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Dmitri Shalin Interview with Laurel Richardson about Erving Goffman entitled "When I Told the Group I Was the Daughter of a Jewish Woman Who Emigrated from Russia, Goffman Said, "So That Explains Why You Are so Smart""

Laurel Richardson

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Remembering Erving Goffman

Laurel Richardson

When I Told the Group I Was the Daughter of a Jewish Woman Who Emigrated from Russia, Goffman Said, “So That Explains Why You Are so Smart”

Dr. Laurel Richardson sent this note about her encounter with Erving Goffman on January 4, 2014, and gave her approval for adding it to the Goffman Archives.

[Posted 01-12-14]

Now, let me add my own little story. Sometime after my presentation at ASA on “The Door Ceremony,” an empirical piece that depended on both Simmel and Goffman for its theoretical basis, and its coverage on the front-page of the editorial section of the *Sunday New York Times*, [<http://query.nytimes.com/mem/archive/pdf?res=FB0C14FD3A59137A93C3AA1783D85F478785F9>] I had the opportunity to join a group of qualitative researchers, including Goffman, at a meeting. I do not recall what meeting. Sorry. The conversation turned to being Jewish in America. When I told the group that I was the daughter of a Jewish woman who emigrated from Russia, Goffman said (and I do quote him now I think correctly, “So that explains why you are so smart.”