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Journey to the Second Chicago School and Beyond

Arnold J. Glass:

Goffman Sat on My Immediate Left at a Long, Oblong Table in a Room in the Social Science Building

Arnold Glass* wrote this memoir at the invitation of Dmitri Shalin and approved posting the present version in the Erving Goffman Archives.

[Posted 08-18-09]

August 9, 2009

Dmitri -

Here is my memoir. I consider myself an "outsider". You may include what follows in any section of the EG Archives deemed appropriate. As I read what I've written, much seems self-serving impression management and name dropping; ergo, edit out what you will, but do include this paragraph.

My journey began at age 18 in January 1946, when I enrolled at Wright College, a branch of City Colleges of Chicago. I attended that school for 18 months and was introduced to sociology and social psychology by Oscar E. Shabat. Shabat received his A.M. from the University of Chicago in 1936. An inspiring, exciting and brilliant lecturer, he spoke glowingly about Herbert Blumer, and symbolic interactionism. Shabat's social psychology course covered the relevant writings of Peirce, James, Cooley, Dewey, Watson, W.I. Thomas, leading to Mead. Of all things, we read *Mind, Self, and Society!* Reflectively, I'd say he taught a Blumer course to first year college students. Fantastic. I was hooked on sociology! Oscar went on to become Dean of the College and later was appointed first Chancellor of the City Colleges of Chicago.

In 1947 I transferred to Roosevelt University and graduated in June 1949 with a double major in sociology and psychology. Memorable professors were St. Clair Drake, anthropologist, who went on to Stanford; S. Kirson Weinberg, a graduate of the Chicago School in the late 30's; and Sol Kobrin from the Institute for Juvenile Research (IJR). Kobrin later was elected president (1960-1961) of the Illinois Academy of Criminology (IAC). These men were scholarly and great teachers - available to students.

The death of my father in 1949, marriage, and the birth of our first child, coupled with the need to work, interrupted plans for full time academic

matters. Between June 1949 and March 1953 I worked as a social case worker for the Chicago Welfare Department (CWD) and the Cook County Bureau of Public Welfare (CCW). This work provided first hand street experience with recipients of public welfare and the bureaucracy and underworld of social work agencies which led to participant-observer research and the writing of a joint Master's Report with Earl Bogdanoff. Earl was a co-worker at both agencies and fellow student at the U of C. What follows are my memories of professors of the Second Chicago School with whom I consulted and/or with whom I took course work from the period of Autumn Quarter 1949 to June 1955 when I received my A.M., degree.

Charles W. Morris, in the late 1940's, maybe early 50's, presented a non-credit, lecture series on George H. Mead at the U of C's off campus, University College (downtown Chicago) location. I recall a packed room with all taking copious notes. He elaborated, amplified, and clarified the works of George Herbert Mead.

Clifford Shaw taught "Crime and Juvenile Delinquency" (Soc. 271) in Autumn Qr, 1949. In 1934 he pioneered a delinquency prevention program, the Chicago Area Project (CAP) with support from U of C's sociology department and the Institute for Juvenile Research (IJR). Shaw, went beyond theoretical discussion. An earthy man with his boots on the ground, he brought guest speakers to class. Among them, Dan "Moose" Brindisi, a tough street worker who had "connections" ('nough said) and the celebrated con man Joseph "Yellow Kid" Weil, both of whom made theory come alive.

Joseph D. Lohman, a scholarly cop, so labeled after he was elected Sheriff of Cook County in 1954, taught courses, "Organized Crime and the Professional Criminal" (Soc. 384) and also either he, or Shaw, taught "Slum Community and Organized Crime" (Soc. 384) and "Community Organization and Delinquency Prevention" (Soc. 377). Lohman was a past president of Illinois Academy of Criminology, 1952-1953 and later was appointed Dean of the School of Criminology at University of California, Berkeley, from 1961-1968. He died that year at age 58.

Albert J. Reiss, Jr., was my professor for "Advanced Field Studies" (Soc. 301) - a solid course involving interviewing and qualitative analysis.

Louis Wirth taught "History of Sociology" (Soc. 323) in Autumn Qr., 1950. Assigned reading was "The Structure of Social Action" and "The Development of Sociology" by Floyd House. Wonder of wonders, Wirth lectured fluently without notes. The information and knowledge just flowed, and flowed.

Erving Goffman I did not know, but I cite him, since I recollect he was either auditing or taking Wirth's course for credit in the Autumn Qr., of 1950 (above). He sat on my immediate left at a long, oblong table in a room in the Social Science building on 59th Street. We exchanged no words. I recall fellow students remarking he was exceptionally brilliant and scholarly. His only knowledge of me was reference to my Master's Report, footnoted on page 43 in "Presentation of Self in Everyday Life". I have nothing to add to the "Tales of Goffman" regarding idiosyncratic behavior.

It is to be noted that this class with Wirth was within the time frame when EG did "twelve months of field work carried on between December, 1949, and May, 1951 in a small community in Great Britain. The community is located on a small island . . ." (Ph.D., Dissertation, page 1), "The student lived for twelve months over a period of over a year and half on the island . . ." (Ph. D. Thesis Statement, page 4).

If my memory is correct about EG being in that class, one can presume that though he did his field work over a period of eighteen months, he left the island for six months and returned to Chicago for an indeterminate period within that eighteen month time frame.

William Fielding Ogburn. Took his course in Autumn Qr., 1950, "Principles of Social Change" (Soc. 236). A tall, distinguished gentleman with (bow-tie?). Lectured and amplified from his book, "Social Change".

Tomatsu Shibutani taught "Collective Behavior" (Soc. 326) in the Winter Qr., 1951. Good man.

Everett Hughes and Howard S. Becker both were available for consultation in framing the scope of the research and during the writing stage for our report, "The Sociology of the Urban Public Case Worker in an Urban Area" (1953). Hughes was an impressive figure. Howard was especially helpful.

Donald Bogue and Selma Monsky. With the exception of occasional employment as an interviewer at Nation Opinion Research Center (NORC) at the U of C. This ends my contact with faculty of the Second Chicago School going back sixty years. For NORC I was involved in the pre-test design of the "Study of the Homeless Man" (early 1950's, I believe).

Edward Shils. Little is said about Shils in the archive material. I knew him as a customer in our families used, rare, and out of print book shop in Evanston. Got to know more about Shils through Joseph Epstein who knew him better than anyone. See Epstein's essay, "My Friend Edward" which appeared in

the *American Scholar* (Vol. LXIV, Summer Issue, 1995, pp. 371-394). A warm, intimate portrayal of a giant intellect and honored figure in sociology.

I did not return to the U of C for further study. Marriage then (and now in it's 57th year), four children, the youngest, neurologically impaired, no money, college expenses for the children . . . required full time work and double-jobbing . . . leading to . . . My working career after four years as a social worker up to 1953. And then . . . Probation Officer and Psychiatric Social Worker at Cook County Juvenile Court - (1953-1957); Director of Social Service at Chicago Alcoholic Treatment Center - (1957-1958); Fund Raiser, Community Organization and Director of Development, Spertus College of Judaica and various philanthropies; Field Research Interviewer for NORC and Survey Research Center, U of Michigan - (1958-1967); City Colleges Chicago, Associate Professor - (1967-1996); Used, Rare, and Out of Print Book Dealer, (1970-2009).

Sandwiched in between all of the above I enrolled at Northeastern Illinois University -low tuition - (1970-1974) where I accumulated 60 graduate credit hours in psychology and sociology (NIU does not have a Ph.D., program) for "salary lane advancement" at City Colleges.

I close with heartfelt gratitude to Gary Fine for his friendship and intellectual stimulation. I met him in October 2006 when Randall Collins came to Northwestern to present a paper. I approached Gary and we had a short conversation. Exceedingly gracious, and welcoming, he suggested I attend the sociology department colloquia which I have attended for the past three years. I have also sat in on his classes. What a mensch. Thank you, Gary, for bringing me back to sociology.

Arnold J. Glass

(Dmitri - OK to post where suitable)

*As for an introduction to EGA readers, well I suppose you can say that I came to academia later than most. After nearly twenty years of other work, much related to the stuff of sociological interest -- hmnn, come to think of it, isn't everything -- at age thirty nine I contacted my undergraduate instructor, Oscar Shabat, now Chancellor of City Colleges. He remembered me and liked the idea that I had "street experience". I was hired and my life changed. After twenty nine years I retired at age sixty eight in 1996 and years later in 2006, once again, the sociological world opened up when I met Gary Fine.