

5-28-2009

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University of Chicago

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Repository Citation

Goodman, L. (2009). Remembering Chicago Sociologists. In Dmitri N. Shalin, *Bios Sociologicus: The Erving Goffman Archives* 1-24.

Available at: https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/goffman_archives/30

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Remembering Chicago Sociologists

Leo Goodman

This conversation with Leo Goodman, Professor Emeritus of sociology at the University of Chicago, was recorded over the phone on May 28, 2009. Dmitri Shalin transcribed the interview, after which Dr. Goodman approved posting the present version in the Erving Goffman Archives. 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 “[?]”.

Shalin: Greetings, is this Leo?

Goodman: Yes.

Shalin: This is Dmitri Shalin. Is this a good day to talk, Leo?

Goodman: Yes.

Shalin: Great. I want to make sure it is indeed OK that I record our conversation and then send you the transcript for further work.

Goodman: That’s fine.

Shalin: I understand that you knew not only Harvey Sacks, but also Blumer, Shibutani, and other people at Berkeley. I wonder, also, if the name David Schneider rings the bell.

Goodman: David Schneider the anthropologist.

Shalin: Exactly, the anthropologist at Chicago.

Goodman: Not only in Chicago, but also in Santa Cruise.

Shalin: You also knew him?

Goodman: Oh, yes. I lived a long time.

Shalin: Let’s start by going back to your years at Chicago and how you ended up there, if you don’t mind, and then we can move to Blumer, Sacks, and others.

Goodman: Now, the thing that puzzles me a little bit is that in the materials that you sent me the center of your project is . . . What’s the name?

Shalin: The Center for Democratic Culture?

Goodman: No, the person, the sociologist at Berkeley.

Shalin: Erving Goffman?

Goodman: Erving Goffman, who is the center of your project.

Shalin: I started with Erving Goffman, but the more I spoke to people, the clear it became that his colleagues, people around him, are important to the project as well. I am talking about Erving's teachers, colleagues, scholars of that era in general. So I expanded the project into an oral history focused on a wider Goffman circle and the academia in that period.

Goodman: Hello?

Shalin: I am here.

Goodman: I didn't hear the last part. You made this into a bigger project.

Shalin: Yes, the project evolved into a study of the Goffman era, with Erving being a central focus, but the net is cast wider.

Goodman: When did he leave Chicago, finished his dissertation?

Shalin: Erving came to the University of Chicago in 1946, got his master's in '48, and defended his Ph.D. in 1953. Then he worked at the National Institute of Mental Health, after which he joined the sociology department at Berkeley in 1958. In 1968 he took up an appointment at the University of Pennsylvania and worked there until his death in 1982.

Goodman: Yes. OK. I'll tell you a little bit about myself first. I was an undergrad at Syracuse University. Saul Mendlovitz was also an undergraduate at Syracuse University. We met . . . I was a major in sociology, and Saul was a major in sociology, I guess. We met in a particular class that we had to take as sociology majors. [That was] a course in statistics given by a sociology faculty member. And the sociology faculty member was Bob Faris – Robert E. L. Faris. Now, this was the first time Faris was required by the sociology department to teach this course. Faris came in the class on the first day and announced that he had been forced to teach this course by the sociology department. Yes, he taught it before, and the reason he has been chosen is that long time before he had written a book that had some tables in it, and so it was assumed he could teach this course. He knew a little bit about statistics, he said, but not that much, and he hoped the students in class would be able to help him.

Shalin: That's a funny. Do you remember which year this happened, roughly?

Goodman: . . . Saul and I both graduated from Syracuse – no, I don't know about Saul, I graduated from Syracuse in 1948.

Shalin: So you must have taken the class around 1946 or '47.

Goodman: Something like that. Yes, probably '46. I went to Syracuse in 1945, and this was probably in '46. Very good. Saul and I are both in this class, and at the end of the class Faris – his name was actually Robert E. L. Faris . . .

Shalin: Yes, I am familiar with this name. He is associated with the interactionist school.

Goodman: Yes, he was also a very top social psychologist, and he was very much into emphasizing the discipline of sociology. He was very much a sociologist. We became good friends. So at the end of that course Faris said to me, "You have a skill in statistics, and if you want to make more of this skill, improve the skill, or develop it more, you should take some mathematics courses." As it turned out, between '45 and '46 Syracuse had a terrific math department faculty because the department thought it could build the top department by hiring Jewish refugees who escaped the Holocaust. It had a number of very top mathematicians there. With two of them in particular I took courses. They had since left Syracuse and became world class mathematicians.

Shalin: Do you remember their names?

Goodman: Oh, sure. One was Lipman Bers – B-e-r-s, or "Lipper" [?] as friends called him. He left Syracuse to become top person at Columbia and the Courant Institute in New York City. His teacher was someone named Charles Loewner – L-o-e-w-n-e-r, who went to Stanford. He also became a world class mathematician at Stanford. He spent his career at Stanford, very top person. I was lucky to take a few courses [with them]. It turned out that when I graduated in 1948, I had just the minimal amount of courses you could have and still be sociology major, and a minimal amount of courses you could have to join a math major. Both had the minimum amount of courses acceptable to be a joint major.

I didn't know what I was going to do. Bob Faris wanted me very much to go to the University of Chicago to be a graduate student. His father, whose name was Elsworth Faris, was the first department head at the University of Chicago after the initial founder of the department. He was the head for a long time,

and became the president of the ASA. He was a very distinguished man, important in developing American sociology in the early 20th century. Both Faris and his wife were sociology students in Chicago. So he wanted me to go to the University of Chicago. By the way, I should tell you, and this is interesting, that one of Faris's sons also went to the University of Chicago and became a distinguished administrator at the University of Washington in Seattle. That's where Faris went after Syracuse. So his children grew up there. One son was trained there, then got his Ph.D. in sociology at the University of Chicago and became top administrator at the University of Washington. Another son has a job there, and now his son, the grandson [also has a job as a sociologist]. So these are four generations of sociologists.

Shalin: I didn't know that.

Goodman: Yes, it's fascinating. Not only Elsworth Faris [who was] the editor of the *American Journal of Sociology*. Bob Faris was the editor of *American Sociological Review*. And each of them was the president of the American Sociological Association at the appropriate time.

So Bob Faris wanted me to go to sociology. And Lipman Bers told me he liked me very much to apply to mathematics at Princeton. So I didn't know what to do. He also told me that no one from Syracuse in mathematics had ever been accepted at Princeton. He was really referring to the fact that Princeton in those early years limited the number of Jews, especially at the math department. The person who was the head of the math department, [someone] named Solomon Lifshitz, very very top mathematician, he was charged with limiting the number of Jews that would be accepted in the math department. His response was at that time, "It would be very hard for them to get jobs because of discrimination."

Shalin: That was in the late '40s?

Goodman: Yes. So I was applying in 1948. Bers did not spell this out for me at that time; he just said nobody was accepted [from Syracuse], and he would like me to apply. What I am saying to you about anti-Semitism is that it was something I learned about later on in connection with Lifshitz. Lifshitz became the president of American Mathematical Association at some point. He was one of the first Jewish faculty members on the Princeton campus. Very early on he was a [Jewish] faculty member on campus, and he said he was an invisible person there. Since there were hardly any Jewish faculty members, he was more or less dismissed.

Shalin: This is very important. The story was probably told before, but I am glad you offer personal testimony. Go ahead.

Goodman: Let's see.

Shalin: So you decided to apply to Chicago.

Goodman: I applied to both. I applied to Chicago in sociology, I applied to math at Princeton, and I wasn't clear if I would end in either one of these. I didn't know how to choose between them. But I decided in my senior year when I was visiting my parents in New York, "I think I'll make a trip from New York to Princeton just to see what the campus looks like." I was very young (I was born in 1928). So this is 1948, I am 20 years old. I took the train, walked around the campus, and I thought this was just the most beautiful place I'd ever seen. I was walking around just enjoying how beautiful it was when I came across the math building. Now, the math building was called "Fine Hall." When the Institute for Advanced Studies got started, Fine Hall was its first location. It wasn't part of Princeton, but Princeton allowed it to be used as the Institute for Advanced Studies until they got their own building. I think I was aware that Einstein had an office in Fine Hall; other very top people at the Institute were located in Fine Hall. So I walked around Fine Hall, and I was sort of in a daze, thinking, "Oh, my goodness, this is where Einstein had been," and so on. So I was walking around and around, and one of the doors was open, it was a secretary's door, and she came out when she saw this strange kid walking and asked if she could be of any help. And I explained to her that I applied to Princeton, that I was from Syracuse and was just walking around the hall. She said, "Why don't you just wait here a second, I'll be right back." She went to the room adjacent to her office, and out came a man and said that his name was Sam Wilks. Sam Wilks was a very top statistician, mathematical statistician.

Shalin: His name is spelled . . .

Goodman: W-i-l-k-s – Samuel Wilks. He was the main person in mathematical statistics in the math department there, sort of the founder of statistics in the mathematics department there. He also played a very important role over the years in the development of mathematical statistics from Princeton. So he came out and invited me to come into his office, which was an enormous, extremely beautiful office with books from the floor to the ceiling and wood paneling and a large conference table and a large desk, and so on. I'd never seen an office like that.

Shalin: I can imagine the impression it left on you.

Goodman: That's right, [especially] as an eighteen year old. He talked to me for more than an hour! We talked for more than an hour, and I thought, "I am taking this guy's time." I finally stood out and said, "It's time for me to go." He said, "Wait just a second. I want to make a phone call." So he phoned another faculty member at Chicago, someone who was at Princeton sociology department [at the time], someone named Fred Stephan – S-t-e-p-h-a-n. Stephan is not that well known, but he was a very good quantitative sociologist. Wilks was a Texan, and he had this very nice Texan accent that I liked. And he said to Stephan, "I have here an undergraduate from Syracuse who applied to the math department, and I think you will find it interesting to meet him. I told him that it was late in the day, but Stephan said, "Sure, that will be fine." Wilks gave me directions how to find sociology department, and I went there and had a nice talk with Stephan. I was in the state of ecstasy.

Shalin: I can imagine!

Goodman: As I walked back to the place where the train was, called the Princeton Junction, I thought, "If I get accepted here, I am going to go here. I'm not even gonna think about going to University of Chicago." I was so overenthusiastic about this reception I got. I walked to where the train was at the Princeton Junction, took the next train with an intention of going back to New York, but I was in such a state that it was only after the train left the station that I realized that the train was going in the wrong direction.

[Laughter]

Shalin: That's real excitement.

Goodman: That's my experience. I didn't visit Chicago at all. I went to Princeton in 1948 and in 1950 I got my Ph.D. in mathematics . . .

Shalin: That's fast!

Goodman: . . . with an emphasis in mathematical statistics. I had a number of very good offers of where to go in 1950, and I decided to go to the University of Chicago [where I had] a joint appointment in the sociology department and statistics department. During the time that I was there, there were these graduate students, for example, my friend Saul Mendlovitz. We knew each other at Syracuse, and when I went to Chicago, he was a graduate student at the University of Chicago. Goffman was a student there, and Howe Becker was a student there, and Sandy Dornbusch was a student there.

Shalin: You probably knew Joe Gusfield.

Goodman: Pardon me?

Shalin: Joe Gusfield who was part of that group at Chicago.

Goodman: Gusfield . . . Now, the main person I was close to was Saul Mendlovitz. But I also would get together, maybe once a month – and I think this is interesting – with two graduate students. One was Howe Becker and the other was Sandy Dornbusch. Do you know the name?

Shalin: Yes, of course. He did work on self-concept.

Goodman: Dornbusch?

Shalin: Yes.

Goodman: Yes, so the three of us would get together. We all were about the same age. I was an assistant professor and they were graduate students. We would get together, the three of us, usually at Dornbusch's house (he was married), and we would talk about what we were going to do in our careers, different research projects, things we were going to do, papers we were going to write, things like that. I remember one time I was telling them that I was invited by a sociologist at Chicago . . . What was his name?

Shalin: Louis Wirth, Everett Hughes, Ernest Burgess?

Goodman: Ernest Burgess! Ernest Burgess was a wonderful guy. When I came there, he asked me to look at his work; he would be interested in my comments on his work that had to do with predictions, different kinds of predictions he was involved with. I looked at his work, and then I was telling Dornbusch and Howe Becker about my thoughts on the subject. Dornbusch is a very enthusiastic person, at least he was then, and Dornbusch got very enthusiastic, as I still remember, and he said, "You have a paper there! You can write two papers!" But he said, "Don't send the paper to the *American Journal of Sociology* because Blumer is the editor for the journal, and he has strong ideas about what is good work in sociology. He would dismiss it." But I thought, "I don't care. I am submitting it to the *American Journal of Sociology*." So I wrote this out and submitted it to the *American Journal of Sociology*. When Blumer read this, he read it as a criticism of Burgess's work. I didn't intend it as a criticism [as much as] an analysis, an explanation . . . a development. Burgess was very pleased with it, because he was interested in getting that kind of information. Blumer accepted the paper and invited Burgess to write a response and invited me to write a response to that. And I think that was my first publication.

Shalin: So Blumer came through for you.

Goodman: He came through, and we were friends. We were pretty good friends, and I was especially friends with Tom Shibutani. Tom Shibutani went to Berkeley for a year, and I don't remember if he came back to Chicago.

Shalin: Maybe that was before he got a tenure track appointment at Berkeley around 1952. He didn't get his tenure there, however, and left Berkeley for Santa Barbara.

Goodman: But Shibutani encouraged Blumer to leave Chicago and come to Berkeley. Blumer asked me if I would come with him to Berkeley. I said I wasn't really interested, I liked it in Chicago. So he came to Berkeley, and he said that he was going to build the best department in the country, that he would hire best people in whatever field. Implicit in this [pledge was that he would get people] regardless of whether it suited him. This was good work from the point of view of what Blumer emphasized.

When Blumer was at Chicago, he and Ogburn couldn't stand each other. Whenever there was a faculty meeting, these two guys would get into real arguments, and each would make more extreme statements that a reasonable person would not make, but they were so hostile to each other that they would come up with something really extreme.

Shalin: Were these substantive differences, administrative differences?

Goodman: No, substantive differences. Ogburn was very much interested in emphasizing quantitative sociology, making it very objective and positivistic, and Blumer had different ideas altogether. After Blumer was there for a few years, he said he would like to hire me and I would have tenure, [moving] from an assistant professor at Chicago to an associate professor at Berkeley. I thought about it, but at that time there was a loyalty oath at Berkeley, which was a serious problem. The trustees wanted it, and the faculty members at the University of California campuses had to sign a loyalty oath.

Shalin: A political loyalty oath?

Goodman: Yes, the loyalty oath to the country. A number of faculty left Berkeley at that time, objecting to the idea of having a loyalty oath.

Shalin: That was in the 1950s.

Goodman: Yes, in the early 1950s. In the end I decided not to accept his offer and stayed at Chicago. . . . Oh, I am just talking about myself.

Shalin: Please, that is precious stuff. It is so easy to let it slip from collective memory.

Goodman: Well, I liked it at the University of Chicago very much. I'll tell you a funny experience that I had.

Shalin: Please.

Goodman: I thought it was good for an assistant professor. It was a good place for an assistant professor to be. I remember once, Leo Lowenthal – do you know this name?

Shalin: Sure.

Goodman: Leo Lowenthal came to give a lecture at Chicago, and I think he was hoping to get an invitation for an appointment at Chicago. He gave what I thought was an extraordinarily good lecture. I mean it wasn't anything related in any way to my own interest, but I can still remember the lecture that he gave.

Shalin: You can get excited about different things which are not exactly mathematical statistics.

Goodman: Yes. So I then went around talking to the faculty, saying, "You know, we should hire Lowenthal."

Shalin: In sociology?

Goodman: In sociology.

Shalin: You had a dual appointment, in sociology and math.

Goodman: In statistics.

Shalin: There was a separate department of statistics?

Goodman: Yes. Actually, when I came to University of Chicago, there wasn't a department of statistics. There was a committee on statistics, and that's usually a way of preventing the department of statistics from getting started. The committee on statistics means that you have someone in sociology, someone in political science, and so on.

Shalin: An interdisciplinary group.

Goodman: There wasn't a department of statistics partly because the head of the university was someone named Robert Hutchins, and Hutchins was opposed to departmentalization. He would found committees; for example,

the committee on social thought. It's a famous committee at the University of Chicago, very very top.

Shalin: Oh, yes. Ed Shils was on that committee.

Goodman: Shils was one person, but Shils also got an appointment in the sociology department. Saul Bellow was there. Top people were there. So Hutchins would not start the department of statistics, but he was willing to build a committee on statistics that would be able to give degrees.

Shalin: Could the committee confer a doctorate in statistics?

Goodman: Yes. We didn't start by giving degrees. We started as a very small group, very small group, and I thought it was interesting. We grew into a top department.

Shalin: And when the committee evolved into a separate department?

Goodman: As soon as Hutchins left the university. The next chancellor made it into the department.

Shalin: I interrupted you with your story.

Goodman: What was it, I don't remember?

Shalin: I got you sidetracked. It was about, let's see . . . We talked about the conflict of Ogburn and Blumer.

Goodman: Oh, yes, yes, Ogburn and Blumer couldn't stand each other. It was a very good thing for Blumer that he could build a top department at Berkeley.

Shalin: Do you remember when Blumer left Chicago – was it in 1951 or '52?

Goodman: I'd guess it was '52, something like that.

Shalin: And you think Blumer's decision to move had something to do with his conflict with Ogburn?

Goodman: I don't know. I don't know that. Also, Blumer, as you probably know, was a professional football player.

Shalin: Yes, I know.

Goodman: And I think this was a great opportunity for him to build his own department. I don't know. I just would see these two intelligent people making extreme statements. Blumer would also make extreme statements.

Shalin: Could you give an example? What would be an extreme statement in your view?

Goodman: Ogburn was a southern gentleman. Ogburn had ancestors in 17th century England. He was sort of an aristocrat, also a very intelligent person with extreme views. And Blumer also had extreme views, so these two dismissed each other, and that would show up. Phil Hauser, another member of the department – and this was a very good department – Phil Hauser was in the department, Louie Wirth was in the department, Burgess was in the department, Ogburn – this was a very good department. And then . . . then what?

Oh, I think this is funny. I always was a very close friend with Saul [Mendlovitz], since the time we were at Syracuse and after I got to Chicago, and we are still very very good friends.

Shalin: That's what I hear. Saul tells me you touch base nearly every week.

Goodman: Yes, we are very very close.

Shalin: You are both lucky.

Goodman: Say this again?

Shalin: I think you are both lucky your friendship has survived all these years. I enjoy listening to Saul and his strong opinions.

Goodman: Yes, yes. Now, one summer Saul – when was this? – I am not sure about the dates on this. Sometime in the '50s, Saul had a project that had been carried out at Harvard, a research project, and my first cousin, Harvey Sacks, was getting a law degree at Yale. I don't remember how Saul met Harvey, but he invited Harvey to come to work on this project.

Shalin: That was probably Saul's project on jury deliberation practices. Go ahead.

Goodman: Aha. So Harvey was working on this project, and Saul decided that he would make a very good sociologist. He had gotten his degree at the law school at Yale. I think Saul got in touch with . . . I keep losing his name.

Shalin: Where?

Goodman: The famous sociologist, the person at the center of your attention.

Shalin: Goffman?

Goodman: Goffman. He got in touch with Goffman . . . recommending that Harvey should come as a graduate student in sociology at Chicago, and that's what happened.

Shalin: And Harvey actually got a law degree?

Goodman: Yes.

Shalin: Did he take a bar exam?

Goodman: I don't know.

Shalin: Harvey moved to ethnomethodology and conversation analysis after that.

Goodman: Exactly. I am quite certain he got a law degree. I could be wrong, but this is my impression. So Harvey came here and, and I don't know where I got this impression, after certain point at graduate school, he didn't get along with Goffman. He got other teachers.

Shalin: I think Garfinkel at UCLA in particular.

Goodman: Yes, yes. I can't really say much more. But every once in a while I come across somebody in sociology who says he is a follower of Harvey's, and I would say, "He is my first cousin." I would get a kick out of their reaction, for his work is so different from mine.

Shalin: Leo, if we could stay with Harvey a bit, Manny Schegloff published a thick volume of Harvey's lectures where he recalls, in his introduction, how Erving Goffman wouldn't sign on his dissertation and was eventually asked to step down from the committee. According to Manny Schegloff it was Aaron Cicourel who talked to Goffman and persuaded him to step down, so the dissertation defense could go on. Did you get a whiff of this story?

Goodman: I don't know anything about it. I know Cicourel; he actually lives at Berkeley now. I know him from way back. . . . I know that Cicourel was attracted by Harvey. You know that Cicourel has his own views of things, and he thought very highly of Harvey. I don't know any more than that.

Shalin: How would you describe Harvey as a person, as an intellectual?

Goodman: Ah-h-h. . . I have a sister four years younger than I, and when Harvey was in law school, my sister, her husband, and their children lived in New Heaven, and they became close with Harvey. When we were growing up, we had a very large extended family. One of my mother's older brothers, Harvey's father, moved away at a pretty early time. They moved into the suburbs while we lived in Brooklyn. I didn't really have much contact with Harvey. Dana [?] had contact with Harvey because they all were at Yale at the same time. So I really cannot say [much].

Shalin: The two of you didn't have much personal interactions. Is your sister still around?

Goodman: Yes.

Shalin: I don't know if she would care to talk.

Goodman: No, no, that would be good.

Shalin: So you had a distant relationship with your first cousin.

Goodman: Yes, I didn't have much contact with him. . . . Here is something else. I had another first cousin who viewed Harvey as some sort of a great hero. I think it was probably this first cousin who phoned me at Chicago to let me know that Harvey was in this terrible accident. . . . I immediately took the plane and flew to . . . I think he was at Irvine. I flew there, and when I arrived, the whole first floor of the hospital was filled up with people who had been up all night long. They were lighting candles, and they were praying or whatever they were doing. Harvey was sort of a guru. They were all hoping that Harvey would recover. And then Harvey's parents arrived from Florida. Harvey's brain waves were flat, but the doctors kept him alive; they didn't want to do anything till the parents would say something. And the parents wouldn't say anything. Then I would talk to the parents about this, and after a while, they said OK.

Shalin: Turn off the respirators?

Goodman: Yes.

Shalin: Sherri Cavan, who co-directs with me this project, recounts the story of Harvey's death in her interview. She mentions David Sudnow as one person who was involved with those decisions. You might want to take a look at our conversation. She attended a seminar at Harvey's home.

Now, did you have a chance to interact with Harold Garfinkel?

Goodman: I know who he was. I know that Saul interacted with him, but I didn't have any connection.

Shalin: You knew Aaron Cicourel.

Goodman: A little bit. Not much.

Shalin: If you don't mind going back to Chicago, you were able to observe the life of the sociology department there.

Goodman: Sure. I was there from 1950 till 1987. That's a long time.

Shalin: You mentioned several key players there. You knew Blumer, you probably interacted with Everett Hughes.

Goodman: Yes. No, I liked Everett Hughes.

Shalin: Maybe you could sum up your impressions about some of these characters. For instance, do you know what kind of teacher Blumer was?

Goodman: Let me mention that the person I was closest to in the department. . . . Well, let's start it this way. I've forgotten which year it was, but I think it must have been in the 1950s. Jim Coleman got his Ph.D. from Columbia University, I don't remember, probably in the mid-'50s. After that he went to the Center for Advanced Studies in Behavioral Sciences, although that's not the exact title of it. The center was located in Palo Alto, at Stanford; I cannot remember the title right now. He was looking for a job, gave a talk at Chicago. I remember that talk too. I thought it that was really terrific, and I argued that we should hire him, and we did. He and I were very close friends until his death.

Shalin: He died a few years ago.

Goodman: Yes, we were very close.

Shalin: Leo, I hope you are not too tired. I don't want to tax you, so if you had enough for one day, we can stop and come back to our conversation later. But at some point I would love to have a few thumbnail portraits of your colleagues at the sociology department in Chicago.

Goodman: Yes, OK.

Shalin: Anything that you feel is appropriate to share and preserve for posterity.

Goodman: Here is something that just came to my mind. When I was finishing as a graduate student at Princeton, I was invited to come up to Harvard for a week. I was invited to stay at the home of someone named Fred Masteller [?] who was trained as a statistician, and he was in the Social Relations department there. I was invited to come up, with the idea that maybe someone named Stouffer – you know the name?

Shalin: Yes, the author of *The American Soldier*.

Goodman: Stouffer was at the University of Chicago for a while, and then he moved to the Social Relations department at Harvard. The idea was that Stouffer and Parsons would make a couple in the same way as Lazarsfeld and Merton made a couple. That didn't work out, and my impression was that I was being invited there to be considered if I wanted to have an appointment at Harvard, and also the possibility of working with Parsons in the same way that Lazarsfeld and Merton worked together.

Then, I came back, I was still finishing at Chicago, and there was a telegram from Chicago, saying something like, "Don't make any decision. We would like you to come to visit at Chicago. Louis Wirth and Phil Hauser," who were very close friends and next-door neighbors, (earlier they were students at Chicago), "were coming to do some work at the United Nations. They would like to meet with you, so please go at that particular hotel and meet them there." I said, "Fine." So I met them in their hotel room and we had a great time. I think they may have had too much to drink, I am not sure. They invited me to come out to Chicago, and I came to Chicago, and that weekend when I went there, sociology department had a student-faculty ball game. I remember Blumer, being an athlete, was in the ballgame. There was also another event on the campus. Every year the University of Chicago put on a faculty show where they would make fun of themselves. It turned out to be at the same time. I don't know if you have seen Louis Wirth.

Shalin: No, I didn't. I came from the Soviet Union to the U.S. in 1976.

Goodman: So you lived through the Second World War there?

Shalin: No, I was born in 1947.

Goodman: Aha!

Shalin: It was before my time. You were talking about that annual party where the faculty was making fun of themselves.

Goodman: Yes. They had an Egyptian square dance. Louis Wirth was a short round person, very short, I would say, and round, he was one of the

dancers in the Egyptian square dance. That was hilarious. And the head of the university, Hutchins, also had a role, making fun of himself. So I thought this was a wonderful place to be.

Shalin: He was not a stuffy person.

Goodman: No, no, he wasn't stuffy.

Shalin: Just one second, Leo. I need to open the door. I will be right back.

[Pause]

Shalin: So Hutchins took part in this lampooning, and what part did he play?

Goodman: Just making fun of himself. I don't remember the details.

Shalin: Was Blumer capable of laughing at himself?

Goodman: **[Laughing]**. I don't think so.

Shalin: How would you describe him?

Goodman: Well, I wasn't that knowledgeable about his work. I got the impression later . . . no, I had the impression at that time that he was very repetitive, that he was like a record, he would repeat his message. But I am not a good person to judge that.

Shalin: I have several accounts of Blumer's teaching style and his tendency to pound the symbolic interactionist message.

Goodman: Exactly.

Shalin: And as a colleague, as a chair?

Goodman: He wasn't the chair.

Shalin: That's right, he wasn't.

Goodman: He was the editor of the journal. He and I got along just fine. He got along with Phil Hauser who had been a graduate student there. He [Blumer] got along well with Louis Wirth – I think. I know he got along well with Phil Hauser whose work was very different from his. I know when he came to Berkeley – I think I told you this already – that he wanted to find the best people in each field of sociology, regardless of what he thought the field's worth.

Shalin: I think this speaks well of Blumer.

Goodman: Yes, yes.

Shalin: And he would take part in students' parties and games?

Goodman: I remember him playing baseball. I don't remember it very well.

Shalin: Was he good at it?

Goodman: I assume he would be as a professional athlete, I just don't remember. It's all vague, you know. All this happened in the 1950s.

Shalin: What about Tom Shibutani?

Goodman: I liked him very much. . . . I wasn't married at that time, he was married, and the three of us would go out from time to time. Oh, I'll tell you a funny story about Shibutani. This was in the early 1950's, maybe in 1950. I got a request from someone at the university, saying there are visitors coming from Japan [interested] in statistics, and they would like very much to meet with me and other faculty members. I said OK. That was soon after the war and we have those visitors coming from Japan. I mentioned to Tom that they were visiting and that it would be good if he stopped by to say hello after they meet with statisticians. I didn't know any Japanese statisticians. So I talked with them; they were very friendly; they invited me to write a paper for their statistical journal. Then Tom came in and talked to them for a little bit in Japanese, and then he left. After that meeting I talked to Tom, and he told me what they told him in Japanese. They came to see why they lost the war, so the next time they would win.

Shalin: [Laughing].

Goodman: They assumed he was Japanese, but he wasn't Japanese. He was [?]. I think he grew up in this country. So they made a mistake of telling him what was on their mind [laughing]. I know that Shibutani, after the year [at Berkeley], encouraged Blumer [to go there], told him it was a very good place. At least that was my impression. That is what he told me.

Shalin: In your memory it was Shibutani who encouraged Blumer to go to Berkley.

Goodman: After he was there for a year, yes.

Shalin: So Shibutani must have gone there sometime in 1951. [It was actually Blumer who encouraged Shibutani to join the Berkeley faculty].

Goodman: I think so. He certainly was there [in Chicago] when I arrived in 1950. I don't know whether he was there for a year. I just don't remember that.

Shalin: Any other memories of Shibutani?

Goodman: Just that we were friends.

Shalin: What about Everett Hughes?

Goodman: Let me say this.

Shalin: Please.

Goodman: Besides Jim Coleman, the person I was closest to was Ernest Burgess.

Shalin: I have a list of people you mentioned and hope to go back to them later. I'll come to Jim Coleman, but maybe we could speak about older faculty. What about Burgess?

Goodman: Ernest Burgess was an absolutely lovely person. He lived with a woman whose name was Mrs. Young, I think. They lived in a very old house, and I remember they had Christmas parties at this house where people would be dressed up. Most of these people were very old. He looked older than he actually was. He aged very very quickly. He was interested in gerontology, was one of the early developers in gerontology. He traveled to Europe and Scandinavian countries to see what was done about old people in those places. Then he came back and aged very fast. Mr. Yong died, and he was there by himself. I remember my wife would prepare roast chicken dishes or some meal once a week, and I would bring the stuff.

I'll tell you a funny story in this connection. One of the sociologists named Donald Bogue – B-o-g-u-e, demographer and sociologist – do you know him?

Shalin: No, I don't.

Goodman: Donald Bogue was a professor. When Ernest was getting really old, he turned over his research project, the research center that he had, I don't remember its name, to Bogue. So Bogue, in a sense, had this professional connection closest to Burgess when he was getting really old. In order to keep warm in this old house, in Mrs. Young's house, he wore a scalp hat on his head, one of the ways he kept warm. Bogue visited him one time, and when he came back, Bogue said to me – I don't know if this should be in the report.

Shalin: You will be able to redact any material when you work with the transcript.

Goodman: Yes. Bogue came back and said, "You know, Burgess is anti-Semitic." I said, "Why do you think he is anti-Semitic." He said, "Well, because when I saw him wearing his scull cup, I said, 'Burgess, I didn't know that you were Jewish,' and Burgess was very upset." Bogue was telling me that this was the sign that Burgess was anti-Semitic. The truth of the matter is that Burgess passed his work, the center that he had, to Bogue, and Bogue didn't know that Burgess's father was a protestant minister, that he came from this clearly Christian background. That's how I interpreted Burgess's response. I like this amusing story that the sociologist from Chicago misunderstood the social interaction.

Shalin: Was Burgess actively involved in the administration of the department?

Goodman: He was the head of the department, chair of the department.

Shalin: Was he good at it?

Goodman: I thought he was wonderful. . . . He was a very gentle person.

Shalin: What about Louis Wirth?

Goodman: I thought he was . . . I remember reading – did he write *The Ghetto*?

Shalin: Yes, he did.

Goodman: I remember it to be one of the sociology books I had read and was impressed with. Burgess had a private house next door to him. Their houses were very very close, and I lived in a small apartment building that was adjacent to Luis's house. I told you it was Wirth and Hauser that I went to visit in the hotel in connection to the United Nations. I thought, "Oh, this would be very interesting: you could be professor at Chicago and do really practically important things in the United Nations." That was in the back of my mind as an added attraction [of coming to the University of Chicago].

Shalin: Any memoires of Everett Hughes?

Goodman: Well, I also liked Everett. I don't know if I could describe him. But I can tell you about David Riesman.

Shalin: You knew David Riesman?

Goodman: You see, I came there very young. I was twenty two years old. And I was sort of adopted by the Riesman family. . . . He was brought in the department. Phil Hauser hated having him in the department. He was impolite.

Shalin: Hauser?

Goodman: Hauser. Riesman came from a wealthy background. I think he was trained as a lawyer in Philadelphia. Maybe his father was trained as a lawyer, and so was Riesman. He was a real gentleman. Now, Hauser grew up in Chicago, he was actually growing up in an orphanage, maybe because his parents couldn't afford to keep him, or something of that kind, and he grew up really tough. He would express whatever he wanted to express, and he made clear that he didn't think Riesman was a real sociologist. He was more a journalist, according to Hauser.

I'll tell you a funny story about Hauser. . . . When I had my first child, maybe when he was three years old, Hauser came over to the house one time. He was very proud how strong he was, and he would lift me up. At that time I was close to six feet tall, I don't think I was tremendously heavy, and Hauser lifted me up and twirled me around above his head. My son Andy was very impressed. That was extraordinary.

Shalin: What kind of teacher and departmental citizen Hauser was?

Goodman: Well, here is something interesting. All these thoughts are coming back to my mind.

Shalin: Great! More will come back when you read the transcript.

Goodman: There were these student troubles in the 1960s. The person who was the head of the department at that time was Janovitz.

Shalin: Yes, Morris Janovitz. You must have known him too.

Goodman: Sure, Morris Janovitz. There were these student troubles, and the students took over the administration building at the university. These were mainly sociology students who did this. And I felt these were our students, this was an improper, bad behavior. So I went into the building at the time that the students were taking it over, and I tried to persuade them to leave before they got into serious trouble.

Shalin: Where was it?

Goodman: At the University of Chicago in the 1960s.

Shalin: At Berkeley there were similar demonstrations.

Goodman: At Berkeley it was much worse, and at Columbia also. . . . I went into the building and tried to persuade them to leave the building. . . . A sociologist was one of the leaders in taking over the building. He had a megaphone so everybody could hear him in the building. I was trying to warn them that they needed to leave the building or they'd get into serious trouble. I wasn't getting anywhere when I heard this megaphone saying, "Close the doors, lock the doors." I think I got out of the building before the doors were locked. After all the riots were over, students were suspended for a year; some were thrown out, I think. And then it was time for the Janovitz's term to be over, and the next person in line for the job was Hauser, because Hauser had been an administrator in Washington in connection with the Census Bureau. He came back, and it was his understanding that he would get the deanship or the department head job when his term in the department comes. He viewed himself as an administrator. And then Riesman came to me – I was friends with Houser but I was much closer with Riesman in a family sort of way – and Riesman came to me and said he would like me to be considered for the department chair. He said that would be very good because people think it was a dispute between quantitative people, Phil Houser, and David Riesman, nonquantitative person, when this has nothing to do with the dispute. He made clear that if Houser became the department head, he would leave to go to Harvard, Everett Hughes would leave, a number of other people in the department who would leave.

Shalin: There was an exodus from Chicago, starting with Blumer perhaps.

Goodman: Right. Hughes and Riesman clearly didn't want Houser to be the department head. So Riesman asked me if I was willing to be the department head. He told me he would leave if Houser became the department head. I thought it would be terrible if he left the department, if Hughes and some other people would leave, Anselm Strauss would leave. I said I was willing to be considered for the department head, but I wasn't willing to campaign for the [job]. He said, "I don't think you need to worry about this." He would campaign for me. . . . In the end, the dean who was to be making these decisions decided there wouldn't be a vote. He understood that there was a lot of stress in the department. There would not be a vote, but people could come in and talk to him about what they would like. Now, my impression is that more people were in favor of me than Phil, but there wasn't a vote. It was up to the administration. It was decided – and I think it was a reasonable decision to make – that Phil would be the department head.

Shalin: Which year was this?

Goodman: My guess is . . . I became an associate professor in 1953 and full professor on 1955, and this might have been either in 1953 when I was promoted to associate professor or in 1955 when I was promoted to full professor. I don't remember. But it was the last year that Riesman was there, and last year that Everett Hughes was there. Maybe Hughes left a year later.

Shalin: You mentioned Morris Janovitz – would you care to say a few words about him?

Goodman: Ah-h-h . . .

Shalin: And again, you can designate any part of our conversation as confidential. It's your call.

Goodman: Yes. I really didn't care about Janovitz. I thought he was very manipulative. I don't remember any particular issues, but I just didn't care for him.

Shalin: Your tenure at Chicago overlapped with Anselm Strauss's.

Goodman: Yes. Well, he was a nice, gentle person. He wasn't working in an area I would have any knowledge of. So I don't have much [to say].

Shalin: I understand. You might have known Philip Rieff.

Goodman: Philip what?

Shalin: Rieff.

Goodman: Spell it.

Shalin: R-i-e-f-f.

Goodman: Oh, Riess!

Shalin: No, "f-f" at the end.

Goodman: Rieff? No. There was someone by the name Al Riess.

Shalin: I am talking about Philip Rieff who taught at the University of Pennsylvania, but he was studying at Chicago about the same time as Goffman.

Goodman: I don't know him.

Shalin: You mentioned that you knew David Schneider a bit.

Goodman: I knew him partly because my partner here . . . I got divorced around 30 years ago. My partner here teaches at the University of California Santa Cruz in the anthropology department. So I knew him when he was at Chicago, and I knew him a little bit better when he was at Santa Cruz in the anthropology department.

Shalin: Right. You knew Howard Becker.

Goodman: Yes, when he was a graduate student, he and Sandy Dornbusch, three of us would get together to talk about the work we were going to do.

Shalin: That's right, any other memoirs of Howe?

Goodman: Well, he has done brilliant work, he was great success, very smart, but again, I don't have any . . . he lives part of the time in San Francisco. I got together with him a few times in San Francisco, but I hadn't had that much contact with him. I know that he has done extremely good work.

Shalin: Yes, he is a very prominent figure in the field of interactionist sociology.

Goodman: Yes.

Shalin: Now, you said that at various points you overlapped with Parsons, Merton . . .

Goodman: I'll tell you about that. I started teaching at Chicago in 1950. I think it was in 1959 that I got an invitation from Columbia. At that time Merton and Lazarsfeld were thinking who would eventually be their replacements. Merton picked a person who came from a background in history, really a great guy, and I cannot remember his name at this moment. And Lazarsfeld picked me for the job. So I said I am not going to accept the job, but I am willing to come for a year and see what it's like. I was willing to take a leave from Chicago, and I would tell Chicago it was possible I wouldn't come back. So I went to Columbia for that year. One of the reasons that Lazarsfeld wanted me there was [because] one of his big ideas had to do with latent structure analysis. He had various people, various students writing theses on latent structure analysis. He tried to get a top statistician and a top econometrician to work on the subject, and I had a graduate student here at Chicago who wrote his Ph.D. thesis on that subject. I think Lazarsfeld realized that the method he and his student used at the time was not adequate for dealing with the subject. It was a

complicated subject, so he wanted me to come there. As soon as I arrived, I was asked if I would give some lectures on the weekends for all his followers, the faculty and whoever might be interested. It would be in the morning . . .

[End of the recording]