sherri

p.s. re the Heilman interview, I think your interviewing skill are becoming even better. This was a great interview.

June 13, 2009  
Greetings, Sherri:

Yes, Sky's letters are a find. I discovered them while I was working with the U of C archivists who helped me identify materials in their collections pertaining to Goffman. I found there three deposits containing relevant stuff, including the collections of Everett Hughes, David Schneider, and Ernest Burgess.

The Hughes-Goffman correspondence is a touching document that tells a good deal about the student-teacher relations in that era and Erving's belated acknowledgment of his debt to his teacher. The Goffman-Schneider exchange, which contains mostly letters from EG, offers perhaps the most intimate look at Goffman, including some profane language. Sky's letters to David were part of the Schneider collection. The Burgess archive contains a 1948 paper on class symbol that Erving wrote for his course, an early version of his 1951 article on symbols of class status, and a paper on TAT, consisting mostly of the test transcripts.

I plan to post the Hughes-Goffman letters on our site. That should not be a problem, I think. The Sky's and Erving's correspondence with David Schneider is a different story. The materials are in the public domain, they can be cited but splashing them all over the internet may or may not be advisable. I want to put there as much as possible, however.

I have come across the reference to Sky's publication that you found through the internet. It would be nice to track Schneider's son and Robin Room. By all means contact Robin, tell him about the EGA, and ask if he is willing to reminisce.

Check out my conversation with Bershady, as well as the one with Arlene Daniels (she is quite a character) and Smelser's memoir. Bershady and Heilman have already added corrections to their interviews, and Harold posted a comment as well.

Michael Delaney will not write anything for the comments section. He planned to but changed his mind, which is unfortunate, for the exchange not only brings up pertinent facts but has an educational value. It is possible that he doesn't want to make public details of his encounters with EG until he publishes his book.

Sky's brother died about two months ago. I wrote a letter to his daughter who lives in CA, sent her a few interviews and told her about the EGA. Will contact again several potential contributors, including Stewart Perry, once I get a couple more transcripts finalized by the people who are slowly working on them (or so I like to think). Jackie's masterpiece in particular is overdue.



Thanks for a kind word about my evolving interviewing skill. Coming from a master ethnographer, it means a lot to me.

All best,  
Dmitri

June 17, 2009  
Dear Dmitri

“Being a character” is not the same as “having character”. Aside from the gratuitous remarks she has about me, I have real concerns with Arlene’s memoir.

I have never heard any story about Goffman dismissing a woman from graduate school because he did not approve of the way she dressed, or for any reason. This sounds like an off-the-wall remark drawn from fancy rather than a fact. Perhaps someone else has heard such a story, in which case, I stand to be corrected. But without corroboration I would be very suspect about the factual basis of this story and by inference, her other stories as well. Her characterization of Goffman as “vindictive” is beyond belief. He might have excluded students from his classes, but getting them removed from the department, much less from the university, requires a concerted effort, not just his whim or will. Who else was involved in this endeavor, if it happened at all? (I checked Stark’s memoir, thinking if anyone would know of such an act it would be Rodney, but he does not make any mention of it)

As to Arlene’s interpretation of what happened between Joan Emerson and Goffman, the only person who would know in fact is Joan (and maybe her brother.) But as I told you in my memoir, Erving was not the kind of professor who was on the make; there were plenty of professors in the 50s and 60s who were always coming on to female students, who couldn’t keep their hands to themselves, etc. Erving was not one of these. And Joan is hardly a seductress (I knew her very well both as a fellow student in the department and as a fellow at the school of public health). If she dismissed him from her committee it was more likely because of some interaction concerning her dissertation (maybe he gave her the same kind of trouble he gave Eviatar). But he was not a leech and it is a disservice to his memory for Arlene to suggest that he was.

Sherri

June 17, 2009  
Greetings, Sherri:

Darlene’s remark about you made me wince when I heard it. She does praise you as a sociologist, but there is some unstated personal agenda. The reference, it seems to me, says something about Arlene and not about you. Would you like me to ask her to redact this reference? I will do that if you feel that is the right thing to do.

So far as her take on Joan Emerson, it has some value insofar as it hints at hypothesis that some of the participants formed at the time. Again, it may tell us more about Daniels than about Emerson. Perhaps we can find out if anyone else derived a similar impression.

On whether Goffman could be vindictive, we have some testimony suggesting that he was at times unfair and mean. John Lofland says in his published tribute to Goffman that the man could be “exquisitely cruel.” Dean

MacCannell says that Goffman could be “mean as hell.” Victor Lidz suggests and Harold Bershady corroborates that Rieff and Goffman conspired to prevent Lidz from getting tenure at Penn. We can check with the Berkeley folks to see if anyone recalls the episode Darlene recounts. I am at home, can give you a call if you are game to chat.

Yours, Dmitri

P.S. I am about to post the memoir of Joan Huber that she sent me earlier today. I am waiting to confirm that she is OK with posting it on the web.

June 17, 2009

Sherri,

You are wonderful. If steam is coming out of your ears, it is for a good reason. The fact that you can stand a gratuitous remark like that is remarkable in itself.

I am at home till about 3:45 p.m., then leaving to teach a class (well, two classes). Will wait for your call.

Best,  
Dmitri

June 20, 2009

Sherri,

Here is the link to Jackie's memoir, which is finally posted on the web,  
[www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/wiseman\\_08.html](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/wiseman_08.html).

All best,  
Dmitri

June 22, 2009

Greetings, Dmitri

It was good to get a chance to talk with you the other day. And now I am trying to keep up with the new postings, although I think I have fallen behind.

First, I read Jackie's memoir which is indeed very personal. The Erving who emerges from her account is such a contrast to the Erving who emerges from Arlene's memory. (By the way, in some places you refer to “Darlene” but it is “Arlene”) Ultimately, how does one resolve such contradictions without having to invoke the biography of the author (e.g., Jackie, Arlene) to the author's account of the subject (Erving)? Is it an endless progression, like a fractal?

After reading Sky's letters (which continue to haunt me) it becomes obvious that any overall accounting of Erving must address her role and the consequences of their relationship. I have written to Robin Room (who is now living in Australia) asking him if he is willing to share his memories of Sky with us; let's hope he says yes.

I have also written to Bob Emerson, first to let him know about some of the things newly posted on the site (especially Goffman's masters and PhD. theses and the letters between Hughes and Erving) and also asking him if he would look at Arlene's memoir and see if he (and/or Joan) are comfortable with Arlene's account of Joan's relationship with Erving.

As to Arlene's account of Goffman banishing a woman from graduate school, one person who might be able to corroborate that story is Tom Scheff, who was a contemporary with Arlene. Also, in reading Jackie's memoir, you ask her about Erving's attitude toward women in graduate school, giving as an example a story recounted by Gary Marx. Do you remember where Gary gives this account?

Well, that's it for now

ciao  
Sherri

June 22, 2009

Greetings, Sherri:

Yes, the role Sky's played in Erving's life and work looms larger and larger. Fractal reflection is one metaphor that comes to mind when I think of the collective portrait we are trying to paint. The man is refracted in many a mind, each one biased in its own way, but the holographic image that will emerge in the end – and I do not foresee an imminent end to this process – promises to be as close to objective reality as humanly possible. Jackie's account is personal indeed. I couldn't help thinking of you when I was transcribing her talk. What a difference in a manner EG handled your and Jackie's job recommendations! Without realizing this, parents sometimes cannot help playing favorites with their children.

Let's hope Robin Room and Bob Emerson join our cause. I will ask Tom Scheff about Arlene's story with expelling a student from the Berkeley department. Thanks for correcting my spelling mistake (with dozens of messages written in the last few days, my grammatical circuits are shot).

I have developed a few new leads on possible contributors to EGA, including Janet Praver, John Gumperz, Melvin Seeman, and Marilyn Merritt. A few old leads are getting hot again (Deborah Tannen, Deborah Shiffrin, Dean MacCannell, Kathleen Slobin). No word from Perry, Larsen, and Furstenberg. Gary Marx wrote an extensive essay about Goffman in 1983. The excerpts are posted on our site: <http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/marx.html>. The full text can be found on Gerry's person web site: <http://web.mit.edu/gtmarx/www/ascervg.html>.

All best,  
Dmitri

June 22, 2009

Hi Dmitri

One of the things I like about Bob Emerson is that he get's back to you.  
If he sees no problem, then no problem.

Sherri

June 22, 2009

Sherri,

Lots of activity! Very nice!

I read the interview with Arlene. I think the part about Joan is absolutely fine and should be left as is, but that is your call. I would not contact Joan about anything; she is extremely negative about Goffman and sociology in general, and explicitly told me that she did not want to be involved. Arlene sees her regularly; let her handle anything if anything comes up.

You're okay with crazy as a loon???

Best,

Bob

June 22, 2009

Sherri,

I hope Bob will offer his recollections. His name came to me via Esther Besbris who spoke to one Willy Leventhal who studied with Bob Emerson and who suggested I speak to John Seeman whom I am trying to contact about EG. It's like three degrees of separation. Perhaps Bob can suggest more people for us to hustle. Herbert Gans may contribute to our project. He asked about Becker, why he was not part of our pool. I wrote to him about my early exchange with Howe and his reticence about sharing his recollections. Here is the paradox: the more intimate one's knowledge of a memorialized person, the more one has to struggle with the question of what cannot be divulged.

Cheers,

Dmitri

June 29, 2009

Sherri,

Attached are two letters from Erving – the first his response to my article on last resorts, the second a short note to the publisher of my juvenile court book. Please put this up on the website.

Best,

Bob

June 29, 2009

Greetings, Sherri:

I added the BE-EG letters to the EGA. Here is the link,  
[http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/documents/emerson\\_eg\\_letters.pdf](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/documents/emerson_eg_letters.pdf)

Earlier today I posted an audio file with the voice of Everett Hughes dictating a letter to Goffman, <http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/mp3/Hughes/hughes.mp3>

Arlie Hochschild wrote a nice note to me on the new developments in the EGA, suggesting I contact David Matza and Troy Duster. Do you know who Troy is and how to find him?

Warm regards,  
Dmitri

June 29, 2009

<...>

Troy was at UCLA when I was there, working on a MA. He got a PhD at northwestern, and then came to Berkeley where he was associated with the Center for Law and Society (with Shelly Messinger, I believe now deceased). He later went to NYU and was president of the ASA in the early 2000's. He is a good friend of David Matza and John Irwin.

I will send Bob the link to the papers.

It would be nice to know how much traffic there is to the site. Can we put a counter on it?

ciao for now  
Sherri

June 29, 2009

Sherri,

Thanks for the email address. I am sending an inquiry to Troy.

Never tracked visitors on the EGA site. A while ago someone (at Google?) sent me a note that in exchange for a small fee and the willingness to post ads on the CDC web, the counter will be added to the site. Didn't think much of that proposal. But if there is a way to have a counter for free, why not, especially if one can do it inconspicuously.

All best,  
Dmitri

July 1, 2009

Greetings, Sherri:

Just posted in the EGA my conversation with Saul Mendlovitz, [http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/mendlovitz\\_08.html](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/mendlovitz_08.html). I find his perspective on EG offbeat and moving at the same time.

Also, I managed to locate Sky's M.A. thesis on class distinction that she wrote in 1950. Will try to get a hold of it and post on our site. I think it will confirm her special place in Goffman's life and scholarly output.

All best,  
Dmitri

July 4, 2009

Greetings, Sherri:

EGA contributors started supplying descriptive titles to their memoirs, usually taking a quote from their own texts or elaborating on it. I think it is better than the generic "Remembering Goffman." I have looked up your memoir and came up with a few one liners that capture various aspects of our conversation (see below). Some of them are rather zany. Let me know if any can be used as a heading for your memoir.

A few more memoirs are on the web, including one from Meyer Brownstone.

All best,  
Dmitri

Headings options:

For the final Goffman played 15 or 20 minutes of a John Cage concert:

Sometime Goffman would write in a margin, "Good job."

Goffman was not a man who was a generous spirit, and your reward was in getting to be his student

There were Goffman's students, Selznick's students, and students who were Kingsley Davis's students

Goffman liked the idea, he thought the bar scene was exciting

It was often difficult to deal with him, because he had a demeanor that put people off

Goffman wasn't a tyrant, but he would never pass an opportunity to be one up

The first thing that Erving said was, "Oh, my God! What happened to the stock market?"

Goffman was nervous – he was going to make a presentation about women's sex roles in front of an audience of women who knew about those matters in an intimate way

Goffman said, "You better not smoke because when you go to light your cigarette, your hands are going to shake, and then everybody will know how nervous you are"

A lot of the guys had trouble with Erving because they wanted to one up him

From my perspective that was just Goffman being Goffman

Goffman could never bring himself to call me by my first name, and after I took my prelims, I became a "Kiddo."

Everybody thought that Goffman has driven her to suicide because he was such a bastard

Goffman said, "Mrs. Cavan, you've passed, but just barely"

I waited and I waited and I waited – Goffman didn't show up

July 6, 2009

Good morning, Dmitri.

I am trying to clear up the log-jam in my inbox. This reference came up in a Google search for Angelica Goffman.

Sherri

Sigma Xi: The Scientific Research Society: Chapter Web Site

Angelica Choat Goffman Lloyd A. Falles John Buettner-Hanush Members initiated May 29, 1952. Ohmu John Bundt Keimer Malcolm Correll Donald E. Walker ...

[www.sigmaxi.org/chapters/web/index.php?chapter\\_id=132&page\\_id=344](http://www.sigmaxi.org/chapters/web/index.php?chapter_id=132&page_id=344) - Cached - Similar

July 6, 2009

Dmitri---

1. did anyone else on the board ever get back to you re posting Goffman's transcripts?

by the way, I found this great quote

"To the living we owe respect, but to the dead we owe only the truth." Voltaire  
it seems appropriate to the work of the archives.

2. What ever happened to the Burgess archive materials (which you mention on 6/13)?

I think everything you uncover, no matter how trivial or uninteresting it appears at first glance, should be included. Including his will. Again, Voltaire is relevant.

3. re memoir headings. I rather like the generic "remembering Goffman" If people want to add a subtitle they could. But other than taking of first line of the memoir, it can end up being forced. I do not particularly care to add anything to mine at this time.

4. have looked at Helle, Gusfield, Bershady, Mendlovitz and Brownstone (and also Gamson). I would like to read them all together, in more detail but haven't had a chance to do that. My impression is that they provide a look into the life of young Goffman, the student, and therefore are very valuable. They all have something to offer, but the image that stays with me most poignantly is young Goffman, closeting himself away in the dark, listening to Wagner. What a loner.

5. re Skye's MA thesis. Again, certainly relevant, especially if it deals with topics Goffman later develops, or for that matter, had developed before she did. I have not heard back from Robin Room. If I do not hear from him this week I will ask Jackie to do a follow up, since she also knew him at Berkeley (although the two of us have not had much luck with Scott).

6. two typos that caught my eye, re Emerson, there should be a comma between the two dates, rather than a dash, since there are only the two letters; and in the Mendlovitz memoir I was going to say that there was some confusion as to who is speaking in the beginning, but when I just went back to check the page I got a notice UNLV page not found.

7. I asked my son about a counter for the page. He said it could be done, but so far he hasn't told me how. After I cage a favor from him this afternoon moving some big pieces of sculpture to the Laboe fest show, "Capitalism in Crises" – I was so excited to be invited to show with them. It opens this Thursday---we will continue the conversation.

I hope I have managed to respond to most of the past items you have mailed me on. I would like to find the time to expand, whether in writing or chatting, on some of these points, especially what we have learned about Erving the student.

ciao for now

Sherri

July 6, 2009

Greetings Sherri:

The quote you dug is wonderful. I'll use it with the acknowledging of your bringing the cite to my notice. One reservation I have about it is the notion of "truth" as Enlightenment thinkers understood it. That is to say, there is the real thing, here is the account, and only one statement can be adequate – true – to thing itself. Such scientific notion of truth as *adequatio – adequatio intellectus et rei* – is not something that a scholar steeped in pragmatism would endorse or what the EGA is after.

The familiar metaphor of "fly on the wall" misses that point. The fly on the wall would witness one thing, the ant – another, and the roach might leave an altogether different account of what has happened. Humans are different in that they can take the role of the fly, the ant, and the roach. This is not to say that one account is as true or good as the other, only that we seek truth on the intersection of all possible perspectives – past, presently in vogue, and those yet to blossom into being. As I see it, the EGA is an attempt to bring together the perspectives currently available and help us understand how interactional events come to language, how they are committed to memory and transmitted via semiotic conventions of the time.

Sorry if I sound didactic. I'm just excited about this large database that should give us a chance to play with those ideas.

On the headlines for your memoir, it can stand as is. But take a look at the index of some three dozen or so EGA bionarratives collected so far, and you will see what I am trying to accomplish with headlining each contribution. Besides showing the amazing range of perspectives on Erving, such headlines are likely to entice readers to check the text. See if you can elaborate in a few more words your heading, even though the one you have works fine too. Here is the link to the EGA Index as it has evolved so far, <http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/publications/ega2.html>.

I see from your web link that in 1952 Angelica Choate was already "Goffman." That means they must have married no later than 1952, probably earlier than that.

No, other board members did not chime with their opinions on the transcripts (I have those for EG and Sky), except for Ruth Horowitz who didn't say she was against posting the EG transcript but indicated she might not have wanted to have hers posted on the web. Maybe we can brainstorm on that and related issues in SF at our dinner, which is set for 6 p.m., Monday, August 10. By the way, can you think of a restaurant where we can assemble? Anything that comes to mind will do, preferably not too far from the Hilton where most people are staying. I plan to send the confirmed date and the place to everyone and invite those who didn't respond yet (Manning, Marx, and Scheff) to let me know if they are coming, so we can make the reservations.

I will post shortly EG's paper on class status that he wrote for Burgess. Digitizing, transcribing (I just finished a great interview with Dean MacCannell), headlining, etc. takes time. I am with you on the posting of the will, at least that of EG, less certain about Sky, but the same principles generally apply to both of them. We need to confer on that. If the board is with us, we have a better chance to withstand criticism (if not lawsuits) that might ensue. I feel it would be prudent to contact EG's heirs, but that might be tricky. It wouldn't be quite right to give them veto power (what if the clan members disagree?), but telling the heirs, as a matter of courtesy, what we are doing seems appropriate. That certainly applies to the photos I uncovered, wonderful stuff indeed, but the third party may object (Tom, Alice, Gillian).



Reference to EG listening to Wagner in the dark caught my eye as well – great quote, great insight. Brownstone’s headline to his memoir is this: “Erving Should Not Be Judged in Any Way and Certainly Not by Students Who Saw or Knew Very Little of Goff.” Mendlovitz asked me to pull his text off the site, as he wants to work on it some more. Hope it will be back soon.

I have ordered the Sky’s M.A. thesis, will digitize and post it once I got a hold of it. The same goes for the first edition of PSEL, the one published came in England in 1956. Esther is sending me the book that she got from Anne, who got it from her son. Wish Jackie sent her memoir to Scott, just to let him know about her take on EG. Not that he would reconsider, but still. (By the way, Dean MacCannell, who was close to EG, thinks that he would have been amused by our undertaking and not object to it). Somehow I need to reach Marsha Rosenbaum. Will give her a call if no other channel opens up. Stewart Perry, who I think knows a lot, had not replied to a recent update from me.

I have changed the entrée for EG letters supplied by Emerson. Counting EGA web visitors is not high on my agenda, so if your son has better things to do – let him. I am at home in case you want to talk.

All best,  
Dmitri

July 9, 2009  
Hi Dmitri---

well, certainly by the end of his life, when he wrote *Candide*, Voltaire had a much more cynical notion of truth rather than a unilinear, monotheistic version. I thought the post-modernists finally put an end to that singular notion for once and for all. I am rather fond of Wittgenstein’s assertion that “the world is all that is the case and what is the case are state of affairs”---which I take to mean that the universe of meaning is composed of facts and what happens afterward consists of stringing those facts into narratives or causal accounts or making statistical claims about how they will or will not appear together, etc. Certainly what we and other scholars might make of the archive is as exciting as the construction of the archive itself.

There are a lot of restaurants within walking distance of the Hilton. I will check out a couple this week-end and made some suggestions to you.

I am now off to work in my garden, on the advise of Voltaire.

ciao  
Sherri

July 16, 2009

Dmitri----this is great. Is Adel Clark Walter Clark’s wife, or Bob Clark, and if the latter, who is Bob Clark?

I am still working on the restaurant problem. who would have thought it would be so complex. First of all, many SF restaurants are closed on Monday night (such as my favorite Italian places). Second, not all that are open Monday night take reservation; since they are popular, who knows how long it would take to get a table for 8 (Is that how many people you expect?) Finally, some places that are open Monday night and take reservations are noisy. Noise level is a big problem in lots of places; it makes conversation difficult. Quiet places that take reservations on Monday night are often very expensive. But I will find some options.

Again, glad you were able to talk with Robin (who is a very interesting guy in his own right) and that he was able to put you in touch with Walter Clark. I am eager to know what you have learned.

ciao for now  
Sherri

July 16, 2009  
Sherri,

Just came down from the mountains, took a shower and revived a bit. On the restaurant front, I did not realize Mondays can be a problem. If going upscale can solve the problem, then go that way.

As for the number of reservations, the total will be smaller. Gary Marx cannot come to the meeting. Manning and Scheff did not reply. Jackie said she might, but it is iffy, as she will be lodging in her house at Tahoe. So, those confirmed are you, Ruth Horowitz, me and my wife. Once we settle on a place, I will send a word and ask to confirm, so we know how many places to reserve.

The name of Adele and Bob Clark came up in the Langs' interview. He is a guy from UCLA, his full name is Burton R. Clark. Kurt thought they knew and his wife had learned about Sky's suicide from them. Bob is no longer lucid, cannot talk, his wife tells me. She remembers both EG and Sky, how they rented Clarks' house. We shall see what else is there to learn.

I am particularly eager to talk to Walter Clark, who told me he was close to Erving and Sky. That comes tomorrow. Ralph Turner might be of interest too, although perhaps more on the insights related to SI and that crowd.

Robin offered some insights on Sky's acting out, bringing drug center folks to her house for drinks, with EG finally telling the folks that they should know better, that his wife is disturbed, so the crowd had to leave. Another insight is that Sky and EG counted cards and were good at it, got proscribed in Reno, but made lots of money beforehand, enough to buy a Jaguar.

Cheers,  
Dmitri

July 17, 2009  
Greetings Sherri:

Just got off the phone with Walter Clark. The exchange was not as rich in detail as some other conversations, but some corroborative evidence surfaced (EG was counting cards with Ira the statistician when the two were evicted from a casino). The same applies to Sky and her bipolar swings (she used to press people to come for a drink at her house with some 20 characters showing up on occasion). Walter mentioned a suicide note Sky left in the car, saying "Erving and Tommy, I am so sorry," or something to that effect. Wonder what else might have been in that note, for the reports making round could be selective. Actually, I recall newspaper accounts mentioning two notes – one note for Tom and one for Erving. Maybe SF metro records can shed light on that.

Sherri, did you have a chance to see the index of memoirs and conversations collected for the EGA, <http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/publications/ega2.html>? Just going by the headlines, we can see the

incredible range of impressions that Erv left on the folks around him. It occurred to me how you can incorporate Voltaire's quote into a headline for your memoir. What do you think about this headline:

In my recollections I try to follow Voltaire's dictum: "To the living we owe respect, but to the dead we owe only the truth"

I think some such title would be true to your perspective, and it will bring into circulation this handsome quote.

All best,  
Dmitri

July 18, 2009

'morning Dmitri

I'm still working on the restaurant; should have something for you to look at by the end of the week.

re: Room---his account of Goffman sending away Sky's friends is the same/similar to the account Stark gives. It was curious when I first read it in Stark's account, but now knowing a lot more, it seem much more significant. First of all, from her will, the house was shared by the two of them, but it was her house in her name. Second, from her letters to David S. it is clear that she feels very isolated; Erving is not communicative and she goes to work to have some meaning in her life. Yet, just from what little you have written, it doesn't sound like her husband is very supportive. In fact, it reminds me of an old classic study from labeling theory by Ed Lemert, (art UCLA) called "Paranoia and the dynamics of exclusion" where Lemert argues that people create "insanity" by, among other things, moving away/excluding the individual from social life in various ways. It is from the '50s, and part of a literature Goffman must have been familiar with. I will look forward to reading Room's full memoir.

re: the index. Hmmm....who is the assumed audience? I find the various phrases odd (even where I have read the various accounts) and my personal feeling is that the phrases "frame" how to look at the memoir, rather than leaving them open ended for the reader to interpret.

I hope more of the board shows up so we can discuss the various issues that have come up. I will call Jackie and see if I can convince he to come to San Francisco. I think her son still lives in the Bay Area, so she would have a place to stay (I long ago transformed my guestroom into a sculpture studio.)

best,  
Sherri

July 18, 2009

Greetings Sherri:

If nothing else works, maybe we can assemble at the hotel restaurant. I am staying at Park 55 Hotel – do you know anything about the quinine at this place? No need to worry much about the setting or food. It's the company that counts. We can go Chinese too.

Yes, Sky must have felt isolated. But then, she was also manic-depressive, which does not make communications easy. Her conditions affected the relationship with her husband. Erv might have – must have – aggravated the situation, but the cause-effect loop is muddled in such cases.

I understand that the heading might over-frame a memoir, gives it a slant, but I think this is minor danger compared to the overall gain in headlining the individual contributions. Taken together, the headings provide a wonderful diversity of perspectives that balance each other. Jackie chose to title her memoir “Having a Friend for a Genius,” Gardner settled on “I Don’t Have Words Enough to Describe Goffman’s Generosity,” and Mendlovitz insisted on “Erving Was a Jew Acting Like a Canadian Acting Like a Britisher.” As long as the choice belongs to the author and expresses his or her sentiment, it is an attention-grabbing device. Otherwise, we end up with the generic “Remembering Goffman” affixed to every bio-narrative or list contributors in the alpha order – one is dull, the other is boring.

So far as your possible title incorporating Voltaire’s quote, it does not prejudge the content of what you have to say about Erving. It expresses your attitude as a memoirist, and an admirable one at that.

You can stay with “Remembering Goffman,” of course, if nothing else appeals to you.

All best,  
Dmitri

July 19, 2009

<http://www.yelp.com/biz/puccini-and-pinetti-san-francisco>

Dmitri, take a look at this. It is right across the street from the Park Hotel; went by this morning to look at it; it wasn't open but the menu looked promising and the reviews are pretty good----considering how critical San Francisco eaters are.

Sheri

July 19, 2009

Greetings, Sherri:

That should work – thanks for tracking the place. Hope we can get seats there.

I am finishing inputting Jordan Scher’s extensive corrections and additions that he scribbled on the margins of his interview. There is stuff on Stewart Perry there, who was at N.I.M.H. at the time. The two were at loggerheads, and if Stewart sees Scher’s take on him, that might spell trouble. Will let you know once I pre-post the stuff, so you can chime in on the need to edit out one or two adjectives.

All best,  
Dmitri

July 19, 2009

Sherri,

Here is a sneak preview of Scher’s memoir,

[http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/scher\\_09.html](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/scher_09.html). Let me know what you think, if it is prudent to do some minor editing in regard to Perry.

Best, Dmitri

July 20, 2009

Dmitri---If "acolyte" and "Perry was nothing" are what is bothering you, I don't see them as a problem. There are a lot of other terms Scher could have used to describe the relationship between Perry and Goffman; the second remark was no more damning than Fox's evaluation of <...>

The description of Erving are pretty powerful---he was a serious loner. So it will be interesting to see Perry's account, since he is probably one of the few people Goffman ever invited to dinner.

And Scher's remarks about Skye support my theory of her isolation and her husband's indifference to it.

ciao for now  
Sherri

July 20, 2009

Greetings, Sherri:

I agree with you on the editing issue, as usual. It's just that Perry is less likely to share anything with us if he reads this account. He might not wish to do so anyhow, as he didn't reply to my last update. I will send him one more, and if there is not reply, that probably means he does not want to be bothered.

I spoke to Jordan over the phone, and he offered more details on what happened between him and Perry. Yes, the visage of Sky is getting sadder. Wish we could hear her side of the story that her relatives might deliver.

All best,  
Dmitri

July 20, 2009

Dmitri---I forgot---some typos

flanked = flunked

brisklly = briefly

closed friends = close friends

a remove = removed

Perry/Harvard sentence needs a pronoun change to "his"

Sherri

July 20, 2009

Just learned from Tom Morrione that Katie Blumer, Herb's daughter from his first marriage who wrote a funny limerick, died a while ago. Her father was very fond of her.

All best,  
Dmitri

July 21, 2009

Dmitri--it is such a gray day here that I decided to read "Insanity of Place" since I have no memory of it. It is not in the archives. Can you get me a copy of it? Thanks.

also, some typos from Goffman's Publication section

Hughes "audio" file

"The" Goffman reader

Asylums "Essays"

Interaction Ritual "Essay"

Relations in Public "Order"

also, from my notes from Scher I was taken by his remark "Erving's total absorption with Erving". It seems to sum up a lot

ciao for now

Sherri

July 21, 2009

Greetings, Sherri:

Thanks for the heads-up on the typos.

The "Insanity of Place" was first published 1969 in the journal *Psychiatry*, but this journal is not available on line. The paper has been reprinted as an appendix in *Relations in Public*. Do you have the book? That's the easiest way to access the paper.

EG's books are protected by copyright law, placing them on line is problematic.

All best,

Dmitri

July 21, 2009

Dmitri--I found it. Oddly enough, as a marker at just that place was a card that said "With the Compliments of the author"

Sherri

July 21, 2009

Good, Sherri!

Maybe we can post the card on the site, along with any other mementos else you can find. Enjoy (if that is the right word) the reading. This is one of the most powerful papers EG wrote, I think, and one of the most explicitly autobiographical. Check for symptoms and compare them with what others have reported.

Best,  
Dmitri

July 22, 2009  
Greetings Sherri:

I pulled out my copy of *Relations in Public* to make sure I's given you the right reference to Goffman's "Insanity of Place" (IP), and then ended rereading the whole piece all over again. The tale is even more riveting than I remember. Now that numerous witnesses chimed in on what had happened between EG and Sky, the autobiographical nature of the IP narrative stands out. This is an astounding piece of self-ethnography, which shows the promise as well as the pitfalls of the genre.

Just think of all the symptoms that a family member with the manic-depressive tendencies exhibit:

The "manic begins by promoting himself in the family hierarchy," he "no longer has time to do his accustomed share of family chores," "displays anger and impatience," "becomes hypercritical and derogatory of family members," "moves backward to the grandiose statements of the high rank and quality of his forebears," entertains "an exalted view of what he proposes soon to accomplish," enters "public life ... through its least guarded portal: participation in voluntary work," promotes "get-togethers of work personnel, and embarrasses status divisions, by trying to bring together for conviviality everyone at work who is remotely within social reach."

Here is more:

There may be a surge in home entertainment that is unstabilizing," "gatherings become socially bizarre," producing "aggregations of persons of widely different social rank," "some sexual promiscuity may occur of the kind that can be realized at will because it trades on marked status difference," "family secrets are confidentially divulged at informal gatherings.

And finally this:

Critical national events such as elections, war policy statements, and assassinations [John Kennedy?], are taken very seriously.

We know from various sources that Sky exhibited most of these symptoms before she had committed suicide. Goffman's article strikes me as an attempt to write "the final word" on what has happened. It reads as an exercise in remedial work where EG is straining to present his side of the story and bring up to date his take on mental illness articulated in *Asylums*. The writing is as passionate and brilliant as it is self-serving and theoretically flawed.

The premise on which Goffman's argument hinges – "Medical symptoms and mental symptoms, so-called, are radically different" – strikes me as wrong. It flies in the face of the recorded history where medical symptoms have been subjected to conflicting definitions. Epilepsy, leprosy, syphilis, depression, tuberculosis – every one of these medical conditions has been culturally framed, with direct, sometimes, deadly, consequences for those on the receiving end of a social diagnosis, as the same medical disorder were cast as a divine inspiration, demonic possession, moral degeneracy, or mysterious scourge requiring community interference.

It is also not true that every afflicted person is bent on imposing his or her loony self-concept on the world and disrupting stable hierarchies. Nor should the disruption a mental illness causes should obviate its medical roots,

its psychosomatic origins that are responsible for much of the social symptomatic. I should add, also, that the symptoms listed in IP can be found in classes, groups, and individuals whose mental status is intact.

“The manic is someone who does not refrain from intruding when he is not wanted,” explains Goffman. “He does not contain himself in the spheres and territories allotted to him. He overreaches. He does not keep his place.” Most protest movements are “manic,” according to this definition. Many have been disparaged by those in power who cast mass protests as driven by “deranged lunatics” and “mad crowds.” This goes for the French Revolution, Antislavery Movement, Civil Rights protests – and, I feel compelled to add, by padres familia of all ages who have treated their family members unwilling “to keep their place” and determined to sustain an “uppity self-concept” as inane, and sometimes, insane. The familiar home place is sure to look “insane” to the entrenched powers that spread the word about the growing “inanity of place” and the need to reign in the “troubled family member.” Reading IP with a new pair of eyes that EGA has afforded me, I kept wondering if EG would have favored forced institutionalization under the circumstances he describes.

Which brings me back to Sky. We know from numerous sources, including her letters, that she was unhappy with her life, that she and her son could be left alone on Christmas eve while her husband trundled to Las Vegas, that she wanted to go back to school and finish her dissertation, that Erving was deeply conservative when it came to family hierarchy, the place each member was accorded in it, and the social mysogenation that unapproved contacts may beget. It seems natural to assume that Sky would rebel at some point, that she would try to carve out a different place for herself in the family and the world, and that Erving would be uneasy about her growing involvement in social reform and philanthropic activities. No doubt, the form that the Sky’s rebellion took was colored by the psychosomatic ailment that is inscribed in her family history (Sky’s mother committed suicide). But just as *Asylums* made me think that EG underestimated the embodied, medical side of mental illness, “The Insanity of Place” convinced me that depression has a social etiology, that the socio-historical conditions embedded in family life may exacerbate depressive symptoms.

Sorry inflicting this on you, Sherri. I have not done any writing on Goffman since last year when I delivered a paper at the ASA, and it will be some time before I can start doing justice to the materials collected in the Goffman Archives. I felt like running a few ideas by someone who shares my fascination with the subject.

All best,  
Dmitri

July 23, 2009

Dmitri---what a brilliant analysis. I think you are right on all points and in particular, the political perspective in support of established hierarchy built into his analysis. I was bothered by it too, even though I described him to you as very conservative. I guess I did not realize how deeply his commitment to conservatism was. I am sure he would support jail for political insurgents. I wonder how he dealt with Tom’s adolescence.

I really liked your analysis a lot. Yes Goffman’s essay is more riveting in light of what the archives have illuminated. All of those examples Goffman gives (some of which would seem odd to make up, e.g. the mentally ill tend to do volunteer work. huh?) correspond to the properties of events in his own life documented in the recollections of others. And also pretty sad. It can be read as a cry for absolution, i.e. “to those who saw me as the villain in my relation with my late wife, this is what I had to put up with.”

I wonder why Goffman wanted to take “Insanity of Place” from the relative obscurity of *Psychiatry* and append it to these essays assaying the public order, especially since he says that the first six essays were written to be published together and the appendix was not (even so, according to his will, *Relations in Public* was not a big seller). I suppose a case could be made for reading IP as an applied study of the forms of interaction he develops



in the six chapters, for example examples of remedial exchanges, what happens to “the with” etc. But because the appendix was written years before the essays; it is not so much an application as an illustration. So then the question, what does it illustrate? By the way, I believe Helen Perry was the editor of *Psychiatry*.

Interesting that he acknowledges Ed Lemert (who I mentioned to you in an earlier e-mail) along with Helen and Stewart Perry and Sheldon Messinger.

There is also a lot of acknowledgments to William Labov throughout the book. Did you say that Gillian remarried Labov?

Anyway good job. You are right, we have no idea what is buried in those archives

my best  
Sherri

p.s. do you plan to run your ideas before Sheff’s Goffman group?

July 23, 2009

Greetings, Sherri:

Thank you for the generous feedback and kind words on my musings about IP, EG, and Sky. Erving was a pioneer on several fronts, but the last thing one would expect from him is such a bold piece of self-ethnography.

The reason he chose to include the IP paper as an appendix in *Relations in Public* is probably complex. As the word about Sky’s sorry demise spread out, he must have wanted to circulate his account to a larger community. The piece also features quintessentially Goffmanian, fine-comb analysis of everyday interactions in a family beset by strife, and as such it merits attention apart from his more problematic take on mental illness.

You must have noticed EG thanking Helen and Stewart Perry for help in writing IP, as well as a nod to Edwin Lemert. After I post Scher’s memoir, I’d sent Perry a heads-up on that, telling him about the interview and a muddled account of the relationship between Perry and Scher. Perry did not reply, just as he hadn’t acknowledged the last EGA update. Chances are we shall not hear from him again, although I hope I am wrong.

I will be putting out an update for the EGA board where I plan to include my exchange with Gary Marx on confidentiality. Gary’s thoughts may help us tackle the thorny issue in SF. I am also wondering if it might be possible to include our exchange on Sky in whichever form you approve of. This note may include your earlier thoughts on Sky. Let me know what you think.

I tried to call but got an answering machine at your home.

All best,  
Dmitri

July 28, 2009

Greetings, Sherri:

Saul Mendlovitz's memoir is back on line,

[http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/mendlovitz\\_08.html](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/mendlovitz_08.html).

I mentioned to you in my last note (hope you received it) the possibility of sharing our exchange on "The Insanity of Place" with the EGA board (minus your overgenerous epithet addressed to me, which was probably meant for my eyes only). Let me know what you think.

All best,  
Dmitri

July 28, 2009

Hi Dmitri

yes, I did get your earlier note but somehow lost it in the plethora of e-mails.

Yes, it is fine to share our correspondence, although other than bringing up "The Insanity of Place," I did not contribute much.

ciao for now  
Sherri

July 28, 2009

Thanks, Sherri:

I finished transcribing my talk with Walter Clark and am now on to Robin Room's recollections.

All best,  
Dmitri

July 29, 2009

Greetings, Sherri:

Robin Rooms memoir is on the web,

[http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/room\\_09.html](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/room_09.html)

Got some info on Liz Bott. She lives somewhere in London, practicing therapy under the name E.B. Spillius. Lots of Google references but no address.

All best,  
Dmitri

July 30, 2009

Hi Dmitri

Read the Room interview. Each little bit enlarges the picture. For example, it seems reasonable that Erving and the Statistician were the ones who went to the casinos and counted cards. The idea must have been the Statistician since Erving got a C in qualitative methods; hard to believe it was his idea. The statistician must have sold Erving on the idea of combining his particular smarts (numbers) and Erving's particular smarts (presenting a front). Also, we have Skye's letters to David that indicate Erving sometimes took the family to Tahoe so he could be near the casinos in the summers but he was perfectly willing to leave her in Berkeley on new years eve. He had a serious habit.

Now, if the money for Skye's jaguar came from the winnings, how did she get a share? We know the car was in her name (from the will) I think (I have to check) she got the car very soon before her death.

And, what is the difference between "vivacious" and "manic"? They most certainly were a mismatched couple. She vivacious and sociable, he sardonic and withdrawn.

I hear it has been over 100 in Las Vegas. Be sure to bring a warm jacket to San Francisco; it is cold and foggy in the morning; windy in the afternoon.

see you soon  
Sherri

July 30, 2009  
a C in quantitative methods

July 30, 2009  
Greetings, Sherri:

Yes, bit by bit we are getting a bigger picture, and even though it remains muddled in some details, we can start formulating hypotheses.

According to one source that insists on remaining anonymous, Sky (which is the way her name is spelled in legal documents) was very good at counting cards. I would not be surprised if she was crucial to the whole operation. As for the provenance of the Jag, I am not convinced it was purchased from the proceeds of gambling. If you recall, Sky got her inheritance portion not long before she died. That must have nicely complemented family income; the blackjack booty might have been a nice tale to enliven the purchase as well as to tout the family's blackjack credentials.

I am more intrigued by what people say about Sky and her illness. Everybody seems to be talking from the same script – Sky was troubled, she had a bipolar disorder, manic-depressive symptoms, and so on. But there is an interesting variation. The closer the person was to EG, the more florid the accounts of Sky's symptomatic turn out to be. People like Robin Room are less adamant about Sky's disorder, seeing her as "a little bit hyper/vivacious." We'll have to explore the possibility of Erving spreading the word about his wife's weirdness just as she was trying to get a life of her own, with his framing of the situation pushing things along if not serving as a self-fulfilling prophecy. You mentioned in your memoir how people in your circle reacted to the news, something to the effect that anyone living with EG would want to jump off the bridge. I am beginning to wonder how much joke there was in this joke.

I sent to Walter Clark the transcript of our conversation and put in the email a package with EGA materials for

Alice Rossi (she told me to send the materials to her home) and to David Gold. Now on to transcribing Robert Daniels, Dean MacCannell, and Leo Goodman.

I have a few thoughts regarding the photo gallery for EGA contributors and mugs for the board members and Frances. Will run them by when I talk to you.

All best,  
Dmitri

August 1, 2009  
Greetings Gary, Dmitri, Ruth, Peter, Tom and Jackie

I thought I would put out some reflections before our board meeting.

Let me start by saying that my understanding of the Goffman archive is that it is just that, a digital repository of the known information relevant to the life, times and associates of Erving Goffman. In that sense, it is like the Nixon Library except it has neither bricks nor mortar. As you know, the Nixon library holds both positive and negative information about old RMN, for example, his taped conversations, which more than anything gave people a deeper, more complete understanding of the man---although they certainly were not something Nixon and those close to him (wife, daughters, etc) ever wanted to be public. I see the Goffman archive as stand-alone project. It is independent of any particular research question or agenda, but it is available to any and all (e.g., scholars, journalists, students) who are interested in understanding this most unique man and his work. It is a data base waiting to be mined. I do not see this openness as problematic in anyway. Even though the information contained in the on-line archive is available to anyone, who might actually want to access this site that shouldn't? What would be our reasons for restricting access?

Gary addresses what should or should not be posted and I would like to address this in part. Fortunately (in a matter of speaking) Erving has a very small number of people who can be counted as "related". Two (his sister and his cousin) are enthusiastic and supportive of the archive and have become participants in the project in an advisory capacity. This leaves Erving's adult son from his marriage with Sky (deceased), his second wife (since remarried) and an adult daughter. What, if any, claim should they have over Erving's legacy? (the question is one that comes up for celebrities. For example, should Michael Jackson's drug use be hidden in deference to his minor children?) The issue is, of course, discrediting information (consider Jefferson and his relationship with his black slave Sally Hemings---should that information have been excised from the public record?). Posting words of praise and honor are not objectionable to anyone. This is not the case with words, ideas, information that might negate, distract, contradict or otherwise discredit Goffman's presentation of self, words that were---up to the time we posted them in the archive--- part of Erving's backstage, known only to him and accessible to few, maybe to no one else. So I cannot imagine that Erving would approve of this whole endeavor. But any portrait of the man that deferentially respected the boundaries he established when he was alive would fall short if it did not push those boundaries in quest of a larger picture.

So is there a line between the "personal" and the "too personal"? Imagine this was the "Alvin Gouldner Archive" put together to document the life, times and associates of another influential sociologist. Should accounts of his various love affairs be excluded because they are too personal? Should the terms and conditions of his will (how he defines his beneficiaries, how much of an estate he accumulated, what charities he gave to, etc.) be excluded because it is "private" even though the will is a matter of publicly recorded information? All of this informs us---scholars, historians and sociologists, students, writers, even the idly curious---about the man and what we know about the man helps us appreciate his sociology. If we wish to understand "the person" then we need to "get personal".

so, these are some of my thoughts about these difficult questions

to be continued

ciao for now

Sherri

August 1, 2009

Greetings, Sherri:

I agree with all your points, just want to add that in some cases, I would contact relatives as a matter of courtesy before posting the letters. Thanks for chiming in with this eloquent statement.

Cheers,

Dmitri

August 3, 2009

Thank you, Sherri:

Like oracles, prodigies and omens, parables do not interpret themselves. More often than not, they are open to conflicting interpretations. Given that the court records contain hearsay, one has to be careful circulating them when the released info can do serious damage even though it is later exposed as false.

Our protagonist is dead, so the issue is less urgent. But as we know from our experience, third parties can get entangled. You remember Rod Stark case. Jackie Wiseman removed certain passages from the final version of her interview (she also offered tantalizing tidbits in subsequent conversations that she pointedly designated as confidential). Another example is Tom Goffman (I agreed to edit out some potentially damaging info about him at the request of a contributor). So the issue of confidentiality remains toxic, especially when it comes to third parties that are still alive.

On a different subject, I woke up last night realizing that the symptoms EG cites in his IP piece highlight the “manic” phase of the disorder rather than the “depressive” ones. One can interpret this as a sign that EG didn’t mind the family member’s depressive phase that much, perhaps because the latter doesn’t openly threaten the interaction order the way “manic” behavior does when the person refuses to “keep one’s place.”

Just a thought on the social labeling of mental symptoms.

All best,

Dmitri

P.S. Would you agree to post in the comments section our three-way exchange on confidentiality? If so, I will check with Garry.

August 3, 2009

yes, if Gary is comfortable with posting the exchange, I am. Hopefully it will be expanded on by other board members.

and yes, the Ryan case is open to numerous and in some cases, conflicting interpretations. And Obama might have won against him if he had not withdraw; he was ahead in the polls. But what I find most intriguing is the judge's decision to unseal and make public the allegations of the case.

Maybe the judge was in Obama's pocket. Or maybe he believed some higher order would be served by exposing the person behind the persona.

Sherri

August 3, 2009

Sherri,

I just finished digitizing the 1956 Edinburgh edition of *Presentation of Self*, [http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/documents/eg\\_ps.pdf](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/documents/eg_ps.pdf). The copy I digitized is the one Erving handed over to his mother, Anne passed it on to Esther Besbris, and she sent it to me, indicating that eventually it would become part of the Goffman archives. The book does not bear the author's inscription, but I spotted a few corrections in the body of the text, probably made by Erving.

Peter Manning is not coming to SF. He and Anne Rawls got married, he wrote to me, and the ASA meeting is not on their honeymoon itinerary. Jackie told me weeks ago she might join us, but I am not sure what her plans are now that she is at Tahoe. If you can, ask you whether she plans to attend. Tom Scheff is the only board member who did not RSVP. Not sure if it makes sense to keep pressing him. Once we hear from Jackie, we can go ahead and make a reservation, with an extra seat in case Tom decides to join us.

When do you think we should make the reservation? Perhaps the time is now. If Tom and Jackie are not coming, then it is Ruth, you, me, and my wife Janet. I think we shall have fun.

I'll send a note to Garry to see if he wants to see his comments on the web. What about our exchange on Goffman's "The Insanity of Place" as an exercise in self-ethnography? I think it might also interest EGA users. I recall you had interesting thoughts on the EG-Sky tangent in our earlier exchanges. Maybe you want to add more of your thoughts. Once the comments are posted, others might join in the debate.

I see the tangent that impressed you in the Ryan story. It is important indeed that the judge chose to err on the side of disclosure. Still, Ryan is a politician, Goffman is not, and the concern about children doesn't seem misplaced in either case. Remember Kenneth Starr dumping his report about the Clinton-Lewinsky affair on the public? Aside from the question of whether the whole investigation was the GOP inspired charade, there had been doubts as to whether the Starr report should have been released the way it was.

It's a pleasure carrying on with you on such matters, Sherri.

With warm wishes,  
Dmitri

August 4, 2009

Dmitri---I was in contact with Jackie about a week ago. She probably is not coming: besides her son and his partners visit, she fell and fractured a rib. She is on the mend, but I doubt if we will see her in SF. Too bad about Peter not coming; hope Tom shows up. We really do need to have good discussion of the various issues the archives pose.

Yes, I think I will write something about Sky and the issue of bringing his late wife out of the shadows. I have a feeling that people who do not feel the biocritique of Erving is a legitimate enterprise will feel that making Sky visible is even a greater breach of deference to the Goffman persona.

Finally, I loved the Star report. But then I am a sociologist and nothing delights me more than getting a peek into the backstage---especially the backstage of power. Anyway, I really do believe that transparency is one of the social controls that keep people "honest".

ciao for now  
Sherri

August 7, 2009  
Dmitri--I am comfortable with my entree as is.

Sherri

p.s. did you ever get Sky's thesis?

August 8, 2009  
Dmitri, the remarks on insanity of place are fine to post.

Sherri

August 8, 2009  
Greetings, Gary and Sherri:

Our exchanges on the confidentiality, [http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/comments/gm\\_sc\\_confidentiality.html](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/comments/gm_sc_confidentiality.html), and Goffman's self-ethnography, [http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/comments/sc\\_ds\\_insaniity.html](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/comments/sc_ds_insaniity.html), are posted on the web.

You can make corrections and additions at any time. Many thanks for sharing your thoughts. I think EGA users will benefit from our discussion.

All best,  
Dmitri

August 8, 2009  
Sherri,

I made reservations for Monday. There will be four of us (Peter, Gary, and Tom are not coming to SF.

I had problems laying my hands on Sky's MA thesis. The U of C library has only one copy that has not been digitized and they will not release it. I offered to pay for preparing a PDF file of the document but so far got no response. We'll find a way to access this piece.

See you on Monday.

Regards,  
Dmitri

August 8, 2009  
Greetings, Sherri:

I am back in Vegas, trying to dig myself form under the pile of emails and other chores. It was good meeting you in person, associating your voice with the rest of you, enjoying your intriguing art. I will try to sum up our exchange on the privacy issue, etc., and relate it to our board.

I added Jackie's thoughts on privacy to our exchange and added a couple new memoirs to our site (Richard Daniels, Arnie Glass). Arlene Daniels added an appendix to her memoir with a few eye-popping recollections. Gary Fine agreed to talk about EG this Friday.

I was mulling over a possible headline for your memoir, which could run something like that: "In Remembering Goffman, We Need to Remember Voltaire's Dictum, 'To the Living We Owe Respect, to the Dead We Owe Only the Truth.'" Perhaps you can come with something along those lines that incorporates a quote from Voltaire. If you would rather have no particular heading, that would work too.

Many thanks for your book. In time I will read and digitize parts of it for our site.

With warm wishes,  
Dmitri

August 20, 2009

Dmitri, I hope you had a wonderful time in San Francisco. I really enjoyed meeting you and Jan; you are a charming couple.

I received some copies of Glass's e-mail and am glad you have posted them (along with the new one I just got this morning.) He sounds like an interested, lively, perceptive octogenarian (and hence a good role model for us all) I am sure we will get to see more of his reflections. I did not find his footnote in my Edinburg press copy of presentation of self; is it in the Anchor edition? Also, I noticed in the Acknowledgements of my copy an acknowledgement to his wife Angelica; I wonder if it is also in the Anchor edition. Could you check? I also noticed in passing an acknowledgement of his wife Angelica in "Cooling the Mark out". As soon as I get a chance I am going to go through all the acknowledgements of his publications in a more systematic way.

I read the Richard Daniels interview, and Arlene's addendum\*. Again, I wonder about her attribution of various affairs with students and colleagues in the 60s. Was she referring to the period when she was in the Department (to have access to such gossip/rumors) and hence while Skye was still alive? was it after her death? or was it a figment of Arlene's imagination?

You have worn me down. How about "Having been Goffman's student I am drawn to Voltaire's Dictum, 'To the Living We Owe Respect, to the Dead We Owe Only the Truth.'"

ciao for now  
Sherri



\*a little footnote. I am sure you picked up on the dynamics between Arlene and Richard. When Arlene and I were (once) friends, she and Richard would come by my house to visit. Invariably, my son (who was 8-10 years old) would answer the door and call out, "It's Mr. Daniels and his wife".

August 20, 2009

Good to hear from you, Sherri:

The anchor edition of PSEL reproduces the acknowledgment that appears in the Edinburg edition, including the generous tribute to his wife. The footnote to Glass's M.A. does appear in the anchor edition. It is one of several changes that EG made while preparing the 1959 reissue of his book. It would be neat if you could go over the acknowledgments EG makes and see what we can learn from those.

On Arlene's updated recollections, I raised the issue of timing during our conversation in SF, specifically on whether Sky was still alive during the alleged affairs, and she said at the time that Sky was still alive. She could not pinpoint the exact timing, though. When I was clearing with her the comments for posting in the addendum, she was less certain, suggesting we stick to "in the 1960s" as the time frame. That's where things stand right now. I was mulling over the wisdom of posting this hearsay but decided that it was appropriate to include provided the uncertain provenance of this rumor is clear.

Thanks for the heading for your memoir, but I feel like I have imposed on you. You can still says no. If you stick to your decision to humor me, then I will add the title as you suggested. One minor stylistic change to consider is this: "As Goffman's student, I am drawn to Voltaire's Dictum, 'To the Living We Owe Respect, to the Dead We Owe Only the Truth.'" But your wording sounds fine as well.

A few weeks back I printed out our correspondence, which added up to a 120 single-spaced page document, with 30-40 more pages added since then. Perhaps someday we could, in the spirit of our enterprise, add it to our site. A few redactions might be appropriate (e.g., Michael Delaney's note on his dissertation that he chose not to add to the site, or your references to Arlene Daniels). It's just a thought.

Tomorrow I am reinterviewing Gary Fine.

With warm wishes,  
Dmitri

August 20, 2009

Dmitri, I think I will keep my wording as it seems to emphasize the experience (having been), rather than the status (as).

re; Richard's wife: appropriate to include provided the uncertain provenance of this rumor is clear. how do we indicate the "uncertain provenance"? Perhaps we should leave my references to Arlene in our collected correspondence.

Sherri

August 20, 2009  
 Sherri,

I added your title to our conversation and the EGA Index, <http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/publications/ega2.html>. As for your note on Arlene, it's your call. Keeping it in is a fair game, unlike Delaney's note which would require his permission if we are to make it public.

Yours, Dmitri

August 27, 2009  
 Hi Dmitri:

This is a draft; please look at it and let me know

1. in general what you think
2. check dates and let me know what else should be added (e.g when EG had his Guggenheim, was he at Harvard for that year? if so, it should be added to community) other things probably should be added but I am getting a bit groggy right now.
3. I have put friendship at the end of each segment because there are a variety of places where friendship is mentioned and I think it is an important category; but anything can be added or dropped
4. anything else?
5. Do you think this organization of his publications works? (I see I have interaction ritual in the wrong place and can change it). Also, I need the publications after 1979 (I used EG's CV which only goes to 1979)

I have prepared a PowerPoint slide, which makes it easy to edit. I have saved it as a jpeg to send to you, but power point gives me the option to save it as a web page and according to my IT Guy, as a web page each entry can be an active link to those memoirs that mention the particular item, e.g. "Las Vegas fieldwork" etc. Of course, we have to go through the memoirs to make the links [between Goffman's publications and relevant EGA interviews], but it is a doable project and maybe someone will be so excited about the project they will help out.

ciao for now  
 Sherri

August 27, 2009  
 Dmitri---this is a better format for the publications. I still haven't filled in all the blanks

Sherri

August 27, 2009  
 Greetings, Sherri:

Good stuff! Thanks for creating the chart. I will give you feedback shortly. With kind wishes,

Dmitri

August 29, 2009

Looks good, Dmitri.

Question: are the memoirs and testimonies something separate from the content of the cells which I assume are filled from the content of the various memoirs and testimonies in the archive? Could you give me an example of what you mean? Also, I am curious about the distinction between “students” and “protégés”

Anyway it will be exciting to get some organizational structure into the archive.

keep in touch  
Sherri

August 29, 2009

Greetings, Sherri:

We have a variety of bionarratives: (1) memoirs and interviews collected specifically for the EGA, (2) memoirs and assessments published previously, (3) occasional snippets and testimonies appearing in newspapers, publications not specifically devoted to Goffman’s bio, or blogs with an uncertain attribution (remember the story of Goffman following menacingly a young student at a faculty party – I still cannot figure out who wrote it). These are all bio materials, whatever their source. I used the term “testimonies” loosely to cover bio snippets that cannot be described as memoir or interviews/conversations. The term is not important in itself, a substituted can be found.

EG wasn’t part of Jackie Wiseman’s dissertation committee, as she stressed to me in a recent conversation. He was her mentor unofficially, acting in the same way he did with Dean McConnell, Tom Delaney, and a few other budding scholars who sometimes had no formal student-teacher relationship yet benefited from the interest that Erving took in their studies and careers. Again, a better term than “protégés” can probably be found.

We have seven categories in the first column, each one is likely to comprise a separate chart with its entrees info and web links. Together they can help map Erving’s life and work and explore the connection between various facets of his existential project.

Now it is the question of finding time to fill all the cells. It is likely to be an ongoing project, with more info and insights added as those become available.

Cheers,  
Dmitri

September 15, 2009

Hi Dmitri---

I did not find this short note by Bourdieu listed in the archive, <http://www.scribd.com/doc/19793006/Pierre->

[Bourdieu-Erving-Goffman-Discoverer-of-the-Infinitely-Small?classic\\_ui=1](#)

He has an interesting take on Goffman-the-person---which I can't copy for some reason.

Hope all is well

ciao for now  
Sherri

September 16, 2009

Greetings, Sherri:

Bourdieu's fine note is posted in the Intercyberlibrary. It used to be in the EGA as well, but then disappeared for some reason. I have restored it in the "critical evaluations" section.

I am done with the transcript of my talk with Gary Fine, who is editing the text. Now I am working on Dean MacCannell's interview.

Aside from Ruth, who is cautious as usual, no one offered an opinion on the EG's and Sky's letters. Hope you are thriving.

Kind wishes,  
Dmitri

September 18, 2009

Greetings, Sherri and Arnie:

Your exchange belongs on our site, and I hope it continues to evolve. Would like to add it the dialogues/comments section as an exchange between the two of you on qualitative research and the ethics of participant observation. More people might join in later. Let me know if that is fine with you.

All best,  
Dmitri

September 18, 2009

Greetings, Sherri and Arnie:

Your exchange belongs to our site, and I hope it continues to evolve. Would like to add it to the dialogues/comments section as an exchange between the two of you on qualitative research and the ethics of participant observation. More people might join in later. Let me know if that is fine with you.

All best,  
Dmitri

PS. Gary Fine's memoir is on the web,

[http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/fine\\_09.html](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/fine_09.html)

September 19, 2009

This is fine.

Cavan

September 19, 2009

Thank you, Sherri:

I put the exchange on the web.

Shana Tova!

Dmitri

September 28, 2009

Hi Dmitri----

hope you (and Jan) are well. I thought you might find this article interesting,  
<http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/0,1518,651859,00.html>

my best  
 Sherri

September 28, 2009

Greetings, Sherri:

Thanks for the link to a fine article. I have been following this controversy for a couple of years. Seems like the matter is coming to head. This is a rich example of the passions that archival materials can incite. I am still tracking Sky's thesis, which UC archivists have been reluctant to share before they track the relatives. My effort to locate those didn't succeed so far. Katrinka mentioned in Sky's will did not respond to my letter. I am not sure about the whereabouts of Sky's other relatives.

Just got the first draft of a memoir by Jane Prather who adds fresh wrinkles to EG's portrait. Hope all is well with you.

All best,  
 Dmitri

September 30, 2009

Many thanks, Sherri:

I wonder if this is a warning for us, a foretaste of things to come. Schneider deposited EG's and Sky's letters in the UC archives whose experts didn't object. Still, it is upsetting.

All bets,  
Dmitri

October 2, 2009  
Hi Dmitri---

were you familiar with the story of Freud's granddaughter's encounter with Goffman's writings?  
<http://www.telegram.com/article/20091001/NEWS/910010699/1116>

ciao  
Sherri

October 2, 2009  
Greetings, Sherri:

We have in our archives this newspaper clip on Freud's daughter and Goffman,  
[http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/news/sfreud\\_03.html](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/news/sfreud_03.html). It seems to be a more detailed statement than the article you found.

All best,  
Dmitri

October 6, 2009  
Greetings, Sherri:

I finally managed to get a hold of Sky's thesis. The UC library is trying to contact Sky's heirs and sort out the issues of sharing and posting the document. Meanwhile, you can take a look,  
[http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/documents/sky\\_ma.pdf](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/documents/sky_ma.pdf). I think you will enjoy reading the thesis. At this point, this is just for you.

All best,  
Dmitri

October 11, 2009  
Dmitri----belated greetings to you.

I read Sky's thesis. I imagine you have also, so when I say it is quite a document of self-ethnography, you know that already.

Did we once have Erving's MA thesis in the archive? I would certainly like to read the two documents together. But the few citations to Erving (in her 1950 thesis) are redolent of a story. It might not be their story, but maybe it is. They meet in class; discover they have similar intellectual interests in common (the thematic apprehension test. Oddly enough I was enamored with the TAT when I was doing graduate work at UCLA and argued that stories could be used as evidence of a mindset either conducive to upholding the law or conducive to breaking the law. (This is an aside). From Erving and Skye's discussion of matters sociological

came a romantic attraction which resulted in their marriage in 1952. In addition to her physical attraction, her social class must have generated a special allure for Erving. Did he write her letters from the Shetland Islands? Are there traces of them someplace? We could wish.

But there is a snag in the story. If Erving thought he was getting an upper class trophy wife, he was mistaken. From the few accounts in the archives we know (or, kinda know) she was really more bohemian than Bohemian Grove. She was certainly more liberal, perhaps radical, than Erving and this must have created a certain tension in their relationship, along with her growing dissatisfaction of being “just a housewife.”

ciao for now  
Sherri

October 14, 2009  
Greetings, Sherri:

I am sorry I couldn't answer earlier. My mother, who is 90, broke her hip, and I have been taking care of her. Now that the surgery is over and she is on the way to recovery, I can write a few words in reply to your observations and insights.

The moment I spotted Sky's thesis in the UC Library catalogue, I knew it must be a find. The very title – “The Personality Trends in Upperclass Women” – brought to mind Erving's MA thesis and his first publication, “Symbols of Class Status.” The fact that Sky quotes Erving's MA (it is posted in the documents section of our site) tells me that the two shared intellectual interests.

Erving's earliest statement on this subject I am familiar with is his 1948 paper that he wrote for Ernest Burgess's class. In 1949 he filed his MA thesis “Some Characteristics of Response to Depicted Situations.” A year later Sky defended her MA thesis. In 1951 Erving published his first article on “Symbols of Class Status,” and in 1953 he defended his Ph.D. It was more than a polite gesture for Erving to acknowledge critical input from “Angelica Choate” in his 1951 article, alongside Lloyd Warner, Robert Armstrong, and Tom Burns. I am convinced that the intellectual exchange between the two was a two-way street.

In his first article Goffman argues that status symbols “may come to be employed in a ‘fraudulent’ way, i.e., to signify status that the claimant does not in fact possess,” that in America “[o]ffenders of this kind commit a presumption, not a crime,” and that the ready availability of class status symbols in the middle class America tends to “undermine the regard in which costly symbols are held by members of other classes.” Subtler marks of breeding need to be considered, such as “the cultivation of arts,” a “command of foreign languages,” and specially refined “tastes” and “habits” that expose nouveaux riches still uneasy in their skins and certify those who had their class bread into their bones from childhood on.

Some of these themes appear in Sky's thesis where she discusses the upper class women's “consciousness of class, consumption patterns and status symbols” acquired through years spent in boarding schools and country clubs where they are prepared for their society weddings and future wifely roles. In a similar vein Sky notes that “the way upper-uppers treat their status symbols suggest that they are uneasy about these symbols which are available to anyone with a certain amount of wealth,” which is why the elite pays close attention to “skill in the use of a set of symbols rather than use of a distinctive set of symbols [and] prize this skill when it is acquired by informal instruction at an early age and to deride it when it is acquired later and/or from impersonal access such as an etiquette book or a magazine on interior decorating.”

A systematic comparison of EG's and Sky's views on class symbols and their deflation in the middle class America is instructive. Such an inquiry is likely to reveal the personal dimension of Sky's musings about upper class women's personality traits and aspirations. Clearly, the composite portrait she divines from her sample of 30 women drawn from "a region near Boston" is grounded in Sky's experience as much as in her data. She admits that much when she writes that "the following attempts to generalize about upper-upper life patterns and the upper-upper subculture cannot be extensively documented and should in some cases be considered as impressions which need further her investigation rather than as statements of fact." Given Sky's pedigree, one can hardly think of a better qualified person to observe the lives of the upper crust women.

This wondrously personal statement made me think that, inadvertently, Sky anticipated the story of her life, of her marriage to an upwardly-mobile middle-class striver Erving Goffman. Sky had 14 years to live after she defended her thesis, with her life story offering evidence that "lineage symbols" meant something to her, that "upper-uppers are unwilling to accept criticism from people outside their class," that "downward social mobility for an upper-upper . . . is often an act of protest." Her rebellious streak was on display when she defied her strata's prejudice regarding higher education ("graduate work . . . is not much valued; this is especially true for women") and pressure to marry "Mr. X, who, brought up in a similar way and educated in private schools, was starting his career in a profession or in one of the Boston banks or investment houses."

I think you are exactly right when you suggest that Erving miscalculated if he sought to marry a "trophy wife." Sky seems to be more liberal than Erving, more independent and more public-minded. The tension in this family reflected various incompatibilities and idiosyncrasies, but Erving's beliefs about wife's proper place in the household must have been a major factor.

Wish we could share with Sky's relatives our discoveries.

All best,  
Dmitri

December 23, 2003

"This year, Christmas Eve falls on the 3,000<sup>th</sup> day that U.S. forces have been in Afghanistan, as well as the 30th anniversary of the Soviet invasion of the very same nation."

[http://rethinkafghanistan.com/?utm\\_source=russia](http://rethinkafghanistan.com/?utm_source=russia)

December 23, 2009

Greetings, Sherri:

Good to hear from you. Hope your year is ending auspiciously and the coming one brings good tidings to you and yours.

We are learning some lessons in Afghanistan that the Russian had picked up a decade ago – suits us right. Wonder if you received the last EGA update that featured a few good interviews, including a meaty one by Dean MacCannell. I have recently recorded an interview with Magali (the two of you apparently knew each other rather well at some point).

I am still off my working schedule, attending to my mother, and now trying to get rid of a commitment to expand an article on Mead I once wrote for Ritzer's volume. One thing I managed to do was to give a talk in my department on Goffman as pioneer in self-ethnography. Attached is a chart I prepared for this presentation.



Regards,  
Dmitri

December 23, 2009

Dear Dmitri---I am sorry I have become such a lame correspondent, but so much has happened since I got back from Morocco (some good, some not so good) and each time I thought about writing it was just too much to manage. Beyond the nagging question, "was I a dope for hope?" were more personal issues. At least the latter have been resolved.

I am taking a break from everything, going to Timbuktu because that is about as far as you can go overland. Besides, Mali is one of my favorite places and I have been traveling there on various occasions over the past twenty years. Twenty years ago video cassettes were transforming traditional life. It will be interesting to see the influence of the digital world and the distribution of wi-fi. Is there wi-fi in Timbuktu? (I bet there is)

When I get back in January I would like to resume working on the two papers re Goffman's early life and his first wife. I hope your interviews with the relatives will be posted by then. Also, I wanted to ask if you had Sky's transcripts from the University of Chicago? If you compared them with Erving's transcripts we might be able to identify the classes they took together. I did (just) read the MacCannell interview, which is a bit of a cliff-hanger with the promise of the *vita voluptuosa* to be provided at some later date. As the archive grows it will be interesting to see who saw only the sweet side of Erving, who saw his spite and who got mixed messages.

The chart for your paper on Goffman is great. I never cease to be amazed by how powerful the visual arrangement of information can be.

Was your talk well received by your department? I hope so.

Anyway the first decade of the new century is passing and those of us who had great hope for this new century are resigning ourselves to what appears as a permanent war, just as Cheney and Rumsfeld promised almost ten years ago.

ciao for now  
Sherri

December 23, 2009  
Sherri,

Your travel plans are inspired (will you be disappointed if there is no wi-fi in Timbuktu?) Hope you will get rejuvenated on the road and come back ready for engagement. I will try to push out of the way a couple of writing chores, then get on with transcribing the rest of the interviews.

My talk at the department went very well. I am thinking of submitting a paper on the same subject for the next ASA meeting in Atlanta.

Did you hear from Jackie? She promised to finish arranging her comments on Blumer and to share her notes from EG classes. If you talk to her, ask if she is thinking about that.

A few weeks back I sent a note to Marsha Rosenbaum but got no reply. If you feel comfortable calling her <...>, ask her if she is still game to share her recollections. If not, we'll stop barking up that tree.

On the endless Bush wars Obama seems to make his own, I am willing to give him time to sort things out. By the next pres election, I suspect, most of the US Iraqi contingent will be out and the withdrawal from Afghanistan well under way.

Cheers,  
Dmitri

P.S. Here is a link to Sky's transcript, which is instructive indeed,  
[http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/documents/sky\\_transcript.pdf](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/documents/sky_transcript.pdf).

December 27, 2009

Dmitri---you really should submit the paper for the ASA.

I haven't heard from Jackie for a while---she owes me a note, but I don't think I will get around to writing her again before I leave. I was going to suggest that you ask Jackie to talk to Marsha; but another possibility is Arlene. I doubt if another call from me will make a difference.

I hope I will be very rejuvenated when I get back as I have committed myself to giving a lecture in my department on sociology and art, and I have been trying to get a sophisticated proposal together to find a gallery for my "War and Capitalism" sculpture. Plus working on my web page. So we manage to keep busy by keeping slightly (or significantly) over committed.

I will be looking for an internet cafe in Timbuktu---

my best for the new year to come  
Sherri

December 27, 2009

Greetings, Sherri:

I will write to Jackie and see how she is doing (I assume Arlene and Marsha know each other and are on good terms).

Did you have a chance to check Sky's transcript? If you did, you might have noticed the upper right corner where the name "Choate" is crossed and the name "Goffman" is penciled in, along with the date "9.9.52." Assuming the latter is the date of their marriage (as seems reasonable), and Tom Goffman's birthday (April 1953), we may speculate about additional reasons EG and Sky did not publicize their marriage and its date.

Sherri, what do you think about posting our exchange on Sky's thesis as a way to draw attention to this document? I am attaching our exchange. If you think it is worth adding to the dialogue section, you can edit and augment the text as you see fit.

Strong move with your gallery plan – hope it works.

Have a great trip,  
Dmitri

December 28, 2009  
Greetings Dmitri

Marsha and Arlene were both a part of Dorothy Miller's social science research project so they know one another pretty well but who knows what their relationship is now. It is worth a try to see if Arlene can be persuasive.

I am comfortable with posting our correspondence re Skye's thesis; I will have to wait until I return late January to see if I want to make any changes, additions, etc. but there is no reason why it could not be posted as is for now.

Yes, I did look at Skye's theses and noted the name change and the date, but is this the date of their marriage or the date the change was recorded? I suppose a check of marriage records would clarify it for us. Isn't there someplace in the archive that refers to the fact that Gillian was already pregnant with Alice when they were married?

Well, I have to get packing---literally.  
My best to you and your family for this new year

Sherri

December 28, 2009  
Greetings, Sherri:

I placed our exchange on the web,  
[http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/comments/sc\\_ds\\_skythesis.html](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/comments/sc_ds_skythesis.html). You can edit/augment it when you have a chance.

Yes, it is possible that the date in the transcript indicates when the name change was entered into Sky's records. It will be hard to check the facts without knowing in which county this marriage was registered. I cannot find anything on the web.

Be well and have a great trip,  
Dmitri

January 26, 2010

Dmitri, when I got back from W. Africa I got the news that John Irwin had died in early January. His memorial service was already over by the time I returned. I would have liked to attend; John and I went back to UCLA in the '50s and '60s, Berkeley in the '60s, San Francisco State from the '60s to the 90's. That was a long time. My guess is that you have not heard from Marsha because John was sick. I had not seen them for about five or six months, and then only because our paths crossed in the neighborhood.

From Africa home is always a culture shock, and frequently a physical shock.

I came home with a horrendous cough, totally exhausted (in part because of a Kafkaesque experience in the Frankfurt airport with a connecting flight an hour and a half late and just 20 minutes to find my departure gate. I still have nightmares.) I have been doing a lot of sleeping, which is always therapeutic; the cough is mainly gone so it's time to make plans for the new year.

Unfortunately US politics goes from bad to worse to unspeakable. What will the new year bring?

my best  
Sherri

January 26, 2010  
Welcome Back, Sherri:

Sorry to hear about John Irwin. It would have been important for you to attend his memorial service. Perhaps you can touch base with Marsha in a near future, and if so, please relate my condolences. If you come across an obituary for John, let me know. In the Intercyberlibrary we have a section for such memorials.

People are passing away. It seems like sad news comes my way more and more often. Dell Hymes died a few months ago, and so did Irving Piliavin, both of whom knew Erving well. Dell had Alzheimer's, which is why he might not have been able to reply to my inquiry. Irving died late last year as well, his wife found my package with the EG interviews on his desk after his death. Sky's sister, as it turned out, had passed away just as I discovered her whereabouts, and so did her brother.

Traveling these days can be a hassle, as your experience reminds me, with natural and man-made disasters waiting in the wings. Good thing you are back. Sleeping in your own bed may do wonders for you. I hope the trip was satisfying nonetheless.

I emailed Jackie Wiseman a couple of weeks ago, then left a message on her answering machine, but did not hear back from her.

Be well,  
Dmitri

January 26, 2010  
dear Dmitri  
<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2010/01/07/BA091BE9R2.DTL>

This obituary appeared in the San Francisco Chronicle.

re Jackie---well sometimes it rains and then it pours. I spoke to Jackie a few days ago; She was just getting out of a rehabilitation unit where she had been for almost a month after falling in her garage and breaking her hip. She is on the mend, but as you can imagine it will probably take a while. I don't know if she is back to using her e-mail but her telephone number at home is <...>. I am sure she would like to hear from you and fill you in on all the details.

Sorry to hear about Dell Hymes and Piliavin, as well as Sky's sister and brother. Seems like an awfully rocky time.

my best  
Sherri

January 26, 2010  
Thanks for the link, Sherri.

I have added it to the I-library.

Sorry to hear about Jackie. Hip fracture – the same thing happened my mother a few months ago. She is wheelchair-bound now. Hope Jackie recovers soon. Will call her.

There are a handful of people who would have been great to talk to about EG but they are either gone or not talking, David Matza is one of them.

Kind wishes,  
Dmitri

February 10, 2010  
Greetings, Sherri:

Here is the link to Magali's interview,  
[http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/larson\\_09.html](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/larson_09.html)

I've always had this fantasy that the EGA will help bring together people who have last touched with or affection for each other. Hence, this challenge. Let me know what you think.

With admiration,  
Dmitri

February 11, 2010  
Dmitri----

I think I will send Magali an e-mail (if you will send me her e-mail address). I will send you a copy. Please feel free to post her memoir as she wants it.

ciao for now  
Sherri

Feb 11, 2010  
Sherri,

Here is Magali's email address: <...>

Do you think it might be a good idea for me, as a matter of protocol, to ask her if I can pass her email address to you? I do not think there will be a problem; it's just a way to cross the t's and dot the i's. If you feel it is unnecessary, that's fine. You can use the address anyway.

Cheers, Dmitri

February 11, 2010  
Hi Dmitri-----

I don't think you need to ask Magali if it is okay to send me her e-mail, since with a little more effort I could have found it on the internet.

I am giving a lecture on war and capitalism and art at SF State in March. I am appending a doc. which I prepared for the occasion. I thought you might find it interesting.

ciao  
Sherri

February 11, 2010  
You are right, Sherri:

I liked the picture. It reminded me of the capitalist moneybag caricatures that would become ubiquitous in the USSR about the same time.

Yours, Dmitri

February 12, 2010  
Dmitri---

I finally found my review of Gender Advertisements. Do you have access to this site? I would like to have a copy of the review if possible and also it can be included in the archive, <http://www.jstor.org/pss/2778950>

thanks  
Sherri

p.s. we have had a lovely, soft rain

February 11, 2010  
Greetings, Sherri:

Just came back from the department meeting. Grim news – I've been elected to serve as next department chair after Andy Fontana retires. That will complicate my life grievously.

Glad you found the link to your review. I added to the site the link with your review.

<...>

All best,  
Dmitri

February 13, 2010

Hi Dmitri----

well, Magali and I are “in correspondence” which is certainly a good thing. Your dream may be realized more than you think.

Sorry to hear about your prospective chairmanship; I hope it doesn't cut too deeply into your life.

Finally, let's add, in brackets [at my house] in my memoir at the meeting where Goffman's presentation of the gender advertisement slides was made.

be in touch

Sherri

February 13, 2010

Sherri,

I am not sure where exactly to insert those words. Could you give me the sentence?

I am thrilled that you and Magali are in communication again. If the two of you can take the role of the other, then there is hope for us all.

Yours, Dmitri

February 14, 2010

Greetings, Sherri and Magali:

I was flipping TV channels late last night when I came across “The Last Picture Show.” Caught it midway through, it seems, as Duane was having hard time rising up to the occasion with Jacey in a motel room. What a desolate terrain, physically and emotionally. It must have been a classic in its time.

I have noticed that the movie came out in 1971, Nixon bombed Hanoi in late 1972, so you must have kept up for a while after Magali moved east in the late 60s.

Wonder what happened to that paper about “The Last Picture Show” you were thinking of writing. I know the prospect of the two of you revisiting this terrain is preposterously slim, but wouldn't it be something if you took up the challenge once again, even if only separately, and then compared notes? The movie is certainly worth it, and so is once vibrant relationship.

Well, I'll keep dreaming.

Happy Valentines!

Dmitri

March 18, 2010

Greetings, Sherri:

Tom, Fran, and Gillian approved posting on the web Elizabeth Bott-Spillius's memoir. Here is the link, [http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/spillius\\_10.html](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/spillius_10.html).

Hope all is well with you. Regards,  
Dmitri

March 25  
Dear Dmitri

I am so sorry about the lapses in my correspondence. I have just been overwhelmed with the miasma of everyday life. I wanted to read the memories you have posted and respond and of course did not get a chance to read them and then did not respond, and then thought I should have something intelligent to say to explain why I hadn't responded but everything around me has been a mixture of Kafka and Brecht and maybe some Escher too.

I hope at this point I can have a realistic agenda and top priority is getting back to the Goffman Archives

my best  
Sherri

March 25, 2010  
Greetings, Sherri:

Sounds like you are going through a rough patch. Hope there is something redeeming in your recent experiences, however annoying they might be. No rush with anything on my side.

<...>

Things are hectic around here. I have not assumed my chairperson's duty yet, but have to attend all manners of meetings to learn the rope. With the huge budget cuts at UNLV, this is going to be rough sailing.

Hope you will slip into your Zen attitude and fend off the nonsense that bogs you down.

Cheers,  
Dmitri

April 4, 2010  
<http://orgtheory.wordpress.com/>

Jenn Lena points us to this incredible archive on Erving Goffman, the social psychologist probably best remembered for his book *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. He laid the foundation for a theory of impression management in that book, claiming that every individual is an actor on a stage performing for an audience. The front stage is where the performance takes place, using various impression management tools to articulate particular images to the audience, and the backstage, he argues, is where the protected self resides. Goffman believed that individuals build a strong barrier between the front and backstage, partly because the individual is vulnerable in the backstage but also in order to preserve the authenticity of the front stage



performance.

The remembrances of Goffman in the interview portion of the archive are precious.

.....so the archive has been discovered

ciao for now  
Sherri

April 4, 2010  
Hi, Sherri:

Looks that way. I searched “Erving Goffman Archives” in the Google and found that the twitter generation is on to Goffman. We can go viral if things continue that way. I’d rather fly under the radar.

Lots of things are happening. I am in touch with Tom again (grateful for my passing on to him his parents’ letters, he is intermittently sharing memories). Fran’s interviews and a few other of that cycle will be posted soon. Haven’t heard from Alice yet.

Hope the miasma of everyday life is lifting and sunnier times are looming large.

All best,  
Dmitri

April 6, 2010  
Greetings, Sherri:

Here is a sneak preview of France’s memoir,  
[http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/goffman\\_bay\\_09.html](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/goffman_bay_09.html).

Hope you are getting around your funk.

Regards,  
Dmitri

April 8, 2010  
morning, Dmitri.

of course I had to sneak a peak of Frances’s memoir and think of all of the bits of information that are collecting in the archive and how they would look all pieced together like a quilt---and how many different quilt patterns can be produced by the same stock of material. I am inspired by the overpowering show of Amish quilts at the d'young museum.

I am slogging through real time, trying to get some medical issues resolved and as we used to say in the ‘60s, “keep on trucking”.

my best

Sherri

April 8, 2010

Greetings, Sherri:

And what a crazy quilt it is going to be! As crazy and cruel and colorful and beautiful as humanity itself. I am having a terrific exchange with Liz Bott. Have to run to classes.

Hope your body behaves and gets back to normal soon.

Yours, Dmitri

April 21, 2010

Hi Dmitri---

well it looks like I have my summer reading set out for me. Congratulations for creating such a wonderful, expansive archive. I am looking forward to reading the new memoirs and rereading the rest.

my best

Sherri

April 21, 2010

Greetings, Sherri:

You will have some good read this summer. As you plow through new memoirs, you will see how these can aid your work on EG and the Jewish tangent, family dynamics, womenfolk, and more.

Hope your health is improving.

Kindly,

Dmitri

May 7, 2010

Greetings, Dmitri--

I finally found a bit of time to start reading the new memoirs in the archive. There is such interesting information in the few I have read (Besbris, Segre, Spillus)/ I hope to find some real time to try to pull out the various things that stand out for me, but right now I wanted to let you know that Dr. Hooker Bresbris refers to must be Evelyn Hooker, who was at UCLA, a very early student of the homosexual subculture. She and Garfinkel were close (at least intellectually) Garfinkel gave a seminar with her (which I took---it must have been the late '50s) Goffman was going to LA to work/discuss things intellectual with Garfinkel (as well as to visit his mother) so it would be reasonable to assume that he had contact with Evelyn Hooker. She is now deceased.

Dmitri, are you planning to present a paper on Goffman and the insanity of place at the ASA this summer? I know you mentioned it to me at one time. Let me know.

ciao for now  
Sherri

May 7, 2010

Greetings, Sherri:

The trove of EG memoires is expanding, with the latest bunch filling a few important gaps. Your guess about Evelyn Hooker rings true. Wonder if UCLA has her papers in its archives. It's worth finding out. Yes, I am set to give a talk on EG and "The Inanity of Place" at the ASA meeting in Atlanta. I'll show it to you once I have a chance to tidy it up.

Did I tell you that I had a long interview with Roy Turner who stumbled on the EGA while surfing the Internet. Roy called me when he came to Vegas and added a few more insights that I scribbled down. He told me interesting things about Henry Elliott and Garfinkel. Wish we found the way to get through to Harold, although he is in his mid-90s now and probably not disposed to communication.

All best,  
Dmitri

May 30, 2010

Greetings Dmitri and Jackie

so Goffman has a facebook page. I wonder how his essay "on face work" would jive with the digital phenomenon of "facebook"

[Erving Goffman | Facebook](#)

Welcome to the Facebook Community Page about Erving Goffman, a collection of shared knowledge about Erving Goffman.

[en-gb.facebook.com/pages/w/107573769265570](https://en-gb.facebook.com/pages/w/107573769265570)

ciao for now  
Sherri

May 31, 2010

Thanks for the heads-up, Sherri.

This is the sign of the time, I suppose. Wonder if somebody will be channeling Erving's spirit and write a blog for him. EG did not live long enough to witness the communication revolution, but he had a lot to say that illuminates the ways of the facebook generation.

Yours, Dmitri

June 31, 2010

Greetings, Sherri:

I have place on the web a memoir by Roy Turner, a fine addition to our collection. Here is the link, [http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/turner\\_roy\\_10.html](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/turner_roy_10.html).

I am thinking who else might be willing and able to share memories about Garfinkel, Sacks and people of that circle. Do you think the UCLA chair you know might be willing to talk to you?  
Hope you enjoy your summer.

All best,  
Dmitri

July 1, 2010  
Hi Dmitri---

interesting memoir. A couple of minor corrections, points

John Lofland was at UC Davis (not San Diego)  
“Larry Whitman” is probably Larry Weider, (deceased) who was a student of Garfinkel; I don't know of any “Larry Whitman”  
Mel Pollner died a couple of years ago.  
Carl Werthman---check spelling

two interesting points----did Sudnow go to Goffman’s house to sit shiva twice, once with Turner and Elliot and once with Schegloff, Sacks and me?

I don’t remember Turner being there and he doesn’t remember me.

More interesting is the story of Sudnow telling Turner of Goffman's remarks about the stock market on hearing of Kennedy's death. Did Goffman say this to everyone (or more than one person) upon hearing the news of JFK’s death or did I tell Sudnow the story and he appropriated it as his own? (the latter is not inconceivable.)

I went to Wikipedia to see if I could find any on the history of the dispute between Sudnow and Schegloff re Sacks work. I did not find the most inflammatory entry (where David threatens to beat Schegloff up, calls him a few unflattering names, etc) but I did find these two entries which hint at the conflict between the two  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Talk:Harvey\\_Sacks&oldid=49964525](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Talk:Harvey_Sacks&oldid=49964525)  
and [http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Harvey\\_Sacks&diff=38446084&oldid=38279337](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Harvey_Sacks&diff=38446084&oldid=38279337)

there are other past versions in the history of the entry on Sacks, but I was getting dizzy looking at them. I did noticed mention of “mutually recorded conversations” between Garfinkel and Sudnow. I wonder if they still exist. I wonder what papers Sudnow left and whether this would be worth pursuing.

anyway I am having a pleasant summer. We actually had a few days above 60 degrees. Otherwise it is like Mongolia here

ciao for now  
Sherri

July 1, 2010

Sherri,

More thoughts for food. Thank you for the input and corrections. Would you mind sharing your observations with Roy? I am sure he will be thrilled to hear from you. I can pass your note to him or you can write directly: <...>.

I agree it would be nice to get a hold of David's heirs and ask them about his archives. Finding them will not be easy.

Wonder how Jackie is doing. She was going to copy EG's lecture notes for our site, but I never got those.

Regards,  
Dmitri

July 1, 2010

yes, Dmitri, you can forward my note to Roy.

Sudnow had a sister (Naomi Rubine) who lives in Hawaii; and his last wife was Wendy Lu (or Liu) who you might be able to contact through David's piano business. The Sudnow Method.com. I never met either one of them.

Sherri

July 1, 2010

Thank you, Sherri:

As you suggest, I am sending your note to Roy.

It would be interesting to get a hold of David's earlier wives, those who knew Goffman or heard things about him from the horse's mouth. But getting in touch with his sister is a good idea. Do you know someone who might help to track her?

Your point on the EG-Kennedy story is well taken: Was Erving performing for more than one audience, did David recount your story as his own, or was it Roy who confused things? Either way, one can learn from this episode and the way matters get reported.

Yours, Dmitri

P.S. Heard bad news about Tom Goffman, will tell you when we speak.

July 2, 2010

since his name comes up in the archive

Sherri

[http://www.berkeley.edu/news/media/releases/2010/06/16\\_selznick.shtml](http://www.berkeley.edu/news/media/releases/2010/06/16_selznick.shtml)

Philip Selznick, leading scholar in sociology and law, dies at 91

By Andrew Cohen, UC Berkeley School of Law | 16 June 2010

BERKELEY — Philip Selznick, professor emeritus of law and sociology at the University of California, Berkeley, and a leading expert in the sociology of both law and organizations, died Saturday, June 12. He was 91.

Selznick died at his Berkeley home after a long period of illness.

“The Berkeley community lost one of its post-war academic giants, whose scholarship and leadership helped shape the theory and sociology of organizations and transform the social study of law,” said David Lieberman, professor at UC Berkeley School of Law (Berkeley Law) and a close colleague of Selznick’s.

Selznick was considered a founder of the institutional perspective in organization theory.

“He showed that organizations are living institutions imbued with cultural and informal characteristics that can constrain and also enhance rationality,” said Lauren Edelman, associate dean of Berkeley Law’s Jurisprudence and Social Policy (JSP) Program and a professor of law and sociology.

Selznick is credited with helping transform the social study of law by developing a new scholarly approach, one that combined elements of traditional jurisprudence concerning the aims and nature of law with social science understandings of organizational dynamics and constraints.

“The resulting mixture of institutional realism, social theory and normative inquiry offered a novel approach to the understanding of legality and the rule of law while making a decisive contribution to the developing field of law and society,” added Lieberman.

Born on January 8, 1919, in Newark, N.J., Selznick earned his undergraduate degree from City College of New York in 1938. In college, he joined and sometimes led a radical Trotskyite youth organization and met such future luminaries as Irving Kristol, Gertrude Himmelfarb, Daniel Bell, Nathan Glazer, Seymour Martin Lipset, and his first wife, Gertrude Jaeger.

After receiving a master’s degree in sociology from Columbia University in 1942, Selznick’s academic training was interrupted by military service in the U.S. Army from 1943–’46, when he served as a research analyst in the Philippines and Japan during World War II.

After the war, Selznick returned to Columbia, where he earned a Ph.D. in sociology in 1947. Two years later, he published “TVA and the Grass Roots,” a renowned sociological study of the Tennessee Valley Authority. In this work, Selznick found that a formal organization “is an adaptive social structure” facing problems independent of its creation. He noted that such organizations are shaped by forces separate from their stated structure and goals, and that individuals in the organization function as a “whole” with actions and alliances separate from the organization.

“TVA and the Grass Roots” launched Selznick’s academic career, and he later characterized that book, and later volumes “The Organizational Weapon” (1952) and “Leadership in Administration” (1957), as investigations “preoccupied with the conditions and processes that frustrate ideals, or, instead, give them life and hope.” After teaching for one year at the University of Minnesota and for five years at UCLA, Selznick joined UC Berkeley’s faculty in 1952 as an assistant sociology professor. He chaired the Department of Sociology from 1963–’67 amid heated debates and political tensions generated by the Free Speech Movement. Though Selznick rejected later student militancy on campus, in 1965 his strong defense of student free speech and protest appeared in *Commentary* magazine as a pointed exchange with fellow sociology professor Nathan Glazer, who viewed the protestors as extremists.

The Center for the Study of Law and Society, where Selznick served as founding director from 1961–'72, became a top think tank and international scholarly destination for interdisciplinary research on law and legal practices.

He joined the Berkeley Law faculty in 1977, and in 1978 became founding chair of its Jurisprudence and Social Policy doctoral program – the first and for many years the only Ph.D. program based in a major U.S. law school. The program maintains a graduate fellowship program named in his honor, and each year two to three admitted students receive special funding support as Selznick Fellows.

Former Berkeley Law dean and professor emeritus Sanford Kadish credited Selznick for making a "major impact" on the school by helping to establish the JSP program. "He was the principal theoretician," said Kadish, "and through it the law school was enabled to augment its interdisciplinary program with an academic Ph.D. program, the addition of philosophers, economists, sociologists and historians to its faculty, and an undergraduate program with a Legal Studies major."

According to Edelman, Selznick emphasized law as a realm of moral values that necessarily shape the character of private as well as public governance. "His legacy is even greater," she said, "because with Dean Kadish he created the (JSP) program and undergraduate Legal Studies major, which have been emulated by major universities all over the globe."

Selznick was married to Jaeger from 1939 until 1979, when she died of cancer. They shared mutual interests in philosophy and social theory, and in 1964 they co-authored an article, "A Normative Theory of Culture," in the journal *American Sociological Review*. Jaeger joined UC Berkeley in 1959 as a research associate at the Survey Research Center. She became a sociology lecturer in 1967 and professor in 1972.

Over the course of his career, Selznick was a faculty research fellow at the Social Science Research Council, a Guggenheim Fellow, and a fellow at the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences and the Woodrow Wilson International Center. He won the UC Berkeley Academic Senate's Clark Kerr Award in 1996, and lifetime achievement awards from the Law and Society Association in 2003 and the American Sociological Association Sociology of Law Section in 2009.

Despite retiring from UC Berkeley's sociology and law departments in 1984, Selznick remained active in his scholarship and authored the books "The Moral Commonwealth: Social Theory and the Promise of Community" (1992), "The Communitarian Persuasion" (2002) and "A Humanist Science: Values and Ideals in Social Inquiry" (2008).

Lieberman said Selznick's nine frequently republished books "helped shape two major subfields in the social sciences, the theory and sociology of organizations, and the sociology of law, which his scholarship helped reshape and redefine as the 'law and society' field."

Selznick is survived by his second wife, Doris Fine, whom he married in 1982. A scholar of public education policy, Fine served in the Office of Academic Affairs at the UC Office of the President, and authored a 1986 study of school desegregation in San Francisco, "When Leadership Fails."

Selznick also leaves behind his daughter, Margaret Ledwith of Dallas, as well as three grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. A private service honoring Selznick's life is being planned by the family. Donations in Selznick's memory may be made to the JSP program. To do so, send a check made out to UC Regents (noting the JSP program in the memo) to Jurisprudence and Social Policy Program, University of

California, Berkeley, 2240 Piedmont Ave., #2150, Berkeley, CA 94720-2150. Donations may also be made via the Berkeley Law [website](#); make the gift to the Boalt Hall Fund, indicating that it is for the JSP.

Barry Eidlin  
 Ph.D. Candidate, Department of Sociology  
 University of California, Berkeley  
[eidlin@berkeley.edu](mailto:eidlin@berkeley.edu)

July 2, 2010  
 Hi Roy---

it is interesting how this project has reintroduced the past to the present. As Dmitri might have mentioned he is eager to collect as many recollections as possible in the face of an ever decreasing cohort.

David died of cancer, ironically at Alta Bates hospital, one of the hospitals he had studied for his dissertation.

Peripatetic at best, he came back to the bay area a year or so before his death. He called, left me a garbled message that was disturbing; I tried to call back; left a couple of messages, no response. Then one day I was in the supermarket and when I turned to see who had gotten in line behind me, it was David. Big surprise. We agreed to get in touch; after a couple of more unexpected encounters at the supermarket (he had moved into the Marina and I was working at a sculpture studio nearby at fort mason) we actually did get together for a long conversation. That was the last time we talked.

He told me about his finance (Wendy Liu) and that they were going to China to meet her family. Then I was out of the country. Then my schedule changed and I frequented the market at a different time. Eventually I got an e-mail from David Matza saying Sudnow had passed on and linking to the obituary in the NY times. I don't have the link right now and the dog is giving me the long, "when are we going" face.

I called Matza to learn the particulars but David M, never wanting to "gossip" referred me to Jerry Mandel, whom I called and spoke with. Jerry said David and his new wife had moved to Oakland soon after they returned from China. That David had gotten progressively weaker; that Jerry had spent a lot of time caring for him at the end. He went into the hospital and did not survive the surgery.

Do you know Jerry? You could call him (he does not do e-mail) if you wanted to know more. I actually wanted to know more but it was so soon after his death that it was difficult to discuss.

Roy, did David tell you the account of Goffman's response to the Kennedy assassination while you were at the meetings or was it some time afterwards? Or did Sudnow just appropriate my story (which I would have shared with him, as such revelatory stories had cache among us graduate students in those days.) It poses a new question: Did Goffman go up to everybody at the meetings with this "funny" routine? If it had been spontaneous the first time it would have been quite calculated thereafter.

anyway if you hear any more about the circumstances of David's death, please let me know  
 take care

Sherri



July 2, 2010  
 Sherri,

Thank you for your moving story about David's death. I wrote to The Sudnow Method.com and asked to pass on my message to David's relatives. No reply yet. I tried to track David's sister, Naomi Rubine, found several web entries for her, but no contact info.

I am chairing a session "Remembering Erving Goffman" at the next Pacific Sociological Association's meeting that will be held March 10-13 in Seattle. Would you care to get on the panel and join me for the occasion? That would be a nice way to touch base and reminisce.

Sherri, thanks for the obituary for Selznick. I didn't know he died. Below is the *NYT* obituary for David Sudnow.

All best,  
 Dmitri

Paid Notice: Deaths  
 SUDNOW, DAVID NATHAN  
 Published: September 16, 2007

SUDNOW--David Nathan. With the passing of David Sudnow on July 20, 2007 at Alta Bates Hospital in Berkeley, California, came the loss of one of the last, great, original ethnomethodologists; that small group of revolutionary sociologists who believed that sociological studies of group processes were not simply exercises in theoretical analyses or rationalizations after the fact about people in groups, but rather were about social phenomena as concrete observable facts (though often unacknowledged in situations). In part derivative of the original observational methods of Emile Durkheim's classical "Suicide" and the phenomenology of Edmund Husserl, these ethnomethodologists would go into a psychiatric clinic and ask for the embarrassingly difficult factual, observational differences between patients and care givers. One of them walked into my biochemistry suite at the medical school and said, "Oh, this is what those about you would call a laboratory." They flushed the unwritten rule dividing the patient's and doctor's coffee machines in a psychiatric ward by violating it. They demonstrated the strange set of unwritten rules among chess players by upsetting an opponent irrationally by simply exchanging pawns without any alteration in position. In 1964, four years before Harold Garfinkel's, another of the pioneers, book was published, "Studies in Ethnomethodology", Sudnow published the field defining book, "Passing On: The Social Organization of Dying," now in its twenty-eighth edition, from the data collected during two years of on-site observations. It was a painful explication of the "facts" about how social class affected the choice and execution of real procedures relevant to health care and dying in a charity hospital. He was early into studies of conversation about what was really going on between people conversing. Along with Harvey Sachs, another of this elite group of social analysts, Sudnow's classical work was about "glancing." In 1972, he edited and published "Studies in Social Interaction." He applied his phenomenological point of view to the interaction of gamer and game, the video game-user interphase, and published "Pilgrim in the Microworld" in 1984. He was best known for his 1978 book, "Ways of the Hand, The Organization of Improvised Conduct", for which he was awarded the Guggenheim Fellowship. It detailed his personal account of learning improvisational jazz on the piano. It was written from the same what-is-really-going-on point of view. His method was radical and completely atheoretical, no scales and chords, no required Bach-like exercises, no figures in all keys, and no harmonic structure. He followed this with a similarly oriented study of musical conversation, "Talk's Body, a Meditation Between Two Key Boards" in 1989. The Sudnow Piano Method became a kind of artistic self realization movement mediated by imaginative web site interactions and material. It was so popular, at one time or other it involved interactions with 25,000 piano students. His piano

pedagogy pulled him from a distinguished academic career in which for 15 years, he held professorial status at the University of California at Santa Barbara, University of California at Irvine, University of California at Berkeley, and various visiting professorships in Europe. He will certainly be missed by thousands of his piano students. Less well known is that we also have lost one of the four or five revolutionary sociologists of the 1960's and 1970's whose ethnomethodologically oriented work augured the present, highly controversial "deconstructionist" era across the sciences. David Sudnow was 68. He is survived by his wife, Wendy Lu, a sister, Naomi Rubine, children Paul and Jessica, and two grandchildren. Arnold J. Mandell, M.D., MacArthur Prize Fellow Laureate in Theoretical Neurosciences.

July 3, 2010  
Dmitri---

here are three more ideas for finding David's papers:

Arnold J. Mandell, M.D., MacArthur Prize Fellow Laureate in Theoretical Neurosciences who wrote the NY times obit, David Nasatir who wrote the obit for the Berkeley alumni page [http://sociology.berkeley.edu/alumni2/viewbio\\_querylist.php?ID=69](http://sociology.berkeley.edu/alumni2/viewbio_querylist.php?ID=69), and Jerry Mandel who was with him at the end.

If you want to contact Mandell and Nasatir, I will call Jerry.

Also, did you ever find out anything about an Evelyn Hooker archive at UCLA?

ciao for now  
Sherri

p.s. I will give Jackie a call

July 3, 2010  
Greetings, Sherri:

It would be good to get in touch with those people and see if they can share memoirs of David and others. Can you approach the folks or should I do so?

No, I hadn't found out about Evelyn Hooker. She is not listed on UCLA web sites, so I am not sure how to go about that. Maybe I should call the UCLA library.

All best,  
Dmitri

July 3, 2010  
Dmitri, I know Jerry Mandel so I will call him if you will contact the other two. Hooker is deceased. The library is a good place to look for her archival remains.

Have a safe and happy fourth.

my best

Sherri

July 3, 2010

Sherri,

I wrote to Arnold and David. If somebody can help locate Naomi, that would be helpful. Will call UCLA library.

Best,  
Dmitri

July 3, 2010

Dmitri, I discovered how to get to the earliest versions of Sudnow's Wikipedia comments. I think this is the most contentious version. Please read it and let me know what you think.

ciao  
Sherri

July 3, 2010

[http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Talk:Harvey\\_Sacks&direction=prev&oldid=48482674](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Talk:Harvey_Sacks&direction=prev&oldid=48482674)

Talk: Harvey Sacks

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

This is an **old revision** of this page, as edited by **Charles Matthews** ([talk](#) | [contribs](#)) at 10:10, 26 February 2006. It may differ significantly from the **current revision**.

[\(diff\)](#) ← [Previous revision](#) | [Current revision](#) [\(diff\)](#) | [Newer revision](#) → [\(diff\)](#)

There seems to be an edit war going on here. One wonders who it is that is deleting David Sudnow's additions. Please identify yourself. (This should not be read as an endorsement of Sudnow or said additions.) [In defense](#) 20:35, 7 February 2006 (UTC)

### **NPOV Dispute, On Sudnow edits**

I removed the passages that are completely irrelevant to the encyclopedic entry, including *Because this "Wikipedia" is a most strange website (to put it politely), where literally 'anyone' can, willy nilly, edit postings that are made here (so it's far from an "Encyclopedia" in any historical senses of that term), prior postings about matters referred to here have been deleted.*

*This posting is not to be edited.*

*So the pathetic situation of suppression and potential plagiarism has not substantially changed.*

I didn't go through the rest of the additions, but I believe it needs to be checked for NPOV and accuracy, the latter due to the lack of any wiki links or citations. [Nobi](#) 09:18, 15 February 2006 (UTC)

### Additional thoughts on Sudnow's POV

Everything after the "Further reading" list is clearly a POV anti-Schegloff screed by someone whose shoulder carries a large chip. [In defense](#) 16:29, 17 February 2006 (UT)

Like all of us, I stand on the shoulders of giants, and if anyone had a large chip on his shoulder it was Sacks himself who was, in nearly every respect, as egocentric as a person can be. He literally thought of himself as a reincarnated Freud, Wittgenstein, Carnap, Weber, Durkheim, and Parsons, not to mention Jesus Christ, Moses and David. There were few things about him one could actually like, in his daily interactions. He was unbearably abrupt towards others whom he didn't respect, and he didn't respect many others at all. He made himself the center of every conversation with a host of childish mannerisms that manipulated every scene he was involved in, and could hardly tolerate being amongst others and not being "well known".

Despite all of this, his work, in its full entirety, and not in the abbreviations the world has seen from the hands of Jefferson and Schegloff, is brilliant beyond description. While I disagree with all the presuppositions of conversation analysis and most of those of 'ethnomethodology', which are scarcely other than set of poor graduate student papers illustrating Schutzian concepts (not to mention his thoroughgoing plagiarism in every respect (e.g., the notion that he and I studied chemistry lectures – in fact, we sat, once, through a half hour of chemistry lecture and then had a half hour conversation later, which becomes a 'jointly published' article – while I disagree with the work of both of these bastards, their work, at least Sacks's, is important, and deserves to see the light of day. It is, in fact, Schegloff who has done Sacks the greatest injustice, and I venture the opinion that a close examination of the full corpus of Sacks's writings would reveal the source for nearly every idea Schegloff ever had (I wrote most of his PHD dissertation, a fact his office mate at Columbia, Allan Blum, will verify). Schegloff always held himself out as a rabbinical jurisprudent, whose own decisions about how Sacks would have wanted his work developed fortunately coincided with those ways Schegloff was able to develop it, however meagerly.

It is time to pay Herr Schegloff a visit, which I plan to do upon my return to California from a business trip in several weeks (around March 10th), and we'll finally settle, once and for all, the issue of Sacks's Nachlass. Even a bastard as big as he was deserves the inalienable right to have his extensive writings made public. So I'll just have to see to that that happens. A confrontation with Dr. Prof. Rabbi Schegloff is long overdue. If I could get away with it I'd happily teach him how to play hardball in the Bronx. But preferring to avoid such activities and their possible consequences, I'll continue to find way to intimidate him until he turns over to the world of social science materials that are not rightfully his by any stretch of the imagination.

Quite aside from the Nachlass of Sacks's work, listed in Schegloff safe deposit book at UCLA's library, one can well ask where it was written that he should have received Sacks' massive library. William James Hall, at Harvard, was ready, in 1988, to create a Harvey Sacks Memorial section in their social science library for Sacks's extraordinary collection of volumes in many disciplines. It's time that Schegloff at least had the dignity to invite a dozen of Sacks's favorite others to take their pick of a dozen or so of his favorite books. But Schegloff is a fool, an inept researcher, good at building arguments. As Sacks routinely said of him, "Manny has no eyes. He can't see".

Well I can, and I can see that I've stirred up some feelings. Write me directly at [david@sudnow.com](mailto:david@sudnow.com) if you care for more details. In the meantime I'll simply paste and repaste and repaste my notes on this Wikipedia place until something comes of that. When I started the Harvey Sacks Memorial Association, which forced the publication of the Lectures, Schegloff was reported to have called the FBI to report that I'd made a threatening call to him. Why doesn't he report to them that I plan to pay him a visit and have it out with him. I wouldn't dare

strike him. His wife is too nice of a person whom, I'm sure, has suffered many miserable years living under his sacred domicile.

david sudnow [www.sudnow.com](http://www.sudnow.com)

Please note well Wikipedia's policy on contentious matters. We are not averse to reporting the existence of controversy. We are bound, under policy, to take a strictly neutral line. Partisan points of view cannot be allowed to stand here. Feelings may run high, but all Wikipedia can contain is an impartial account.  
 Charles Matthews 10:10, 26 February 2006 (UTC)

This version of the page has been [revised](#).

Besides normal editing, the reason for revision may have been that this version contains factual inaccuracies, vandalism, or material not compatible with the [Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike License](#).

July 3, 2010  
 Woe, Baby!

So much brilliance, so much vitriol, so much David Sudnow.

Yours, Dmitri

July 6, 2010  
 pretty sad story----he obviously suffered a lot, most of it of his own making.

I contacted Bob Emerson to see what he might know about Evelyn Hooker's papers. He said he knew the archivist at UCLA and would make inquiries.

I called Jackie----I could tell something was wrong as soon as she answered her telephone. Her companion---Hobbe---is very ill, dying, and so I did not ask her about her class notes---she said you asked her to contact Scott again to see if he would change his mind. You are such an optimist, Dmitri.

Finally I called Jerry Mandel hoping he would have Sudnow's widow and/or sister's contact number, but I had to leave a message and so far have not heard back from him.

ciao for now  
 Sherri

July 6, 2010  
 Hi Sherri:

I got today this note from David Haynes regarding Sudnow:

Thank you for the note. I have forwarded your email on to David's widow and I expect that she will contact you.

Regards, David Haynes

The Sudnow Method

I asked him about Naomi as well. Let's see what materializes with the Hooker's archives.

I spoke to Jackie as well, and she told me her sad news. I didn't mean to press Jackie about Scott. In our prior conversation the question came up as to whether she wants to send him her memoir, and she said it was a good idea. I agreed but stressed that she should not do anything she feels uncomfortable doing. I think we should leave the man alone.

All best,  
Dmitri

July 6, 2010

Hi Dmitri----

Jerry called me back with Wendy Liu's phone number: <...>

ciao  
Sherri

July 6

Thank you, Sherri.

David Haynes plans to pass my inquiry to Wendy. He thinks I will hear from her. Let's wait and see if this happens.

Yours, Dmitri

July 8

Hi, Sherri:

I shared Sudnow's take on Schegloff with Aaron Cicourel and here is his reply (for your eyes only).

Best,  
Dmitri

July 8, 2010

hmm,

so when David claims Manny stole his ideas from Harvey, is this what Aaron means when he says David's account of Schegloff is "consistent with what I know."

or does he mean something else?

how convoluted this all is; who wrote whose dissertation? David claims he wrote Manny's dissertation and now Aaron says he and David edited Harvey's "entire dissertation" which certainly implies something more than a little copy editing.

also, when I was talking with Jerry Mandel he mentioned that Stan Lyman's papers are at the University of Florida at Jupiter. There might be something Goffman-related in them.

ciao for now

July 8, 2010  
Sherri,

The story I heard was that Harvey's dissertation could not be defended as written and had to be revised by others, something Harvey resented but accepted as necessary. Who exactly wrote what may be difficult to so from afar.

Best,  
Dmitri

July 9, 2010  
Hi, Sherri:

I got this note from Nasatir (see below).

I see there is a number of Berkeley alumni who studied there between 1958 and 1968 and who might have known Goffman. Do you think I should contact any one in particular?

Best,  
Dmitri

July 9, 2010

Dmitri---these are people who MAY have had interactions with Goffman (the asterisk refers to the biographies available on the site. I left the ones you already have/have contacted on the list----omitted the deceased)

1957  
David Nasatir  
1958  
Emanuel Schegloff  
Audrey Wipper  
Jacqueline Wiseman  
1960  
Max Heirich  
Travis Hirsch  
Norman Linton  
\* John Lofland  
\* Jerry Mandel  
\* Gary Marx  
Marvin Scott  
Rodney Stark  
John Lofland

Gary Marx  
 1961  
 Hubbard Buckner  
 Sherri Cavan  
 Henry Finney  
 Irwin Sperber  
 Roy Turner  
 1962  
 Lucy Sells  
 David Arnold  
 \* Robert Dunn  
 \* Arlene Hochschild  
 \* Lucy Sells  
 David Wellman  
 1963  
 Earl Babbie  
 Shirley Hartley  
 Kathryn Meadows-Orlans  
 Janet Salaff (?)  
 Metta Spencer  
 Ruth Wallace  
 \* Shirley Hartly  
 John Irwin  
 \* Kathryn Meadows-Orlans  
 Robin Room  
 \* Metta Spencer  
 \* Ruth Wallace  
 1964  
 Angelo Alonzo(?)  
 Randall Collins  
 Jane Prather  
 James Wood  
 \* Randall Collins  
 \* Jane Prather  
 Harriet Presser  
 1965  
 \* Ruth Dixon-Mueller  
 1967  
 \* Lillian Rubin  
 \* Ann Swidler  
 \* Robert Wood  
 1968  
 \* Fred Block  
 Hardy Frye

July 10, 2010  
 Thank you, Sherri:

I don't see on the Alum site several names on your list: Max Heirich, Travis Hirsch, Norman Linton [no email],



Hubbard Buckner, Henry Finney, Irwin Sperber [bounced], David Arnold, David Wellman, Shirley Hartley, Hardy Frye. Where did you get info on these folks?

I sent inquiries to the alumni. Some messages came back, but I managed to trace the new address. Others seem untraceable:

I sent inquiries to some alumni. Some messages came back as undeliverable (Donald Metz <...> and Chester Winton <...>. Mark Sanford – diseased)

Regards,  
Dmitri

July 10, 2010

Dmitri---this is the source of the names I sent you (although thinking about it today I didn't see Joan Emerson or Dorothy Smith, so there might be other people missing as well)

Also, two people it might be a good idea to talk to are Lillian Rubin and Audrey Wipper  
hope this helps.

Sherri  
<http://sociology.berkeley.eddo/alumni/>

July 10, 2010

nutz---spell check messed up that link  
<http://sociology.berkeley.edu/alumni2/>

July 10, 2010

Thanks, Sherri:

I used a different web site: [http://sociology.berkeley.edu/alumni2/view\\_listed\\_alumni\\_by\\_cohort.php](http://sociology.berkeley.edu/alumni2/view_listed_alumni_by_cohort.php). I found here several names not mentioned by you, including Dorothy Smith's.

I have already interviewed Audrey Wipper, whose memoir is on our site:  
[http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/wipper\\_09.html](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/wipper_09.html). Will send more inquiries as you suggest.

Best,  
Dmitri

July 11, 2010

Greetings Dmitri---

When I went over the list of Berkeley Alumni I came across Norm Linton's name. I had forgotten about him---we had been close friends in graduate school, stayed in touch for a while and then drifted apart. I did keep in touch with Denis Lum, so it was pretty easy to contact Norm through him.

Anyway, I wrote him back and said you would call and encouraged him to do an interview with you. I think he will.

what would you do without me?

ciao for now

Sherri

Dear Sherri

Been a long while but seems you are well and working. I am currently in Costa Rica but am returning to the US this coming week for at least 2 months. So: <...> and <...>.

Had Goffman remained at UC I would have asked him to chair my dissertation. Which would have [been] a different one than what I wrote with Matza as chair. Here is one thing you might not know about Goffman. He was born in a tiny hamlet in Manitoba (or maybe Saskatchewan) out on the great western prairie. The place no longer exists as near I can tell. He went to U. of Winnipeg for 2 years, a private school, before moving to Toronto. This doesn't indicate to me that he came from wealth and sophistication.

Other than that I can probably add little. I took 2 or 3 courses. One when he was writing *Stigma* and the other when he was writing *Relations in Public* or *Behavior in Public Places*. Anyway, the fascinating one that so resembles animal behavior studies. Realizing that a lot of people, students, seem to have had bad experiences with him, he was as close to a teacher as anyone ever was for me. He was interested in what I had to say (write) and took me as seriously as was possible. He managed to lose the best paper I ever wrote and there was no copy so it died. Never got around to reconstructing it.

Keep in touch. I will give some thought to the topic but its quite a reach, about 50 years.

Norman Linton

Dmitri

you might want to add this link----

[http://shetlopedia.com/Erving\\_Goffman](http://shetlopedia.com/Erving_Goffman)

best

Sherri

July 11, 2010

Sherri,

It was good taking to you. Things are moving in the right direction, with more surprises in store. I called Norman, he was not there but should be back next week.

Here is a quote that appears on page 356, note 4, in Mary Jo Deegan's article published in Gary Fine's *A Second Chicago School?* ("The Second Sex and the Chicago School," pp. 322-364).

"The late Erving Goffman said he was a blatant sexist prior to a major transformation in his consciousness in the mid-1970s. He thought all the men in his age group and cohort were similarly biased against women to greater or lesser degrees. He said this during an intense discussion we had at the American Sociological

Association meetings in the New York City, in August 1982. Goffman had prepared a three page, single-spaced, typed critique of a paper a group of us had prepared on his sexism that he had read prior to this hour-and-a-half interview/meeting/confrontation (Nebraska Feminist Collective 1981).”

I couldn't find the source she mentions, but located a volume called “A Feminist Ethic for Social Science Research. Nebraska Sociological Collective.” Women's Studies. Vol. 1. The Edwin Mellen Press. Lewiston/Queenston, 1988

Pauline Bart has an article in it, titled “Lesbian Research Ethics.” Maybe she could help us unravel the story of the Nebraska group and Erving's penance re his early sexism.

All bests,  
Dmitri

July 12, 2010  
Hi, Sherri:

Sent a note to <...> and got a reply. He wants his memories to be part of the archives and now is seeking comments before the final OK. So, any feedback you have will be appreciated.

Indeed, you never know. Maybe I should send a word to Becker.

Best, Dmitri

July 12, 2010  
Hi Dmitri  
!!!!!!

what did you say in your note?

I have to prepare for my painting workshop, but of course I had to read John's document immediately, Interesting he ends it with what is acceptable evidence in a court of law since he is not a lawyer but a sociologist. Every sociologist (and certainly every sociologist who studied with Goffman) knows that all ethnography, all history, all anthropology----indeed all of the “social sciences” ---rest on accounts, assemblages of narrative texts about a topic whose truth-status is always open to question. The Goffman archives are not a part/within the frame of a court of law and it seems a non-sequitur to evaluate the texts as if they were “legal evidence”. Truth and falsehood are both social constructions; what's new?

I personally think that Erving would be as amused at our efforts to reconstruct “the man” as he often was amused at efforts people made to explain his “ideas”.

while I am at it I found an e-mail address for Pauline Bart; and also discovered she has an archive of papers at the University of Illinois. I will write her as soon as I prepare for class; in addition to asking her about the Nebraska collective Goffman paper, I will ask her if she was at the gender presentation, and if she remembers anyone else who was there; and also ask her if she has had any personal interactions with Goffman, and if so would she be willing to be interviewed.

p.s. you have to guess who is the "sociologist known for his loud mouth theatricality and flamboyant bad taste attire" on p. 13

cheers  
Sherri

July 12, 2010  
Sherri,

I just passed on a word about new memoires to John and provided the inks in case he wanted to check them out. Then came his rely.

I thought John meant Arlene, was it you he tried to nab? As for the hearsay and such, this is what I wrote to John earlier today:

“The word of caution you sound at the end of the text is well taken. We need to be careful interpreting the hearsay, vague recollections, and problematic reconstructions that make up the bulk of the Goffman Archives. But then, much of ethnographic work is of that kind, and it is up to ethnographers to show tact and wisdom in piecing together problematic accounts. It is worth remembering, also, that any biographic account is a hidden self-portrait which tells us a good deal about the biographer, his or her biases, prejudices and hidden agendas.”

Best,  
Dmitri

July 13, 2010  
Dmitri-

He must have been poised to change his mind if that was all it took. Now I wonder if you will be able to interview Lynn, who would have her own distinctive memories. Did John intend for you to send me a copy before it was posted? If I reply to him will he feel “betrayed” and take back his document?

ciao for now  
Sherri

ps. the theatrical bad dresser was Marv. Arlene is a good guess, but she was a few years ahead of John.

July 13, 2010  
Greetings Sherri:

I asked Lyn in the past and she demurred. Maybe she would think differently now, but I feel awkward to bring it up again. Perhaps you can ask John when you communicate with him. I am not sure when is the good time to contact him – now or after he submitted the final text. Perhaps the latter, so you can give John your feedback after the fact and then ask if Lyn is game to join the fray. That would be a natural question coming from you.

Best,  
Dmitri

July 21, 2010

Hi Dmitri-----

yes, Evelyn Hooker's papers are at UCLA. Here is the info from Bob Emerson. Lets hope there is some Goffman in those 15+ boxes

best  
Sherri

Dear Sherri,

UCLA does have Evelyn Hooker's papers – 15 plus boxes. Here is the info.

Best,  
Bob

Prof. Emerson -

Good to hear from you and yes, Evelyn Hooker's papers do exist, known as UCLA Manuscript Collection 523.

The collection consists of approx. 8.5 linear ft. of materials. To view the finding aid (index) to the contents of the Hooker Papers, go to the Online Archive of California (OAC) website,  
<http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/tf8h4nb5fp>

To view descriptions of each box's contents, <click> on CONTAINER LIST under the "Table of Contents" header (right side of screen).

If you decide to consult the papers, call the Young Research Library Special Collections reference desk at least three working days prior to your visit: x54988. They will ask you for the collection number – 523 – and for the box number(s).

Special Collection hours are: Monday to Friday, 10am-5pm

Also fyi, I've pasted the Library's catalog record for the Hooker Papers at the bottom of your email.

Hope this helps.

Kind regards,  
cbb

Charlotte B. Brown  
UCLA University Archives  
21560 Charles E. Young Research Library  
Los Angeles, California 90095-1575  
+1.310.825.7265  
+1.310.825.4068 (reference phone queries)  
[univ-archives@library.ucla.edu](mailto:univ-archives@library.ucla.edu)  
(reference email queries)

www2.library.ucla.edu/libraries/UniversityArchives/7238.cfm

Dear Charlotte,

Hope all is well with you. A quick question: Do you have any papers from Dr. Evelyn Hooker, who worked at NPI for years and was an early researcher on gay life?

Best,  
bob emerson

Author/Name: Hooker, Evelyn Caldwell.

Title: Papers, 1910-1997.

Physical description:

13 boxes (6.5 linear ft.)

2 cartons (2 linear ft.)

1 oversize box.

Arranged in the following series: 1. Obituaries and memorial tributes; 2. Autobiographical and biographical material; 3. Education and licensure; 4. Family; 5. Photographs; 6. Tributes and awards; 7. Lectures and speeches; 8. Manuscripts; 9. Publications; 10. Correspondence; 11. Wayne Placek Fund; 12. Appointment calendars; 13. Information files; 14. Books.

Subject(s): Hooker, Evelyn Caldwell--Archives.

Hooker, Edward Niles.

University of California, Los Angeles. University Extension --Faculty--Archival resources.

Women psychologists--United States--Archival resources.

Homosexuality--Psychological aspects--Archival resources.

Genre/form: manuscripts for publication.

Record ID: 4233163

Collection: UCLA Libraries and Collections

Online Access: Finding aid Internet version available via the World Wide Web, <http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/tf8h4nb5fp>

Location: SRLF Non-Circ Request at UCLA YRL Special Collections

Call Number: Collection 523 [Barcode:FF0000249714]

Library has: box.1-15

Status: Not Checked Out

UCLA Library Catalog

July 21, 22010

Thank you, Sherri:

Now we need to find someone willing to search the collection. There is nothing online, unfortunately.

Best,  
Dmitri

July 26, 2010

Hi Sherri:

Tom Scheff came out of nowhere to give a boost to our venture. Whatever credit is due belongs to you as well.

Here is a note he sent to the Goffman Forum list, with a few responses.

All best,

Dmitri

July 26, 2010

Hi Dmitri---I hope this gets through, as I am in e-mail purgatory again. Yes this is good news. The archive will be very important to all Goffman scholars.

I have still not heard from Pauline Bart. Hopefully my e-mail tsuris will end so and I will follow through. I will also contact a mutual friend in Santa Barbara to see what I can find out about Pauline's whereabouts.

my best

Sherri

July 27, 2010

Hi Sherri:

Got your message, hope the gremlins messing up your email will let up.

I spoke to the UCLA archive expert who checked the index prepared by Evelyn Hooker and found no references to mail addressed to or received from EG. The same holds for all other UC system archives. It is possible that Erving's name is mentioned in some documents but you can't tell without reading through. No luck here, but we shall lumber along.

Best,

Dmitri

P.S. A few more accolades on the EGA have arrived (hope you got my note I sent to the Goffman forum and copied to our board):

July 27, 2010

Have you seen this?

“Jenn Lena points us to this incredible archive on Erving Goffman,”

<http://orgtheory.wordpress.com/2010/03/28/goffmans-front-and-backstages/>

s.

this too

<http://whatisthewhat.wordpress.com/2010/03/27/framing-him/>

July 27, 2010

Sherri,

I think I came across some of that stuff a while back. ds

July 28, 2010

Hi Sherri:

A charming note (see below), the kind that makes you think we are on to something.

Regards,

Dmitri

August 5, 2010

Hi Arnie---

some thoughts: Eating with others is a small, defined occasion, providing an opportunity for reputations to be made or discredited; but it is of no great significance. Mostly the dining occasions reported (in the archives) were with an ever-changing set of others so you might say that he repeated this same performance over and over each time he had a new audience. It is only when these observations are collected can a recurrent pattern be seen.

I think status-consciousness is one of the major dimensions of Goffman's psyche, so to speak. Growing up as a Jew in a very anti-Semitic Canada, coming to the University of Chicago as a Canadian, having ideas about sociology which had little if any currency when he began (and indeed, were often put down by his colleagues, e.g.. Selznick) Being short might be a part of this syndrome. Dmitri thinks it is important, but as a woman, I am almost always short, so it doesn't seem like a big deal for me, but it may be for a man----all generated a sense of the "outsider" concerned (overly-concerned? obsessed?) with where he stood vis-a-vis the other; the eternal outsider could be put to good use as an observer but not such good use as a compatriot.

Are you familiar with the works of Stephen Potter? He was a British humorist writing in the early fifties. In fact, I read him before I read Presentation of Self; I always felt Goffman might have been influenced by Potter's insights about status relationships. See for example, [http://www.amazon.com/One-Upmanship-Activities-Lifemanship-Correspondence-Lifemastery/product-reviews/1559211903/ref=dp\\_top\\_cm\\_cr\\_acr\\_txt?ie=UTF8&showViewpoints=1](http://www.amazon.com/One-Upmanship-Activities-Lifemanship-Correspondence-Lifemastery/product-reviews/1559211903/ref=dp_top_cm_cr_acr_txt?ie=UTF8&showViewpoints=1)

The pugnaciousness which people observe in Goffman's interaction with others seems (to me) to be expression of this status-competition, who will be one up and who will be put down. What makes Goffman so unique is that he seems to bring this view to most---but not all---of his interactions with others. Your remarks are well taken:

[Arnie Glass, [https://cdclv.unlv.edu/archives/interactionism/goffman/glass\\_09.html](https://cdclv.unlv.edu/archives/interactionism/goffman/glass_09.html)]



August 5, 2010

Hey, Dmitri, I was mentioning Stephen Potter to Arnie Glass and decided to Google Goffman and Potter and this came up:

<http://www.scribd.com/doc/11659621/Helping-How-to-Offer-Give-and-Receive-Help->  
by Edgar H. Schein

I worked closely with Goffman during my stint at the Walter Reed Institute of Research where he was a consultant from 1953 to 1956, and I continued to focus on this form of analysis in my collaborations with my sociological colleague John Van Manen (1979).

I don't see Schein in our memoirs.

ciao for now  
Sherri

August 5, 2010  
Greetings Sherri:

I sent a note to Schein. We shall see if he is interested.

Nice exchange between you and Arnie. Perhaps we can add it to the Comments-Dialogues section of our site as it continues to evolve.

Hope to finish shortly my paper on EG and "The Insanity of Place."

All best,  
Dmitri

August 10, 2010  
Dmitri--I am forwarding Arnie's mail to alert you to his edit of his correspondence (see below).

Do you think we ought to post these exchanges in the archive as a single entry (with sub-topics)?

Ciao for now  
Sherri

August 10, 2010  
Good morning Sherri -

I've not read Stephen Potter but I think I understand the gist of the behavioral maneuvers employed in "gamesmanship" and "one-upmanship". No doubt Potter sowed some seeds for Goffman to cultivate.

At your discretion feel free to forward correspondence to Dmitri.

If anything is posted, please delete my reference to Howard Becker's statement in an email to me where he wrote "everyone knew Erving could act like a putz". He said this in the context of explaining why he didn't want to be too critical of Erving. Such a sentiment is consistent with his benign and short posting dated August 25, 2007 in the Biographical Materials section of the EGA. Clearly he prefers not to enter into deeper questions in a public way about Erving's behavior.

Thanks.

Arnie

August 10, 2010

Hi Sherri:

Yes, let's place your exchange in the Comments section. I think the two of you make some fine points. Could you and Arnie send me the continuing flow of your exchange, starting with the earliest communication, the way it should appear on the web?

Did you hear from the feminist scholars you contacted a few weeks back?

I just finished the second part of my interview with Jerry Skolnick, the third one is set for tomorrow.

All best,  
Dmitri

September 24, 2010

Hi Sherri:

Check out this video: <http://www.webmd.com/video/breast-radiation-shield>

I have revised an extended my paper on the self-ethnographic dimension of Goffman's work, [http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/articles/ds\\_eg\\_selfethno.html](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/articles/ds_eg_selfethno.html). If you have time to look it up and spot errors of fact and trained interpretation, please give me a word.

Hope all is well with you.

Regards,  
Dmitri

September 24, 2010

Something is wrong with my email. Here I try again.

Hi Sherri:

Check out this video: <http://www.webmd.com/video/breast-radiation-shield>

I have revised an extended my paper on the self-ethnographic dimension of Goffman's work, [http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/articles/ds\\_eg\\_selfethno.html](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/articles/ds_eg_selfethno.html). If you have time to look it up and spot errors of fact and trained interpretation, please give me a word.

Hope all is well with you.

Regards,  
Dmitri

October 4, 2010  
Greetings Sherri:

As I mentioned to you earlier, the next Couch-Stone Symposium will be held in Las Vegas on April 1-3, 2011 (see the announcement). Elijah Anderson is giving a keynote address at this gathering, titled "The Cosmopolitan Canopy: Race and Civility in Everyday Life."

I hope you can organize a session or come and give a talk on a topic of your choice. I am putting together a session "Issues in Self-Ethnography: Theory, Methods, Ethics" where you will be most welcome. It would be great to see you in Vegas. We'll take a ride to the Valley of Fire, have fun and make merry.

Cheers,  
Dmitri

October 15, 2010  
Greetings Sherri:

Thank you for the card announcing your exhibition. Wish I could attend. My son plans to visit me at the end of the year, and maybe the two of us make it to SF. I would like to show him your artwork.

Hope you are thriving.

All best,  
Dmitri

November 1, 2010

Dear Dmitri---I must make this message short and by whole electronic system is out of kilter and subject to unexpected shutdowns. Good thing I am not paranoid.

I enjoyed talking with you, as always. I want to read your revised paper and hope you will be willing to send me a hard copy as my printing is as problematic as my e-mail.

For April, this is what I hope to do:

"Early Erving: What we know about Goffman's boyhood and why it matters".

A review of Goffman's family and the Canadian community in the years before Erving left for college. What we know as documented facts of his life and what we can infer from the facts of Canadian history.

I raise the question, "Why Bother?" How does looking for data about his youth and speculating about his boyhood advance our understanding of the man and his work?

I hope this goes through. Unfortunately, I like the first version that the Ethernet ate up better.

ciao for now  
Sherri

November 1, 2010  
Greetings Sherri:

Your forthcoming paper sounds great. No question in my mind as to why bother – reasons are ample. Here is the link to the expanded version of my paper,  
[http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/articles/ds\\_eg\\_selfethno.html](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/ega/articles/ds_eg_selfethno.html).

Hope you find a way to exorcise gremlins from your computer.

All best,  
Dmitri

November 8, 2010  
Hi Dmitri----

I actually started work on the Early Erving paper.

Went to the archives, decided to look at Cooling the Mark out, [http://www.tau.ac.il/~algazi/mat/Goffman--Cooling.htm#\\_ftn2](http://www.tau.ac.il/~algazi/mat/Goffman--Cooling.htm#_ftn2), and found the following

† Terminology regarding criminal activity is taken primarily from D. W. Maurer, *The Big Con* (New York, Bobbs-Merrill, 1940), and also from E. Sutherland, *The Professional Thief* (Chicago, Univ. of Chicago Press 1937). The approach that this paper attempts to utilize is taken from Everett C. Hughes of the University of Chicago, who is not responsible for any misapplications of it which may occur here. The sociological problem of failure was first suggested to me by James Littlejohn of the University of Edinburgh. I am grateful to Professor E. A. Shills for criticism and to my wife, Angelica S. Goffman, for assistance.

I knew I had seen that reference

ciao for now  
Sherri

November 11, 2010  
Hi Sherri:

This is interesting. The note is missing in the Goffman reader edited by Lemert where I read the piece. Would be nice to get the date of his marriage, along with the place and the circumstances of this occasion.

Best,  
Dmitri

[http://www.tau.ac.il/~algazi/mat/Goffman--Cooling.htm#\\_ftn2](http://www.tau.ac.il/~algazi/mat/Goffman--Cooling.htm#_ftn2)

A.B. Univ. of Toronto 45; M.A., Sociology, Univ. of Chicago 49; Instr., Dept of Social Anthropology, Univ. of Edinburgh, and field research in the Shetland Islands 49-51; admitted to candidacy for Ph.D. in Sociology, Univ. of Chicago; Rsc. Asst., Division of Social Sciences, Univ. of Chicago 52-. For bibliography, see Reference Lists section of this issue.

November 8, 2010

Dmitri, I have 1952 as the date of their marriage (and 1953 as the date of Tom's birth.) and his 1979 resume lists Cooling the Mark out as being published in Psychiatry in 1952,

Sherri

November 8, 2010

Sherri,

I have this info, need more specifics.

Best,  
Dmitri

November 13, 2010

Hi Sherri:

Here is the info on the C-S symposium.

All best,  
Dmitri

November 16, 2010

Hi Dmitri

I found the source for making the cups again. I still can't figure out what the options are for size unless I go on to the order page, but I don't want to do that until I know

- (1) how many, if any, of the regular size cups you want to order
- (2) how many of the larger ones (if they are available)
- (3) if the larger ones are not available, is there a plan B?

ciao for now  
Sherri

November 16, 2010

Greetings Sherri:

Thank you for humoring me on the cup front. The regular size will do if the bigger one is not available. What would it cost to produce a dozen cups like the one you sent me before?

I will pay you the cost, plus labor, plus creative design, plus anything else you can think of.

Thanks,  
Dmitri

November 16, 2010

Dmitri, they have 11 oz mugs at \$15.95 and 15 oz at \$17.5. do you want 12 of the larger size?

Sherri

November 17, 2010

Dmitri---I ordered two of the large cups just to make sure that the image works on the larger size. It will take a week or 10 days to get the order, so I will let you know how it works. If it works I will order the rest of them.

Sherri

November 17, 2010

Thanks, Sherri:

Let me know how things look to you once the cups are ready.

All best,  
Dmitri

November 23, 2010

Morning, Dmitri.

I got the two large cups I ordered. I need to enlarge the picture to have a better fit on the cup. They do not look bad but not as good as they could. Let me know if you want me to go ahead with four more large and six small ciao for now

Sherri

p.s. I was re-reading Esther B's memoir and toward the end she mentions that Erving kept knowledge of how sick he was from his mother. Do you remember that part?

November 23, 2010

Hi Sherri:

Why don't you order 4 larger cups and 8 smaller ones? I think that should do. Let me know how much I owe you, and many thanks for your help.

Regards,  
Dmitri

P.S. Dell Hymes-Goffman correspondence is posted on our site.

November 23, 2010

Dmitri----do you want 4 larger cups altogether or four more to add to the two we have already plus 8 smaller ones? Is the total number of cups to be 12 or 14?

sorry for the confusion  
Sherri

November 23, 2010

Sherri,

The total is 12 cups – 8 smaller ones and 4 larger ones. That will be total of 4 in the large size and total of 8 in the small size.

Thanks,  
Dmitri

December 4, 2, 2010

Greetings Arnie----

the only other memoir to add to your list that reflects on Goffman's youth (the Averbach / Averbach Family Reunion Album, Eli Bay, Frances Goffman Bay, Esther Bresbis, Gertrude Frankelson, Anne Goffman, Marly Zaslov ) is Meyer Brownstone.

Is this correct Dmitri? Eventually it would be nice to have an inventory of which memoirs reflect on which parts of EG's life, e.g. University of Chicago, Berkeley, etc.

ciao for now  
Sherri

December 5, 2010

Greetings Sherri and Arnie:

To the interviews/memoirs listed by Sherri, I can add one more that I just posted on our site:  
Avron Katz,

After High Holidays Erving Made up Excuses Rather Than Admit That He Missed School Because He Was Jewish, [http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/katz\\_01.html](http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/archives/interactionism/goffman/katz_01.html)

We talked about charting the bio materials, linking periods to specific memoirs. No time to do so, but this is something that can and will be done in due course.

All best,  
Dmitri

December 13, 2010

Dmitri---I have to send the cups UPS pick-up. Because they have to be repacked (I unpacked them to check on the order) it will take me a day to two to get around to it. It is a large package (they charge by the dimensions) so you need to let me know if you want me to ship it the cheapest which may take a week+ to deliver (who knows how long it will take this time of year) or send it two day, which is more expensive. I will not know the cost until the driver comes to make the pick up but I need to know what you want so I can be prepared.

Also, I really do not want to spend three days in Las Vegas listening to papers I am not interested in or alternatively, sitting in the bar. I would like to arrive, spend one night, leave the next day; so you need to let me know (when you know) when the Goffman session will be scheduled.

Finally, I found your response to my decision to have my lawyer friend write to Transaction books rather “unsupportive” for lack of a better word. Transaction Books did not have the courtesy to contact me about their republication plans, much less acknowledge the fact that the copyright is in my name. Copyright is a matter of law. So I was really supersized that you would suggest I approach them with some deferential letter rather than asking a lawyer to write them. But the, people are always surprising us, as you know.

So let me know how you want the cups shipped and also be sure to let me know about the scheduling at the conference

ciao for now  
Sherri

December 13, 2010

Hi Sherri:

You can send the package in a faster mode, something that will take a few days to deliver, then let me know how much it cost.

I will let you know once the date of our panel is set.

I didn't mean to suggest that your letter to the publisher is a wrong idea, only wondered about the initial format.

You definitely should press the matter, the question of royalties and rights. Sending a general inquiry and then pressing specific demands seemed like a plausible tack, especially since you mentioned the possibility of publishing some work with TP in the future. Perhaps I misunderstood you on the last point.

All best,  
Dmitri

December 13, 2010

Sherri,



I did misunderstan you, then. Sorry about that.

Thanks for sending the cups. Let me know the shipping cost, so I can add it to the \$227.84 production price tag.

Regards,  
Dmitri

December 14, 2010

Dmitri---the cups went out this morning. I put the invoices in the package. It should arrive Thursday or Friday, UPS. This is the tracking number. The cost was \$73.17

enjoy  
Sherri

December 14, 2010

Many thanks, Sherri!

I put in the mail \$301.01 check.

I plan to be in LA on December 23, set up a dinner with Frances. Let me know which questions you want me to ask her.

Am thinking of taking a ride with my son to SF, arriving there late on Thursday. If that works and you have time, would like to take you out for dinner.

All best,  
Dmitri

December 16, 2010

Greetings Sherri:

The cups have arrived – many thanks! You should be getting my check shortly (I sent it two days ago).

Let me know the questions you want me to raise with Frances. Last time I talked to her face-to-face she did not want me to record our conversation. So I will try to remember as much as I can.

All best,  
Dmitri

December 16, 2010

Dmitri---glad the cups arrived. UPS is pretty impressive, if expensive.

Yes, I would like to have dinner with you and your son on Thursday, Dec. 23 if that is the date.

I am working on my questions for Frances, but right now I have a few questions about the Zaslov memoir which I would like to clear up

1. Who is Marly's mother? Is Marly's mother Anne Goffman's sister? Or is Marly's grandmother Anne's sister?
2. I know Charles Bey married Frances Goffman. Is the other Bey brother Marly's father?

3. Is Anrea Marly's daughter?
4. Is Gertrude Frankelson Marly's sister?
5. Is Erving Marly's uncle or her cousin?

So help me. I am getting dizzy trying to straighten out who is related to whom and how.

thanks  
Sherri

December 16, 2010  
Greetings Sherri:

It doesn't look like we are going to make to San Francisco. I have someone staying with my mother over a couple of nights, but extending things further gets complicated as we are running into Christmas. Also, my son does not appear to be enthusiastic about so much traveling in such a short span of time. Maybe some other time.

I conferred with Esther, and she has answers to your queries. Here they are.

1. Who is Marly's mother? Is Marly's mother Anne Goffman's sister? Or is Marly's grandmother Anne's sister?

Marly's mother is Gertrude (Goldie) Frankelson, who is also Esther's sister. Gertrude is a niece of Anne Goffman.

2. I know Charles Bey married Frances Goffman. Is the other Bey brother Marly's father?

Charles Bay married Frances Goffman. Eli Bay is the son of Harry Bay, Chuck's brother. There were four (and possibly five) Bay brothers, including Chuck, Harry, and Saul. There was also one sister in the Bay family.

3. Is Anrea Marly's daughter?

Anrea and Shannon are daughters of Marly.

4. Is Gertrude Frankelson Marly's sister?

Gertrude is Marly's Mother.

5. Is Erving Marly's uncle or her cousin?

Erving is Esther's direct cousin, and Goldie is Erving's cousin, so Marly is Erving's cousin once removed.

All best,  
Dmitri

December 18, 2010  
September 25

Hi Cherri:

I looked up the Bart's archives, found no reference to Goffman, or any mention of her correspondence.

Do you know the wife of Fred Davis, Marcia Davis? I came across EG's thank you addressed to both of them. By the way, I stumbled on a reference to Evelyn Hooker in one of Goffman's books. The reference was to her work on homosexuality, if I recall it right.

Do you know Candace West, another scholar EG mentions? She is teaching at Santa Cruz.

Yours,  
Dmitri

September 26, 2010  
Greetings Dmitri---

If there is no mention of Goffman in her papers do you think it is worth while to continue searching for Pauline? Fred Davis is, as they say around here "late" I have met Marcia once or twice eons ago. Fred was at UCSD so Jackie may be in contact with Marcia or know how to find her. I knew of Candace West but do not know her.

ciao for now  
Sherri

September 26, 2010  
Hi Sherri:

There might be something there in the archives, but to find out you need to be on campus working your ways through the files.

I mentioned to you, I think, the session on Goffman at the next PSA meeting in Seattle that takes place March 11-13, 2010. Gary Marx will be there, Jane Prather, and possible Ruth Horowitz. Do you think you could join us? That would be lovely. I can put you down for the time being, and you can bow out if you have to. Let me know what you think.

All best, Dmitri

P.S. Take a look at the fine article in today's NY Times on the fight over Kafka's archive and his legacy: [http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/26/magazine/26kafka-t.html?\\_r=1&src=me&ref=general](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/26/magazine/26kafka-t.html?_r=1&src=me&ref=general)

September 26, 2010  
Dmitri---what a wonderful article. I think this was my favorite quote:

If Brod could see what was happening now, Keret says, he would be "horrified." Kafka, on the other hand, might be O.K. with it: "The next best thing to having your stuff burned, if you're ambivalent, is giving it to some guy who gives it to some lady who gives it to her daughters who keeps it in an apartment full of cats, right?"

I was a little miffed to find out Brod had excised things (e.g. visits to the prostitutes) from Kafka's diaries. From his diaries!!! But then, how did the author of the article know this in the first place?

Do you think we will ever discover one of Goffman's old hairbrushes? We can see how far a fetish can go. Maybe we will discover the letters Goffman must have written to Skye when he was in the Shetlands. Now that would be a find!

thanks for the link.

Re Seattle: I am booked on an expedition ship for Antarctica for early to mid march, so unless the ship sinks (which is what happened to the last ship I was booked on!) I am afraid I will not be able to make Seattle.

ciao for now  
Sherri

September 26  
Sherri,

This is indeed a very fine statement – unforced, clear-headed, bereft of verbal pyrotechnic. There are good many quotes in this piece, the one you cite is a riot.

One thing that always puzzled me is why, if the author wishes to get rid of one's archive, not to destroy it personally. That's what Foucault did. Not Kafka, though. And Goffman apparently could not bring himself to burning his papers; all he could do is to seal his archives, which were humongous by some accounts. Wonder what his intent was. Surely there is more than his hairbrush lying around Gillian-Erving's home in Philadelphia.

Your Antarctica cruise sounds like lots of fun. There will be a Couch-Stone symposium in Vegas on April 103, 2011. Maybe you can join that one.

All best,  
Dmitri

September 26

Dmitri---maybe the answer to Goffman and his papers was that he was ambivalent. On the one hand he didn't want anyone poking around in his private papers, making who knows what out of the ephemera, while on the other hand he wanted a stake in posterity. Maybe he secretly wanted those papers to be uncovered by some single minded researcher.

Although he could have never known (because she was so very young when he died) maybe someday Alice will want to see those papers.

Also, physically destroying your work is a difficult psychological act. I threw away about 85% of all my papers when I retired---eight years ago yet the emotional experience of the act remains very vivid.

ciao for now  
Sherri

p.s. Las Vegas is a possibility

September 26, 2010  
Greetings Dmitri---

If there is no mention of Goffman in her papers do you think it is worthwhile to continue searching for Pauline? Fred Davis is, as they say around here "late" I have met Marcia once or twice eons ago. Fred was at UCSD so Jackie may be in contact with Marcia or know how to find her. I knew of Candace West but do not know her.

ciao for now  
Sherri

September 26, 2010  
Sherri,

Yes, there must have been complicated set of calculations. The sudden death could have been a factor. EG went into the operation thinking he would make it through. His was in place but he might have reconsidered it had he survived.

The issue is not just what Erving's wishes were, but also his executor's interpretation. Tom wanted to get a hold of a certain manuscript they knew their father left behind, but Gillian wouldn't budge.

Yours, Dmitri

December 18, 2010  
Here are my questions for Frances

1. Were Erving and his uncle Mickey close? What can she remember about Uncle

Mickey? Was he Erving's favorite uncle? Was Erving close to his aunts and uncles, cousins?

2. What is "pull"? Frances mentions it as something Erving enjoyed as a boy and that their parents bought him a table. [Bay: I'll tell you one thing – he loved to play pull. My parents bought him a table, it was on our veranda in Dauphin, and he played on it.] Is it a solitary game, like pin ball machines; or is it a game played with another, like ping pong or foosball?

3. Was Erving a wrestler in high school? [Dmitri, I came across a reference to Erving as a wrestler and I cannot find it again; I think it is important]

4. Did Max and Anne speak Russian at home? [we learned they did not speak Yiddish] Where/when did they learn English? Did they speak well?

I listed the question in the order of their importance to me.

The check arrived; sorry we won't be able to make it for dinner. Some other time.

season's best  
Sherri

December 18, 2010  
Hi Sherri:

Some of the questions you bring up I have already asked. I will ask them again but it is doubtful that France's memories have improved since the last time I queried her. I checked with Esther, and she reiterated a few points she made earlier.

1. Were Erving and his uncle Mickey close? What can she remember about Uncle Mickey? Was he Erving's favorite uncle? Was Erving close to his aunts and uncles, cousins?

Neither Fran nor Esther remembers any particular interactions between Erving and Uncle Mickey, nor were they able to recall any details or episodes besides what is mentioned in their interviews (which is mostly a warm feeling everybody had about Mickey). I will ask about the aunts and uncles that EG was close to, but what I heard in the past was unspecific. The best account is that of Goldie Frankelson who reports several encounters with Erving. Esther tells me that Uncle Mickey and Anne were especially close. Mickey and his wife used to visit them in Winnipeg, staying at Frances's house. They had no children. Esther cannot think of other cousins close to Erving. She explains her special relationship with EG by the close bonds between her and Erving's parents.

2. What is "pull"? Frances mentions it as something Erving enjoyed as a boy and that their parents bought him a table. [Bay: I'll tell you one thing – he loved to play pull. My parents bought him a table, it was on our veranda in Dauphin, and he played on it.] Is it a solitary game, like pin ball machines; or is it a game played with another, like ping pong or foosball?

The "pull" should be "pool." The reference is to the billiard table.

3. Was Erving a wrestler in high school? [Dmitri, I came across a reference to Erving as a wrestler and I cannot find it again; I think it is important]

I also recall the reference to Erving being a wrestler in high school. Can't remember who brought it up. Will keep looking.

4. Did Max and Anne speak Russian at home? [we learned they did not speak [Yiddish]. Where/when did they learn English? Did they speak well?

Fran and Esther recall Max and Annie talking English, not Yiddish or Russian. Perhaps the last two languages slipped out of use by the time the couple moved to Dauphin. Esther says it is conceivable they would speak Russian if they didn't want kids to understand, but she recalls nothing of the kind.

Regards,  
Dmitri

December 22, 2010  
Thanks, Dmitri.

This helps.

Be sure to let me know about your visit with Frances.

ciao for now  
Sherri

December 26, 2010  
Greetings Sherri:

I am back from my trip to LA where I met with Fran and Esther. Both were touched by the Goffman cup and asked me to extend their gratitude to you.

The dinner at Fran's featured a relative and a couple of friends. The conversation shifted from the health reform to antisemitism in Canada to Erving's children. Some speculated about the cases of Tom's death (a leading theory is drug overdose). Frances resents being left in the dark.

Hope the year is winding down well for you, with the next one promising good health, satisfying artwork, and inspired scholarship.

Kindly,  
Dmitri