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Remembering Erving Goffman

Richard Daniels

Goffman Was Always Ready to Explain, and He Did That without Condescension, with Patience, and with Grace

This conversation with Richard Daniels, retired hospital administrator, was recorded over the phone on May 31, 2009. Breaks in the conversation flow are indicated by ellipses. Supplementary information and additional materials inserted during the editing process appear in square brackets. Undecipherable words and unclear passages are identified in the text as “[?]”.

Richard Daniels: Hello?

Shalin: Greetings, is this Richard?

Richard Daniels: Yes.

Arlene Daniels: Hello?

Shalin: Greetings, Arlene. This is Dmitri.

Arlene Daniels: Hello, Dmitri.

Shalin: Both of you were willing to talk to me. Maybe I can start with Richard.

Arlene Daniels: I'll go to another room. Hold on.

Shalin: Should I talk to you later, Arlene?

Arlene Daniels: OK.

Shalin: Richard?

Daniels: Yes.

Shalin: Greetings. First let me ask you if I can record our conversation then send you the transcript for revisions.

Daniels: That would be fine.

Shalin: Great.

Daniels: Let me ask you something.

Shalin: Yes.

Daniels: I presume you are taking these interviews for the purpose of developing a book or a [publication] of some kind.

Shalin: Not quite. This is a web-based project where I collect interviews and memoirs about Goffman and then place them on the web so interested scholars can read them. The idea is to illuminate the life of Erving Goffman, academia and and people of that era. It might at some point evolve into a conventional publication, but publishers are generally reluctant to bring out materials available on the internet.

Daniels: Yes, I understand [**laughing**].

Shalin: But I don't worry about this. The important thing is that I talk to as many people as possible and preserve their memoirs for posterity.

Daniels: Aha! OK, I just wanted to know what kind of funnel I am getting into.

Shalin: I don't know if that makes sense, but that's where we are right now.

Daniels: Oh, no. That [makes sense]. There are different ways of establishing a record when an auditor must make conclusions about how reliable the report is.

Shalin: It's a kind of oral history, if you wish, except what I collect are not so much interviews as conversations. I like to call them "interviews" – a cross between interview and memoir. It starts with a talk to prime the pump, then more is added when the contributor works with the transcript. The process can also work in the opposite direction, beginning with a memoir, which is then followed up with questions to fill in the blanks. In this case we have "memoview."

Tell me, Richard, did you have a chance to read my conversation with Arlene?

Daniels: Yes, I went through . . . I don't know who prepared the record, but I recently reviewed several pages of the interview that you conducted with Arlene. Is this what you are referring to?

Shalin: Yes. That's right. We spoke over the phone and then Arlene tinkered with the transcript, edited it, and so on. You probably know the issues that keep coming up. In your case, since you didn't have much of a chance to observe Erving, except in his seminar you took . . .

Daniels: Only from a distance.

Shalin: That is important. You can spot a lot of things that way. If you don't mind, I'll mention a few tangents that are of interest to me, and then you can move at your own pace and pick up questions that concern you. Maybe you can start with how you ended up in the class taught by Goffman, what impression he made on you as a teacher, what kind of figure he cut, then on to the paper you wrote for Goffman, how Arlene negotiated the grade for it, and so on. I leave it up to you where you want to start.

Daniels: [Laughing]. Well, let's put it this way. I was a public health major at UC Berkeley, aimed at a Master's degree in hospital administration. I was an undergraduate when I started to take sociology courses and found that I have an interest in sociology. Sociology was actually a minor for me. That occurred before I met Arlene [Daniels] who later became my wife. She was a sociology graduate student at the time when I met her. She just finished her Master's degree. I was a late bloomer, faced with the inevitability of draft into the armed forces, and didn't have anything better to do at the time. I was 19, didn't have much in a way of prospects attending the university, at least at that early point, because I didn't have any money to support myself. Trapped by the Korean War, I put in nearly four years in the air force from age 19 to almost 23.

Shalin: And you were born . . .

Daniels: In '29. So I was a late starter as an incoming freshman at UC Berkeley in 1952. But early on I began taking sociology courses. First course I took was an introductory one with Herbert Blumer, who was a fine teacher.

Shalin: Oh, you also knew Blumer!

Daniels: [Laughing].

Shalin: Well, probably the same way you knew Goffman.

Daniels: Yes, really. Arlene later developed a relatively close relationship with Blumer, but I wasn't really much of a participant in that relationship. I was out of school at this point, pursuing my career, my career development and [different] angles. But at any event, it was a golden age of sociology at UC Berkeley. The department was transformed by the appointment of Blumer as the new chair, and the people that Blumer began to recruit for the department. It was an especially interesting event on campus for a lot of us, the way the sociology department was developing. I had an interest in the subject I found, so even before I met Arlene I really began to pursue sociological interests. She indicated to me from an early point what she

thought were interesting courses to take, interesting personalities under whom to study sociology. So it ended up being a minor for me. Basically, my serial relationships with sociology people there were entirely through Arlene. I was still in a lower division at the time, so my course selection decisions were made under guidance of counselors in the School of Public Health, but I also chose courses for myself as electives. Arlene helped me to choose interesting courses [taught by] interesting people, and among the interesting people certainly was Erving Goffman.

One anecdote I remembered after our conversation yesterday that wasn't touched in the interview that you had with Arlene is about an instance that occurred after we moved out of Berkeley. I left graduate school status and was working at a hospital down on the Peninsula south of San Francisco on the other side of the Bay. Arlene was still very much related to Berkeley, had a lot of contacts there, making way for herself in the profession as a young Ph.D. holder in sociology, looking for a career in sociology. She and a male colleague whose name I forgot . . .

Arlene Daniels: [In the background] that was David Matza.

Richard Daniels: . . . went to a local pub in Berkeley. Two of them were seated across the table from Erving. They ordered a meal, some entrée served in a bar cafe. Sitting across of them and looking significantly at Arlene and her colleague, Erving said, "You can always tell lower class New York Jews by their atrocious table manners." They both had their hands on their lamb chops or whatever it was that they were eating, using the combination of cutlery and hands to get their food into mouth and doing it with gusto. He made this condescending, and not to put too fine a point on it, snotty remark about their table manners. Arlene and her pal looked at another obliviously and continued as before.

Shalin: [Laughing]

Daniels: Erving never passed up an opportunity to make a remark like that and to be condescending, used his [wit] to make fun of some behavior.

Shalin: It seemed like he was playing Ms. Manner on that occasion.

Daniels: That, but also maintaining and reinforcing his higher position.

Shalin: Showing his superiority?

Daniels: Yes, superiority. That was a reason people were very wary of dealing with him. He did not hesitate for an instance if there was an opening, a little chink in the armor. He did not hesitate to stick in a wicked remark and

make you feel it. If you were in a demonstratively inferior position, it made you very weary even approaching him. But I did learn that he was always ready to explain anything that he said in a lecture or in an interchange that seemed difficult to understand. He did that without condescension, he did that with patience, and with grace! If you were ready to talk business with him, if you were in the arms-length relationship with him in the first place, but you were ready to talk business with him, [he was approachable]. For instance, if you had a question about something you misunderstood, he was more than willing to take just about any amount of time that was necessary to make sure you understood what he meant.

Shalin: This is very important. He was really intellectually engaged, and if someone was prepared to challenge him on this substantive level, he was there to spar with you in earnest.

Daniels: He was there to spar, particularly if you were careful enough to couch your inquiry without belligerence or aggression. He was a very suspicious guy in a sense that . . . I think he thought that the world was an armed camp, that he had better have armor and arms of his own and be prepared to use them, as if he was out there alone in the world.

Shalin: Would you call it defensiveness?

Daniels: It was clothed in a costume of a moral superiority, and certainly higher social status than thou.

Shalin: Do you have any theory or a hunch about the origins of his suspiciousness, his readiness, if not eagerness, to strike back?

Daniels: Well, I think Californians [tend to be ?] something like that. He didn't grow up in California, but he lived in California maybe for years. That was not my case, although at that point I lived in California long enough to be distinctly Californian in my point of view. [I ?] have a suspicion of Easterners who seem to be belligerent, aggressive, perhaps unusually assured, incisive in comments about almost any field. It is a sort of tiff, a suspicion of the kind of behavior that he displayed in spades. He felt that he had to assert himself, and aggressively so.

Shalin: Are you saying that Erving fit the stereotype of someone from the East coast?

Daniels: Yes, that's right. But that's just a curbstone judgment, a psychological [viewpoint]. Who knows what in Erving's background made him

feel that way, feel embattled, maybe not against the whole world but a large portion of it, anyhow.

Shalin: I spoke to Erving's sister and relatives, so I may have some idea about the origins of his suspiciousness. Erving's mother was one of eight siblings growing up in Canada. But please continue, I don't want to interrupt you.

Daniels: I didn't know that Erving had such an extended family.

Shalin: He did. I posted in the Goffman archives the photos and materials related to Erving's family and its Russian-Jewish roots. The materials are from the Frances Goffman family archives and the Averbakh family reunion album. I can give you the web link.

Daniels: One question I have is about Erving's parents. When they immigrated to this country, did they come in through Ellis Island?

Shalin: No, they went to Canada and ended up in Manitoba.

Daniels: I wanted to know which route they took.

Shalin: Did immigrants bound for Canada still have to go through Ellis Island?

Daniels: It wasn't necessarily a different route, but it could be.

Shalin: It didn't occur to me that they might have entered via the U.S.

Daniels: I want to know how Erving's folk ended up in Canada instead of Lower East Side.

Shalin: There is a story behind the family migration. It starts with one brother leaving Russia and finding his way to Canada, with more brothers and sisters to follow. Sometime around 1913 Milyeh Averbakh and her daughter Anne, Goffman's mother, immigrated to Canada as well.

Daniels: Aha!

Shalin: Erving's smother was about 13 when she came to the New World.

Daniels: I see. Well, those are facts about Erving I didn't know.

Shalin: Conversations I had with Erving's relatives offer an interesting perspective on the origins of his dramaturgy, theoretical and personal. But please continue.

Daniels: [Laughing]. I am perfectly happy to answer any questions. I think I've run out of gas.

Shalin: Could you tell me a little more about the seminar you took with Erving? When did you take it and what was the title of this class?

Daniels: The title of the seminar I cannot remember, but he was talking about roles and the dynamics involved – the way people assume roles, the way they develop in their roles, and the way they sometimes cast them aside after a while.

Shalin: It might have been a seminar on society and personality, perhaps.

Daniels: Exactly.

Shalin: Do you remember when you took it?

Daniels: No, but we were living in Berkeley [at the time].

Shalin: Erving came to Berkeley in 1958.

Daniels: In '58.

Shalin: So it might have been in 1959 or '60.

Daniels: That's exactly right, because by '61 we had moved to the Peninsula on the other side of the Bay. . . . Erving came in '58; in '59-'60 I was still in a student status, so it must have been during that year. I remember one thing about it – we had a rainy winter. So I have a suspicion it was in the fall that he gave the seminar, in the fall of '59.

Shalin: How many people you had in the classroom?

Daniels: Oh, gee. My only memory of accuracy is that it was a larger seminar than usual. I was impressed how many people wanted to take something with Erving.

Shalin: Was there a few dozen students?

Daniels: No, it wasn't that large.

Shalin: Maybe 15-20?

Daniels: I'd say 15- 20. To me that was large seminar.

Shalin: It was a large one. Usually you have 8-10 students. Was it a graduate seminar?

Daniels: I don't think undergraduate seminars were very common at Berkeley at that time. Many of Arlene's post grad confederates were in that seminar.

Shalin: You wouldn't happen to have a syllabus from that seminar.

Daniels: I don't think so.

Shalin: What was the setup for class session?

Daniels: He would introduce a topic he prepared. He advised the attendees a week before what the topic would be. He would also advise people if they were interested about the items they could read. He would prepare a little background for the discussion. I am relying on my memory, but generally his approach was [to give] a brief presentation at the beginning, talk about what he had on his agenda of which he had apprised attendees a week prior to that. It would go for 15 minutes or something like that. He would make [an introduction] and ask for discussion. People would give anecdotal examples for the items of interest that he set up for such a discussion.

Shalin: So it was a discussion-oriented class.

Daniels: It was heavily weighted in favor of students participating in what he indicated to be the outline of issues involved.

Shalin: Do you know if he credited those who actively participated in class discussions?

Daniels: Well, I assumed that he did. I was auditing as much as anything. I was not there for a grade.

Shalin: But you did write a paper.

Daniels: Yes, I wrote a paper for the seminar, and I got a grade, but I wasn't taking it [because I had to].

Shalin: Understood. For you it was strictly elective class. Do you remember if Erving spelled out criteria for grading students' work in his class? And what kind of grader he was?

Daniels: I don't think he discussed any administration [of the class] at all. I think he assumed that we were all either graduate students, and if not graduate students yet, then upper division undergraduates.

Shalin: And you were expected to write a paper at the end of the class.

Daniels: Yes, he wanted a paper.

Shalin: What was your paper about?

Daniels: "The Social Function of the Career Fool." I had my chance, browsing one day in a sociology textbook that Arlene had on her desk, I came across an article by – [**addressing Arlene Daniels**] – What was his name?

Arlene Daniels: Oren Klapp.

Daniels: An article by Oren Klapp.

Shalin: How is it spelled?

Daniels: K-l-a-p-p. And Professor Klapp had prepared a kind of taxonomy of fools. What he described was people who were made fools of and the manners in which people could be made fools of, and eventually how the victim could escape the role of having being made a fool. It was a transitional, transitory experience for the unfortunate person who had been made a fool of.

Shalin: And your paper addressed those issues?

Daniels: No, not so much. I raised a question about what kind of person who becomes known as a fool that doesn't get out of the role. That's why I referred to the function of a career fool.

Shalin: Oh, I see. A career fool who stays in the role willingly or unwillingly as opposed to someone who was pressed into the role but leaves it when there is a chance. How did Erving respond to your paper?

Daniels: [**Laughing**]. At one point he made a comment which caused near delirium in me. He commented that it was "a swinging paper." In the vulgate of the time, swinging meant "that's really jazzy," "that's really swell." That was about the only encouraging remark he ever made to me, or made of me, but I was crazy about it.

Shalin: Did you discuss the paper with him?

Daniels: Oh, I had a bit of a disadvantage in this seminar. My only convenient way of getting in touch with him was at the seminar. I don't think I had much of the discussion with him regarding selecting the topic. In fact, I know I didn't, because I fumed and fussed about what kind of paper I was going to write, until I read the Klapp article that made me think about an experience I had with a guy in the service when we were in basic training. That seemed both to fill the void in the proposed Klapp's taxonomy and might be suitable as a subject of a paper for Erving's seminar.

Shalin: So you wrote it, Erving liked it, and . . .

Daniels: He was very encouraging.

Shalin: Was he just complementary or did he encouraged you to do something with it?

Daniels: He said it needs further work, it needs some polishing, but it is good paper.

Shalin: Was he suggesting it could be published?

Daniels: He was instrumental . . . Arlene was the go-between. He helped me with the original paper, giving me suggestions and guidance, and that was a lot more . . . I was busy commuting to a distant point on San Francisco Peninsula from Berkeley, and I had long days. I just didn't have time to go to the Berkley Hills and spend time with the sometimes difficult professor.

Shalin: So Arlene worked with Erving on this paper to bring it to another level? She would bring you the progress report?

Daniels: Yes, we would work on suggestions that he would make, the items I should handle more conclusively, or some criticism. We would deal with these criticisms, and eventually the paper suited him, and we circulated it [with an eye] to publishing it.

Shalin: Was it published?

Daniels: It was published in *Psychiatry*.

Shalin: Very interesting. At that point you interacted with Erving mostly through Arlene.

Daniels: That is correct.

Shalin: And what grade Erving gave you? Arlene mentioned something like “B++” that he was willing to give you.

Daniels: [Laughing]

Shalin: At which point she challenged him, “Why not A- –.”

Daniels: My memory is that I got an “A” in the course. Whether it was “A” or “A-” I don’t remember [Laughing].

Shalin: I’d like to have a reference to this publication.

Daniels: Yes. Arlene is senior author.

Shalin: You co-authored it.

Daniels: We co-authored it.

Shalin: I’d like to look it up, as it retains Erving’s touch.

Daniels: It has a touch from Erving, but the important thing is that whatever standard it reveals, it was a standard that Erving thought to be promotable.

Shalin: That’s what I mean. You brought it up to a level where he was comfortable to encourage its publication.

Richard, you mentioned to me earlier that Erving tended to give 100 percent of himself when he was teaching a class. You had a chance to observe this personally, right?

Daniels: Yes, I observed it.

Shalin: Could you elaborate on this?

Daniels: Well, there was never any question that he knew what he was going to say. His lectures were models of clarity. He always had stories to tell, stories from St. Elizabeth’s in Washington, other clinical settings he had worked in, experimental settings he had worked in. He always had tales to tell, and they always seemed important, obviously important in his view to be made for students. I was at that point going on 200 units, being exposed to a variety of [classes], lecturers, professors and presenters of one kind or another. I always thought he was a model lecturer – incisive, clear, engaging.

Shalin: He would literally sweat it out.

Daniels: Oh, on one occasion I did notice it. I didn't approach him without reservations.

Shalin: You did or you didn't?

Daniels: I approached him with reservations. If I was mystified by something he had said, the intent of which eluded me, I would approach him at the end of the lecture and ask what he meant by that. That is exactly what I did in this large lecture hall where he delivered to a presentation to a large audience of students.

Shalin: It was not a seminar.

Daniels: No, that was a big lecture course. I forget what the title of the course was: it was a regular course for credit I was taking.

Arlene Daniels: It was a social psychology course.

Daniels: It was a social psychology course taught by different professors but regardless of who taught, the course auditorium had the same number. I did take Erving's social psych course. At the end, I had a question to ask, and I went to the podium in this very large auditorium. The size was necessary to accommodate people who wanted to take this course. When I got down there, I was surprised to see the perfectly dressed professor Goffman dripping with perspiration. It couldn't have been the result of physical [exertion] during the course of the lecture. It had to have been the result of concentrated mental effort to give an edifying analysis to his students. I think it was the kind of strain that an actor on a drama stage would undergo. He worked to give a good performance. But I also thought public presentation was not second nature to him and that perhaps he had an unsettling experience of stage fright.

Shalin: He really threw himself into this role to perform at the top level.

Shalin: Richard, you must have heard your share of stories about Goffman, particularly from Arlene, I imagine.

Daniels: Well [**laughing**], from Arlene. She was closer to him; [I] had an arms-length relationship.

Shalin: I wonder which of the stories you've heard over the course of years proved most memorable?

Daniels: The story about Erving and the truck driver. He had his car pinned in the parking spot in Chinatown in San Francisco, and the dressing down that

the diminutive Erving gave to a burly truck driver who retreated as if he had been assaulted by a heavy weight champion.

Shalin: Erving must have scared this guy with his intensity.

Daniels: Well, it was dramatic, apparently.

Shalin: I wonder who witnessed this encounter. The story doesn't come from Erving, obviously. Did Arlene see it?

Daniels: Arlene [didn't ?] see it. It was second hand to her. When you talk to Arlene, and she is sitting right here now, you can talk to her.

Shalin: Later, after we finish, I'll talk to her.

Daniels: [Someone] related it to her. I don't think she witnessed it. I know she didn't.

Shalin: Any other stories?

Daniels: The ones I'd given you are in my repertory of stories and anecdotes about Erving. I can't think of anything else about him.

Shalin: You mentioned you took a class from Herbert Blumer.

Daniels: Yes, it was an introductory class.

Shalin: Anything that stands out in your memory?

Daniels: Well, the thing that stands out in my memory first and foremost is that the class, probably given in the fall semester of '52. The Red Scare was on at the time. Professor Blumer took just about the first full hour at the first meeting of the class to make an explanation. It was a large group, as introductory courses for undergraduate often are. And he spent time spelling out to the class the difference between sociology and . . .

Shalin: Socialism?

Daniels: . . . and socialism. That was absolutely a reaction to the McCarthyism Red Scare that was in operation at the time. I was quite impressed that a university professor would anticipate being attacked by conservative parents and parental households about the course content that their student kids would be presented. . . .

Shalin: What was the gist of Blumer's argument?

Daniels: [Laughing] His take on McCarthyism was that it was inimical to sane and rational thought. What President Bush would have referred to as the kind of war in order to prevent something really disastrous from happening. You start a war to prevent something disastrous.

Shalin: Preventive war?

Daniels: Preventive war. And he [Blumer] was doing preventive defense. Sociology had nothing to do with Marxist theories of any kind directly. You can study Marxist societies as a genre of societies in general, but sociology did not mean socialism.

Shalin: What kind political beliefs you sensed in Blumer?

Daniels: I don't remember any overtly political partisanship in his lectures or presentations. My assumption – and it was strictly a matter of assumption – was that university professors were rational and therefore liberal and progressive in their political and social views. As a result, I presumed most of them were probably ready to vote as democrats. Certainly, I was. So I had no argument with him [laughing]. I certainly would have remembered if Blumer or any other of my professors said anything that indicated political partisanship, particularly if colored by a hard right bias.

Shalin: So Blumer, if I got it right, was a progressive type thinker, a liberal. Would you say the same thing about Goffman?

Daniels: I made the same presumption in his case. I never heard Erving say anything much politically partisan in nature. His view of what was appropriate, how people get into the roles that they play, was very consonant with a liberal social outlook.

Shalin: You assume from his theoretical orientation that he was liberal in his political sensibilities. There is bit of a mystery as to which political beliefs Erving had, if any.

Daniels: My perception of Erving's political views is strictly attributive. On my part I assumed that [Erving's] notion about how people came to behave the way they do would be very consonant with an idea that it takes all kinds, and all kinds have got to be accommodated, within the limits of civility, of course.

Shalin: Anything else about Blumer as a lecturer?

Daniels: Oh, he was a colorful lecturer. Arlene used to do a terrific parody of Blumer's mimic of the conversation of gestures between two dogs.

[Laughter]

Shalin: He would literally impersonate the dogs?

Daniels: Yes, something I have heard but never witnessed. Did you ever know him in the flesh?

Shalin: I went to see him once at Berkeley. In fact, when I emigrated from Russia in 1975, I had written to a few American sociologists, including Blumer, while I was waiting for an American visa in Italy. I thought of studying with him, but he retired and left Berkeley and was teaching at something called "American University," I believe. He wrote to me that there was no scholarship money to pay for my education, so I went to Columbia University which offered me a fellowship and a place in a student dormitory. When I had a chance (I think it was at an ASA meeting in San Francisco), I visited with Blumer.

Daniels: Aha!

Shalin: So I have an idea about his big frame and self-assured manners.

Daniels: You remember him as I do.

Shalin: But you took his class, so you had more of chance to observe him.

Daniels: Well, I saw him on campus, but I took two courses with him – an introductory soc course, and later on, social psychology class.

Shalin: He was a colorful teacher.

Daniels: He was, and the color he wore . . . he was teaching George Herbert Mead under whom he had studied. So anybody who invests the time and effort that *Mind, Self and Society* requires would know you have liked the professor because you wouldn't do it for anybody else.

Shalin: Did you know Shibutani?

Daniels: Yes, Shibutani was both a teacher and a social friend. . . . He was Arlene's mentor, and she had an almost a father-daughter relationship with him, at least intellectually. I got to know him and his first wife. Later on we would go to Santa Barbara to visit them for long weekends with considerable regularity.

Shalin: He was easy to be with.

Daniels: He was a good friend, we had a social friendship. He came to the Bay Area, which he liked to do frequently. Cultured though he was, born into an émigré family, he loved Chinese restaurants in San Francisco.

Shalin: I understand that he didn't get tenure at Berkeley and then went to Santa Barbara.

Daniels: He did not. He was selected to be the first chair of the department at the then new Santa Barbara campus.

Shalin: Was he upset about this transition?

Daniels: I understand he resigned his appointment at Berkeley. . . He got into a departmental contest of some kind, I didn't know what the issues were, or with whom he had a disagreement that eventually resulted in a pretty unpleasant contest, I gather, and that led to his resigning. I think I am right in that. [**Addressing Arlene Daniels**] Did he resign, Arlene?

Arlene Daniels: He was not offered tenure.

Daniels: Arlene makes it clear that he was not offered tenure.

Shalin: That was my understanding. He was not offered tenure and had to leave.

I so much appreciate your time, Richard, your willingness to travel down the memory lane. If I may ask you the last question, I am curious about your impression of Erving's scholarship. You must be familiar with it.

Daniels: No, I have to disabuse you of that. I have read very little of Erving's published materials, and I am not a professional sociologist at all. I would not be able to comment on your level.

Shalin: Well, maybe we can take a different tangent. You know that Erving talked about masks, performances, putting the show on, protecting the backstage, and so on.

Daniels: Right.

Shalin: And when he published his *Presentation of Self*, it seems to me, he found himself in a dilemma how to present himself in public, insofar as he knew that people might watch his performance closely. He had to develop a style of presenting himself in public that implicated his own theories. I felt that his abrasiveness might have been in part his reaction to this dilemma. He

needed to show a role-distance from whatever conventional role he was pressed into.

Daniels: I think that's very accurate. And I think you appreciate the fact that despite his aggressive, but not necessarily belligerent, presentation of self, his reserve from the role allowed him to criticize frankly, candidly, and sometimes obtrusively the conduct of others with whom he came into contact. Underneath all of that, he could be a reasonable human being.

Shalin: My sense of Erv is that he was a born participant observer and an observant participant who refused to draw a bright line between Erving the scholar and Erving the man, that he constantly observed, experimented with, and poked fun at conventions.

Daniels: You well crystallized exactly my impressions.

Shalin: Richard, thank you for finding time to talk to me.

Daniels: Pleasure.

Shalin: Can Arlene talk now?

Daniels: Yes, I am getting her on the phone. Are you coming to the ASA meeting in San Francisco?

Shalin: Yes, I do.

Daniels: Maybe we'll [see you there].

Shalin: That would be great.

Daniels: Terrific.

Shalin: OK. Bye bye.

Daniels: Here she is.

[End of the conversation]