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Situating Goffman's «Interaction Orders» in Durkheim's social fact lineage

Grounding an alternate sociology of modernity in heightened awareness of interaction

Abstract

Goffman devoted his career to developing an alternate interactional sociology: an approach to modernity grounded in a heightened awareness of the fragility of Interaction Orders and Self. The position was built on Durkheim's «constitutive practice» approach to social facts: centering studies of interaction to demonstrate forms of social solidarity achieved in interaction that are not grounded in and, therefore, can resist consensus. Although transformational, constituting a powerful critique of conventional sociological approaches to modernity, Goffman's position and its critical focus remain obscure. In the interests of laying foundations for future research, this article addresses a range of issues that have confused the reception of Goffman's argument. One of the most important involves his relationships with Parsons, Garfinkel, and Sacks: the aim of establishing an alternate interactional sociology was not his alone. Systemic resistance to insights by Black, Jewish, Female, and other marginalized scholars, inspired by their experiences of exclusion, runs a close second. A tendency to dismiss Goffman's work as «mere description» or as an exercise in «defining concepts» is also problematic. Studies of Interaction Orders are not conceptual. They rely on a close description of features that are constitutive of social coherence. Descriptions of this process have broad theoretical, moral, and research implications.

Keywords: Erving Goffman, Interaction Orders, Ethnomethodology, micro/macro divide, Durkheim, social fact lineage, social justice, morality, social self, constitutive rules, Parsons, Garfinkel

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1. Introduction

Before considering how new research might build on Goffman's conceptions of Interaction Order and Self[1], it is important to understand the broader argument he was making and recognize its critical relevance. Otherwise, research inspired by Goffman often contradicts his position. This is the case particularly for those who treat Goffman as a micro sociologist within a conventional sociological framework. He should rather be considered in the context of his effort with like-minded others (including Garfinkel, Sacks, and Parsons), to develop an alternate sociology, that; 1) centers interaction; 2) contests theoretical assumptions that have split sociology between micro/macro and qualitative/quantitative approaches; and, 3) draws on Durkheim's social fact position and his conception of «constitutive» practices to do so (Rawls, 1996a; 1996b; 2001; 2003; 2004; 2009a; 2009b; 2019). Goffman should also be recognized as a Jewish scholar who, like others managing marginalized identities, developed a heightened awareness of social practices similar to Du Bois' «Double-Consciousness» (Du Bois, 1903; Rawls, 2000; Rawls, Duck, 2020; Rawls *et al.*, 2020; Eisenmann, Rawls, forthcoming; Duck, Rawls, 2021; Rawls, 2022)[2]. This awareness

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[1] It is a practice of mine to capitalize key terms for social facts in my writing – such as Self, Race, Female, etc. – as an irritant to remind readers that these are all social and not natural categories/things.

[2] George Simmel wrote a famous short essay titled «The Stranger» (Simmel, 1908). This chapter references Du Bois rather than Simmel for the relevance of marginalization for developing insight about interactional processes for a number of reasons. While it might seem obvious that in writing about the experience of being excluded Simmel is contributing to the same line of argument – he is not. Du Bois originates the idea that the marginalized person develops a heightened awareness of the social processes of their exclusion. By contrast, Simmel positions the stranger relative to the society in various abstract ways. He does not describe the development of any special awareness on the basis of their exclusion, however. Rather, Simmel proceeds via abstractions that are not at all interactional, building on the idea that consensus defines the group and that the stranger does not fit into the consensus. In keeping with a large literature on being Jewish that treats the status as a choice (not to assimilate) and often as a «failure» to modernize, Simmel treats the position of the Jew as stranger as «outside» of the society that they in fact live their everyday lives within. It was Du Bois who first recognized that the Black/Jewish person was marginalized within the society – and that this marginalization gave them heightened awareness and second sight as a participant – not as an outsider. Durkheim had challenged the view that consensus is necessary – and therefore that Jews are outsiders – fifteen years before Simmel wrote the essay. For Durkheim, in a modern society consensus is not needed – in fact to become modern a society needs to overcome consensus. It is the adoption of situated constitutive practices that makes this possible – and the remaining difficulties involved in participating in them that give the Black/Jewish participant double consciousness. It is the remnants of consensus that produce the difficulties that marginalize the stranger – remnants we must get rid of in order to achieve the justice necessary for constitutive practices to work. Not only does Simmel not recognize any of this, he argues that not being part of the cultural consensus gives the stranger an «objective» view of things. This position is at odds not only with Du Bois and the alternate interactionism, but even with the basic sociological idea that meaning is a social creation – and therefore cannot have that kind of «objectivity» – as well as conflicting with the conception of fragile social facts that Durkheim introduced. Everything, including the Stranger's own

informs the development of an alternate theory of modernity, grounded in social processes, that rejects traditional consensus and its emphasis on assimilation, while supporting diversity, equality, and inclusion (Rawls, 2021b).

In our belated recognition that Race and Gender bias have denied sociology the contributions of Du Bois, Eric Williams, and other important Black and Female Scholars – we should also remember that it was not until World War II, after the discovery of Hitler's death camps, that the US decided it would be politic to adopt a posture against anti-Semitism. Systematically misappropriated by US sociology in the 1890's – and then ridiculed after publication of *The Elementary Forms* in 1912 – Durkheim, a Jewish scholar whose awareness of social processes was heightened by anti-Semitism, was not accepted into the sociological cannon until after World War II, and then – in a perverse distortion of his identity and argument – as if he were a White male[3]. Georg Simmel, Alfred Schütz, Aaron Gurwitsch, German Critical Theorists, and other important Jewish scholars who broke new ground while pointing out social biases in many disciplines have been similarly marginalized and their critique absorbed and neutralized.

Goffman's was a critical and not a conventional sociology, and in spite of constant misinterpretation, the Durkheim social fact lineage in which he worked was also critical, grounded in the «right to conflict» (Durkheim, 1893; Rawls,

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understanding is a social achievement. The stranger – Simmel's (1908) «Stranger» – brings with them a different social orientation – but has no heightened awareness. When Simmel says the stranger has «objectivity» this might seem like the same thing, but, if we remain within sociological theories in the social fact tradition, there is no objective position beyond the boundaries of a group or culture. What confers heightened awareness in Du Bois' view (and in Garfinkel's) is precisely that the marginalized person does need to achieve social facts within the group – and is often prevented from doing so successfully. It is their constant experience of this trouble that makes them aware of the social processes that everyone is using – not some mythical objective position. Simmel's argument is also quite different, and conventional, in maintaining that it is only the «quite general» that the stranger can have in common with the group. From the perspective of the alternate interactionism – it would be the very specific that the excluded may manage to achieve in common with the group. The one interactional thing Simmel describes that resonates with the alternate interactionism is being confided in and finding oneself in the midst of confidences that would not occur with members of your «own» group. But, the explanation, which again references «objectivity», is not consistent with the alternate interactionism.

[3] In fact, in a perverse reversal of their actual social statuses, Marx, Durkheim, and Weber are consistently referred to as «dead White men», by scholars who are challenging conventionalized versions of their arguments. In point of fact, Marx and Durkheim were Jewish men whose social status was tenuous and Weber was several times a «Mental Patient» – one of the marginalized identities that Goffman and Garfinkel treated as having heightened awareness – and he contended with mental problems for the last twenty-five years of his life. All three would have had the heightened awareness that marginality brings. Reference to their ideas as representing «dead White men» is as perverse as the many arguments being launched today that portray Critical Race Theory as the original racism, as those who deny the existence of systemic racism claim to be the original anti-racists (a new version of «color-blind racism» as a way of continuing racism through denial). We need to abandon the many secondary misinterpretations of these scholars and return to their texts to find a liberation scholarship that we can build on.

2003), informed by the constant presence and possibility of exclusion, and the heightened awareness of interactional processes that the many marginalized scholars in that lineage developed. Their critique and the awareness that inspired it informed a mission to address social justice issues in ways that a conventional US sociology dominated by White Christian men had not. An adequate sociological theory of modernity must explain the possibility of coherent sense and Self-making in diverse populations that cannot assume a consensus they no longer have and that it would be unjust to force (Rawls, 2019; 2021a; 2021b)[4]. In continuing to emphasize a consensus of durable social facts – more suited to societies that are neither diverse nor constantly changing – sociology has failed to acknowledge this need.

Black, Jewish and Female sociologists have challenged this failure (as have some Marxist sociologists). Durkheim developed a conception of fragile «constitutive practices», not based on tradition or consensus, to explain how societies could accommodate diversity and differentiation in modern civic public spaces. On this basis, he argued that diverse modern societies are only viable insofar as they afford individuals sufficient equality to cooperate in enacting constitutive practices together. Durkheim introduced his adaptation of Kant's (1783) conception of constitutive practices in *The Division of Labor* (1893) and its «Second Preface» (1902), and refined it in *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (1912). The essential point is the same as Kant's: Because constitutive practices are nullified by a failure to meet their constitutive requirements, they can self-regulate, making external regulation by traditional authority (and hence a consensus of beliefs/norms/values) unnecessary[5]. This transformation point distinguishes sociology before Durkheim from approaches to modernity that adopt his conception of constitutive practices for making social facts (Rawls, 2009; 2021a; 2021b).

In being situated, self-regulating, and tied to specific and changing tasks, constitutive practices avoid the need for consensus – and are not generalizable.

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[4] The obvious point here is that assimilation is not a solution. It would be unjust. But, because modernity is not organized in terms of values, emphasizing assimilation also prevents modernization.

[5] That Durkheim made this argument in *The Division of Labor* (1893) is both foundational to his argument, and one of the most overlooked foundations of social theory. I follow Parsons in thinking that being wedded securely to a conception of norms and social facts as durable has kept social thinkers from being able to see the possibility that some practices and rules do operate free from norms as Durkheim argued (and trivializing those who demonstrate this point). Missing that, the rest of the argument disappears. The importance of distinguishing constitutive practices from norms and values has thus been entirely missed by conventional social thinkers. This is strange, given Kant's (1783) demonstration of the difference between constitutive practices and norms in the *Prolegomena* in his discussion of promising 240 years ago. The gist of the argument is that in the case of a constitutive practice – like promising – the practice is destroyed by a violation of its constitutive expectancies (note the similarity to Garfinkel's Trust Conditions). By contrast, in the case of norms, a violation requires punishment by an external force or authority. The difference is obvious: constitutive practices self-regulate without intervention from outside authority. Durkheim used the distinction to explain how social coherence was possible in a diverse society in which norms and beliefs were not shared. It is also the essence of his critique of Comte. That critique is also overlooked.

This makes possible self-regulating «corporate» groups defined only by their constitutive practices[6]. It also facilitates coherence in contexts of diversity; gives new importance to particular details of *how* social facts are created in interaction; and confers a new role on government: to *guarantee the prerequisites for constitutive practices* – that Durkheim called *justice* – rather than enforcing social norms, which are no longer necessary. The self-sanction or interactional trouble, *is empirically visible*, making scientific study of sanctions and trouble possible (Durkheim, 1893; Rawls, 2021b; Eisenmann, Rawls, forthcoming). This alternate interactional approach treats *social justice* as constitutive of social solidarity in modernity, and therefore as a central sociological concern.

Durkheim's principal argument – an explicit challenge to the Comte/Spencer emphasis on durable social facts and folkways – was twofold: *first*, that some social facts are fragile, not durable; their creation requiring implicit commitment to embodied constitutive practices, rather than norms or consensus; and, *second*, that Individualism and the modern Individual are fragile social facts created by modern society and therefore, cannot threaten the coherence or moral integrity of modernity as some had maintained[7]. This argument, made by Durkheim in the introduction to the *Division*, gives the *gemeinschaft/gesellschaft* distinction new meaning (Rawls, 1987; 1990; 2009; 2021a): durable social facts and identities predominate in social contexts whose practices are grounded in consensus (as in racially intolerant modern communities), while fragile social facts and the Individual and Self as fragile social facts (grounded in constitutive practices) predominate in social contexts not grounded in tradition and/or consensus (Rawls, 2021b). For Durkheim, the latter include aspects of both early aboriginal and diverse modern societies – an argument present, but overlooked in *Division*, which he had clarified by 1902 (Rawls, 2018; 2019). This innovative and critical theory of modernity, which positioned tribal peoples as the equals of Europeans, while finding that most modern European communities exist in an Abnormal Form – when it was finally understood after 1912 – ran afoul of an established American sociology grounded in the Eurocentric consensus-based ideas of Comte/Spencer and the earlier misreadings of *Division* they had generated (Rawls, 1996b)[8].

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[6] In this regard, in the «Second Preface» of 1902, Durkheim described the properties of guilds – calling them «corporations». Guilds were also historically called «colleges». Such guilds had from early times existed as independent and situated collectivities that offered both «freedom» and membership to those who could master the skills regulated by the guild. Early guilds made it possible for women and immigrants to find relative equality within the guild community. While guild historians used to consider the guild a backward form of organization that worked against progress (just as many still consider the Jewish religion to exert an anti-modernizing effect), new thinking and research is encouraging the idea that the guild was a progressive organization in a way that is compatible with Durkheim's argument (although he does not seem to be cited in this regard).

[7] David Riesman's, *Lonely Crowd* (1950), and Herbert Marcuse's, *One Dimensional Man* (1964) are two of the most famous books ringing this alarm.

[8] Albion Small, one of the original founders of the Chicago Department of Sociology, wrote in his 1895 inaugural essay for the first issue of *The American Journal of Sociology* (titled «The Era of Sociology») about the importance of sociology, given the seriousness of

Goffman built on both of Durkheim's innovations, arguing that social facts, including the Individual and Self, are fragile and created in interaction; and that because achieving Self as a fragile social fact requires a great deal of cooperation, situated interactional requirements are moral obligations, commitment to which constitutes an implicit social contract with moral implications. In an effort to achieve clarity on these points, this article situates Goffman in relation to those fellow travelers with whom he shared his project and against the conventional sociology with which they contested. Consideration is given to Durkheim's position as well as Parsons' much misunderstood attempt to reintroduce it in the US. If we accept conventional readings of either Durkheim or Parsons, or for that matter of Garfinkel, Sacks, and Goffman, their relationships make no sense. Yet, these connections in all directions are important.

The discussion is supported by materials in the Garfinkel Archive that document the relationship between Goffman, Garfinkel, Parsons, and Sacks, and their shared objective to establish an alternate interactionism. Some of their meetings were recorded and much of their correspondence has been preserved. Several times, they even recorded themselves talking about the relevance of

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misperceptions about the role of society in most disciplines: «The peculiar element of danger in the situation was just now suggested. Modern thought assumes that the fixed factors in human conditions are insignificant as compared with the elements that may be determined by agreement. Popular judgment is just now intoxicated with the splendid half truth that society is what men choose to make it. Popular social philosophy in its countless forms is today unanimous in speculation about institutional rearrangement without due estimate of human limitations» (1895, p. 3). In his inaugural essay, in arguing that the current moment was a peculiarly sociological moment, Small paraphrased arguments from Durkheim's *Division of Labor* – setting the tone for the decades of misinterpretation that would follow. His point was that 1895 inhabited a sociological moment – when everyone was consumed with the idea that societies could be rebuilt along different lines. The parts of Durkheim's argument Small emphasizes resurface in the mid-twentieth century in popular versions of Structural Functionalism and the Post-Modern critique of it. From Small on, the ideas of constitutive practices, the importance of diversity/differentiation in modernity, and the emphasis on the requirement that modernity give up consensus and hence assimilation are systematically elided. For Small, the problem is human limitations – not even the limitations of social forms. For Durkheim it is the requirements of constitutive practices and the dependence of both individuals and institutions on those requirements that sets the requirements for modernity. Because of this misinterpretation – Chicago School sociologists were as outraged as other sociologists and philosophers when Durkheim published *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. From their misinterpreted vantage point, EF appeared to entirely contradict *Division of Labor*. In actuality, it only contradicted their reading of it. On the basis of their misunderstandings (and the misunderstandings of most others) Durkheim's position was condemned (Rawls, 1996b). Small also referred to sociology as a Christian movement, and said that the newfound relationship of men to each other has its origins in Christianity – which may explain why in paraphrasing Durkheim he did not reference him. Small also tied all of this to a *desire* for social justice – which he also identifies with Christianity. However, in concluding (1895, p. 15) Small says that while he is respectful of Christian sociology, he is «suspicious of Christian sociologists», by which I take him to mean that Christian sociologists are making recommendations without full scientific understanding of society – which has been the theme of his piece. The historical origins of US sociology in Christian movements in the US likely has a great deal to do with the particular shape of its development.

being Jewish to their approach, including Parsons in those discussions[9]. A point of difference between them that emerged during a meeting they all attended in 1964 is also assessed, both for its relevance to what should count as data for studying social fact making, and for what it reveals about differences between Goffman and the others. While Goffman treated Self as a fragile social fact, he had a tendency to treat language/meaning in more durable, abstract, and conceptual terms – a contradiction that this disagreement makes visible.

Building on Durkheim's conception of social facts as fragile achievements that require constant cooperative use of constitutive rules/practices, Goffman, Garfinkel, and Sacks, elaborated what I have called a theory of «Emergent Order» (Rawls, 1990). This Emergent Order approach has been a foundation for much innovative contemporary research and theory, although the debt is often unacknowledged, and credit assigned elsewhere[10]. Establishing Goffman's contribution to this emergent social fact lineage, and the many ways contemporary research can and has built on it is important. Toward that end, this article will: *first*, discuss the sociological significance of the Jewish categorization of Durkheim, Goffman, Garfinkel, and Sacks; *second*, examine a 1962 collaboration between Goffman and Garfinkel that focused on marginalization in the form of «passing» and the heightened awareness it can generate; *third*, give an overview of the alternate interactionism of the four sociologists; *fourth,* discuss the origin of the conception of Interaction Orders in relation to the overall project of establishing an alternate interactionism; and, *finally*, analyze that disagreement between Goffman and the others in 1964.

2. The significance of being Jewish for the development of an alternate interactionism

Goffman, Garfinkel, and Sacks several times said that the detailed interactional approach they were developing was informed by their experience of being

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[9] One of these discussions occurred in 1960 at a seminar Parsons gave at Harvard, attended by Garfinkel and Sacks. Another was during the SPC (Suicide Prevention Center) conference in 1964 and was attended by all four. I was also present for some of these discussions between Garfinkel and others. But, it was not until I started writing about Du Bois in the 1990's that I began to realize their significance. Without that understanding, it had seemed like a narrow cultural preoccupation with little theoretical relevance. Later I realized that it was the opposite – it was my own hearing of what they said that was ethnocentric. They were talking about an important phenomenon with broad theoretical significance.

[10] My establishment of this terminology was overlooked, a process I was forced to witness, as I was asked to review papers by scholars who credited me for the argument and then had to watch as their papers were rejected by editors who instructed them that unless they stopped citing me their papers would not be accepted and assigned the credit elsewhere *(and then sent those review decisions to me)*. Hence, I am ironically not associated with the Emergent Order tradition that I initiated – and that many authors tried to give me credit for. I have adopted a policy of ignoring such actions over the years and quietly persisting with my own work that I am now able to identify with «Submissive Civility» (Du Bois, 1890; Rawls, Duck, 2020).

Jewish[11]. The social fact lineage in which they worked was also inspired by Durkheim's experience as a Jewish man, whose acceptance in French society was sometimes tenuous[12]. Jews had only been emancipated and eligible for state service in France since 1791, a mere century before Durkheim found himself caught up in the Dreyfus Affaire, in which a Jewish officer was framed for treason. Durkheim defended Dreyfus, wrote a number of articles on Anti-Semitism, and the open rioting and violence toward Jews and their property that took place at the time affected him deeply. According to Goldberg (2008, p. 303), Durkheim's analysis of French Anti-Semitism «suggested an analogy to disease», marking a connection between that analysis and Book III of the *Division*, which treats unjust aspects of modern society as a diseased Abnormal Form[13]. In «Anti-Semitism and Social Crisis», Durkheim described Jews as «expiatory victims» (Goldberg, 2008, p. 304), an analysis similar to Garfinkel's (2012) portrayal of the roles «Negro» and «Jew» in US society as reinforcing sacred/profane boundaries in his 1947 «The Red as an Ideal Object»[14].

[11] Goffman, Garfinkel, and Sacks talked among themselves about the significance of being Jewish (audio recordings in the Garfinkel Archive). Garfinkel's first dissertation proposals were specifically about «The Jew as a Social Object». Goffman's first publication «class status» flirts with the issue, and in *The Presentation of Self* (1959, pp.163-164) he says: «It is to be noted that persons who are colleagues in one capacity, and hence on terms of some reciprocal familiarity, may not be colleagues in other respects. It is sometimes felt that a colleague who is in other respects a man of lesser power or status may overextend his claims of familiarity and threaten the social distance that ought to be maintained on the basis of these other statuses. In American society, middle-class persons of low minority-group status are often threatened this way by the presumption of their lower-class brethren. As Hughes suggests in regard to interracial colleague relations». Sacks also talks in an early discussion about how a «Jew» only counts in his father's eyes if he becomes a Doctor – an allusion one suspects to his father not being impressed by his becoming a lawyer – only a doctor could join middle class White society. Simmel also wrote about being Jewish – but his «stranger» played a more positive role in society – a role that seems somewhat at odds with the actual experience of Jews in Germany at the time Simmel wrote the essay.

[12] The «Dreyfus Affaire» as it came to be known, seems to have represented a period in French history with many similarities to the period of BlackLivesMatter and the Trump Presidency in the US. Part of the population became more aware of racial discrimination and sprung into action, while at the same time acts of discrimination and anti-Semitism increased and became quite open and obvious in everyday life. Much like the current period in the US and Europe – which is experiencing both extremes at once. The period was important for Durkheim and many authors have commented on its influence on the development of his thinking. Goldberg (2008, p. 300) writes that «These accusations were accompanied by public demands to bar Jews from political life and the state service, repeal the emancipation that the French state had granted them in 1791, and even expel them from France altogether» (see also Vital, 1999, pp. 540-566; Fournier, 2007, pp. 365-390; Gartner, 2001, pp. 232 and 234-235; Kedward, 1965; Lukes 1973, pp. 347-349; Strenski, 1997).

[13] According to Goldberg (2008, p. 303): «Since Durkheim views anomie as pathological and anti-Semitism as symptomatic of it, anti-Semitism serves as a kind of social thermometer for him, a useful index of the health of society; it is "one of the numerous indications that reveals the serious moral disturbance from which we suffer". Any sudden upsurge of anti-Semitism could thus be taken as a sign of the illness of society». Racism and Anti-Semitism are similarly acting as a barometer of weaknesses in the fabric of society today.

[14] Simmel (1908) offers a similar analysis.

Durkheim's theory of modernity – the shift from values/norms to constitutive practices – both addressed and was informed by dilemmas inherent in his position as a Jew who could be united only with a society that abandoned traditional values and identities. Overall, Durkheim proposed a practice-based division of social labor in all parts of society (not just the economy) that distinguished belief from practice and treated practices as primary (i.e., practices generate beliefs, see Rawls, 1996a; 2009c; 2021a; 2021b). Hence, practices and their constitutive requirements can replace consensus as the means for creating Individual/Self and social coherence in modernity. Thus, Individualism, the one modern «value» Durkheim thought could be common to members of a diverse modern society, he treated as *the creation of* the constitutive social processes and implicit conditions of modernity. This left to constitutive practices the primary role of creating social solidarity – including values (Rawls, 2019; 2021b).

There is a direct connection between Durkheim's sociological analysis of Individualism in the *Division* and Goffman's portrayal of a fragile Self in *The Presentation of Self* (1959). In Goffman's version of the argument, it is the interactional performance of Self and its confirmation by the other, that creates its identity as an Individual; again putting practices before values. Both theorize an Individual who is only free insofar as they can participate as equals in a working consensus not grounded in tradition and is oppressed insofar as the working consensus embeds systemic inequality, requiring individuals to hide aspects of personal biography (e.g., being Jewish, Black, Transgender, or Epileptic, etc.), to «pass» as «normal» members of society.

Goffman (1951; 1959; 1961; 1963) examined inequalities in interaction that impact the achievement of Self, concluding that equality in the ground rules of interaction – «working consensus» – is a necessary prerequisite. Durkheim had come to a similar conclusion, calling the prerequisite justice, and urging diverse modern societies to guarantee the justice constitutive practices require through «moral education» and legal reform. Instead of enforcing consensus, and trying to force assimilation, governments should support the development of the Individual and Individualism by guaranteeing equal participation in the constitutive practices of public life (in sciences and occupational groups, in particular).

My own research with Waverly Duck on Race (2020; forthcoming) suggests that in the US (and likely elsewhere), a failure to guarantee equal participation led to the formation of alternate Interaction Orders among the marginalized. We find that Black Americans often orient alternate sets of interactional expectations that produce an egalitarian form of membership, rather than the more familiar American hierarchical form of Individualism. We describe this alternate «value» in terms borrowed from Du Bois (1890), as «Submissive Civility», which he described as *submission to the good of the whole*. Whereas the White American Individual is encouraged to pursue their own interests – which we have seen on display during the Covid-19 pandemic – membership in the Black community involves treating fellowship with others as an end. We treat the creation of this ideal as a response to oppression that historically denied the achievement of Individualism to the marginalized. Finally, we argue that the resulting conception of the moral obligations of the Individual among Black Americans is more in

keeping with the original Enlightenment ideal than are forms of Individualism embraced by the White majority: the Black American ideal and practice having much in common with Kant's famous «Kingdom of Ends»[15].

The challenge, however, is how to bring into view the social practices through which these two conflicting Interaction Orders are maintained – so that they can be studied empirically. Goffman and Garfinkel sought an answer in the insights of the marginalized and focused much of their early research on the «extra work» those with marginalized identities must do to avoid exclusion. Their awareness and empirical observations of that extra work informed their alternate interactional approach to the study of society and its moral prerequisites.

3. A collaboration on marginalization and exclusion: titled «On Passing»

In February 1962, Goffman and Garfinkel were finalizing arrangements to publish a book together (correspondence, Garfinkel Archive). Their shared experience of the ever-present possibility of exclusion and what could be learned from the troubles associated with it, led them to focus on marginalization. The book as proposed was to be co-authored, and titled *On Passing*. It would have two sections: one detailing Garfinkel's research with a transsexual woman (her own 1959 terminology) he called «Agnes» and her success in passing as female in interaction; the other reporting on Goffman's study of interactional troubles faced by people with epilepsy, who pass as «normal» by hiding their symptoms and avoiding disclosure in various ways.

When the joint project fell through, Goffman published his part of the book in 1963 as a monograph, *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity*. The title of the co-authored book as proposed was based on Garfinkel's use of the term «passing» to describe interactional work done by people like Agnes to achieve «normal» identities, and the «secrets» that must be hidden during interaction to protect their «rights» to achieve these identities. Goffman's focus on secrets and deception, which has since developed negative connotations, takes on new meaning when the achievement of Self is considered in the context of marginalization: it is not strategic interaction as most have understood it. For the marginalized it is survival.

The term «passing» was in common use in the Mid-Twentieth Century US with reference to light-skinned Black people passing as White, a practice Garfinkel was familiar with from his studies of Race at North Carolina (1939-1942). He expanded on that use to include anyone who needed to do «extra»

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[15] The «Kingdom of Ends» was the one idea that Kant said the individual should subordinate itself to. There is an interesting sense in which – although Kant began with the individual and said the individual should be treated as an «end in itself» – his formulation of the individual as an end in itself was secondary to his conception of a Kingdom of Ends to which all Individuals have a duty to subordinate themselves. The Kingdom of Ends is a very sociological conception. For Kant it was an idea. For Durkheim and Goffman it was a social contract grounding the possibility of a very fragile but very real social world of social facts and social fact making.

interactional work to hide attributes that would result in their losing rights to achieve a «normal» identity. Goffman, finding similar issues in research on those with epilepsy, described the interactional work involved as the «management of spoiled identity»: the subtitle he gave the published monograph.

Often treated as studies of deviance, the interest Goffman and Garfinkel took in these interactional achievements had *nothing to do with deviance*. Rather, as Garfinkel argued in his own planned contribution to the book, the interactional work involved in «passing», is valuable for what it reveals about what anyone must do in presenting and achieving the «normal» looks of a social identity. In other words, we all present selected parts of who we are that best fit the situation and identities that are relevant to the situation. However, while everyone must achieve their identities using accepted social practices, most can *take that work for granted* and it remains invisible. By contrast, those who face exclusion and must «pass» develop an awareness of interactional work that is similar to the Double Consciousness that W.E.B. Du Bois argued African Americans develop in response to racial exclusion: the work of this achievement is visible to them but not to others. The marginalized must think about what to do and study the behavior of others to learn how «normal» people achieve identities. In doing so they develop a conscious awareness of interaction that most majority people lack.

The two essays in *On Passing* comprise twin aspects of a single theoretical approach to how social interaction works: one (Goffman's) focused on the underlying (moral) requirements and compromises demanded (of individuals, institutions and Interaction Orders) by the *need to achieve Self as a fragile social fact*; the other (Garfinkel's), focused on the social practices – ethno-methods – and mutual commitment to them (Trust Conditions) required to achieve the fragile social facts of embodied work, meaning, and Self, in situated sequences of interaction[16]. While Goffman focused on descriptions of the interactional strategies and compromises required to achieve Self, it was the heightened awareness of the ordinary interactional work done to create the social facts of language, information, science, occupational work, etc., in addition to ordinary social identities, that motivated Garfinkel's search for the ethno-methods used in that work.

There is significant overlap between Goffman and Garfinkel, and in both cases, the social justice implications are important (Rawls, 1990). In studying the troubles encountered by those who face the constant possibility of being treated as deviant, they were making visible the hidden details of what those considered «normal» are doing to achieve «normal» without being aware of it. It is the awareness the process produces of the taken-for-granted social practices everyone must use that makes studies of «passing» such a valuable resource for social theory and research, not the so-called deviance of those who pass.

In acknowledging this hidden taken-for-granted aspect of social order and the role the marginalized play in revealing it, Garfinkel (1957) referred to those who experience trouble passing as «natural experiments» whose heightened

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[16] «Ethno-methods» is a name for what Durkheim called «constitutive practices» and Garfinkel also refers to them as «constitutive» (Rawls, 2019; 2020; 2021a; 2021b).

awareness reveals the hidden workings – the ethno-methods – of interaction. I suggest that Goffman and Garfinkel were natural experiments in their own right – embodied locations for both trouble and critique: that their use of the term «passing» was inspired not only by Black Americans who «pass» as White, but also by Jewish Americans, like themselves, trying to pass as «normal» in a society dominated by White Christian men. Garfinkel's dissertation proposals on «The Jew as a Social Object» reflect his familiarity with the troubles confronting a Jewish man aspiring to succeed in such a context – a familiarity with trouble he shared with Goffman and Sacks (Turowetz, Rawls, 2021c).

If their co-authored book had been published as planned in 1962, it would have produced a very different early impression of Goffman and his relationship with Garfinkel. The popular belief that they took different, even opposing approaches, might not have developed and social theory could have taken the opportunity to center interaction and overcome contradictions that instead have become intractable. There were differences between them to be sure, and as their careers progressed, those differences became more important. Nevertheless, the shared project of developing an alternate interactional approach grounded in Durkheim's constitutive social fact position remained, as did their indebtedness to Parsons, and a legacy of important students and colleagues they had in common that included Sacks[17].

4. The alternate interactionism of the four sociologists

By the beginning of the Twentieth Century, the social interactionism of G.H. Mead, W.I. Thomas, C.H. Cooley, and Robert Park was already associated with the Sociology Department at the University of Chicago, and comprised essential theoretical grounding for what is now widely referred to as «Chicago School

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[17] As it was, however, revelations about Agnes' use of her mother's hormone pills, conveyed to Garfinkel shortly before they were to deliver the manuscript to the press, prompted Garfinkel to write Goffman (on February 3rd, 1962) that there would be a delay, encouraging him to publish the book on his own if he could. At that point eager for another publication, Goffman talked the publisher into a monograph and wrote Garfinkel that he had done so. Wanting to highlight Agnes' success in achieving a female identity, rather than emphasizing her use of hormone pills – which from his point of view was irrelevant to her social accomplishment – Garfinkel wrote an appendix explaining her deception, and published the original chapter with that appendix in *Studies in Ethnomethodology* (1967). This also led to misunderstanding, as many scholars felt Garfinkel had been misled by Agnes and that the paper should have been revised. From Garfinkel's perspective, however, the original chapter was about how Agnes convinced people that she was a «normal natural female» and she had convinced Garfinkel. Therefore, the chapter as written was an accurate documentation of how she had achieved that perception of normality as a public shared identity – and of the heightened awareness of how Gender in general is accomplished by all people that she acquired in the process. Revision in light of later revelations would not be an accurate portrayal of that interactional work and its success. Garfinkel decided to handle the new information in the accompanying appendix to preserve his description of her achievement. However, because many of his critics in 1967 and later remained wedded to the idea that gender/sex is a biological category – a prejudice Garfinkel did not share – they did/do not understand the revolutionary character of his approach.

Sociology». Although he did his graduate work at Chicago, the alternate interactionism Goffman and the others were developing was different. While incorporating some aspects of Chicago School interactionism, they followed Durkheim in treating social facts as fragile, rather than durable, and consequently focused more directly on witnessable processes of interaction in a way that displaced the perspective of the individual and the importance of generalization that were both prominent in the earlier interactionism (Turowetz, Rawls, 2021a)[18]. In developing this alternate approach to interaction, Goffman was in contact with Garfinkel from the mid-1950's, and with Sacks (his PhD student) from 1960-1964[19]. He also read, admired, and met with Parsons throughout. In overlooking the significance of these relationships, there has been a tendency to deny connections between ethnomethodology, conversation analysis, and Goffman; and a corresponding failure to include Parsons and Durkheim in the equation (see Garfinkel, 2019a).

Getting a clear picture of Goffman's alternate approach to interaction requires not only understanding how he took up Durkheim's position, but also figuring out how Parsons fit into the picture. The conventional analysis of Parsons will not help much in this regard. His discussions with Goffman, Garfinkel, and Sacks as preserved in the Garfinkel archive, however, suggest that a more critical and interactional appreciation of Parsons contribution is warranted. These discussions also suggest Parsons appreciated the role that marginal identity played in inspiring their focus on interactional detail. None of this should be surprising. Parsons had challenged established US sociology from the beginning. It was Parsons, after all, who reintroduced Durkheim to US sociology in an effort to displace the pre-World War II preference for durable social facts inspired by Comte/Spencer that characterized the Chicago School.

Toward this end, Parsons took up Durkheim's argument against consensus theory, arguing for a «voluntaristic» approach grounded in social interaction.

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[18] The Chicago Sociology Department and interactionism more generally, built on a foundation comprised of primarily Mead and Cooley (with some James, Dewey and Peirce), German Psychology (especially Wundt), and Comte/Spencer. The combination of the Pragmatist philosophy of Mead and Cooley with the durable social facts of Comte/Spencer made this form of social interactionism individualistic in ways that were not compatible with the heightened awareness of social processes that animated Garfinkel, Goffman, and Sacks. Given the added focus of Durkheim and Parsons on constitutive practices, the new approach turned strongly away from the individual and toward interaction itself – what occurred between people – in the alternate interactionism.

[19] In January 1964 Sacks was finishing a dissertation on Suicide («The Cry for Help», 1964) which he planned to defend that summer. Sacks' interest in these questions was both serious and informed. He had been working with Garfinkel and Shneidman at the SPC for two years already, collecting data on calls to the Center about Suicide. Goffman was his dissertation chair, but had remained at Berkeley while Sacks worked in Los Angeles with Garfinkel and Shneidman. The proximity to Sacks' PhD defense, and growing tensions between Sacks and Goffman over his dissertation, are likely one reason Garfinkel gathered them all to discuss this particular topic. Later that summer, Goffman refused to sign off on his dissertation forcing Sacks to assemble a new committee. It effectively ended his relationship with Goffman and initiated a series of rather nasty published critiques by Goffman of Sacks' work. This meeting is one of the last times the two would discuss issues amicably.

In his Presidential Address to the *American Sociological Association* (ASA) in 1949, Parsons (1950) advanced an innovative conception of interaction as an independent domain of social action. Largely ignored, Parsons' conception was similar to the approach to interaction as independent that Garfinkel (who did his PhD with Parsons) had been elaborating since at least 1946 (Rawls, Turowetz, 2021b). Goffman became a key figure in this effort in the 1950's, as did Sacks in the 1960's.

One could say that the effort to craft a sociological approach that centered interaction and put constitutive practices before concepts and values, began with Durkheim (e.g., his argument that the concept of «force» is created in interaction; in the *Elementary Forms*, Book III, 1915, p. 405; Rawls, 1996a; 2009c, pp. 67 and 235). Alternatively, one might argue that the effort began with Parsons' (1937; 1938) adaptation of Durkheim as an antidote to fractures in pre-World War II American sociology (Rawls, 2018). In either case, the tradition that Goffman and the conception of Interaction Orders belong to builds on Durkheim and Parsons, with additions from Garfinkel and Sacks, while rejecting conventional dichotomies and their theoretical commitments.

The tendency to denigrate Goffman's emphasis on description, as if description had no theoretical import, is one consequence of misunderstanding Durkheim and Parsons. Creating social facts in interaction is not a conceptual process, and empirical descriptions of that process have essential analytical import. Close reading of Durkheim's *Elementary Forms* reveals a theory that relies heavily on description (Rawls, 1996a; 2009a). The work of making social facts *in situ* depends on *how* it takes place: its witnessable constitutive contours. The practices involved are embodied and must be physically enacted. Coming to terms with the implications of Goffman's work and the alternate interactionism he contributed to, requires a *new understanding of social theory* that recognizes the displacement of concepts, norms, and consensus in favor of constitutive practices in diverse modern societies as a theoretical turning point.

It is this displacement of concepts/norms/consensus in favor of constitutive practices that makes unity and coherence in a diverse society possible – *grounding a new theory of modernity*. It is also this displacement that gives analytic import to description and in particular, descriptions of how embodied interactional practices are physically enacted in cooperation with others to create social objects in situated contexts of social action[20]. Inspired by a height-

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[20] This attitude toward «description» results from an early prejudice in sociology and philosophy that «particular» things, events, or instances of anything have no meaning on their own – but only by reference to something else. This then leads to a preoccupation with perfecting «concepts», and treating them as analytic and theoretical tools that transcend the particularities of description. It is important to point out that this problem only exists for «natural» facts. Social facts, by contrast, only exist in relation to shared social criteria and particulars and their descriptions can hold the key to how this work is done. Durkheim challenged this philosophical prejudice, arguing that individual events create shared meaning in very specific ways that can be described. The alternate interactionism of Parsons, Garfinkel, Goffman and Sacks took up Durkheim's lead and focused on descriptions of how social interaction creates social facts (although Parsons never stopped relying too heavily on concepts for analysis).

ened awareness of the taken-for-granted, research and theory in the alternate interactional approach rely on witnessable physical features of empirical events and their conditions of recognizability – in place of well-defined concepts and values. Goffman's descriptions of the presentation of Self and interaction rituals have this relevance, as do Garfinkel's and Sacks' analysis of sequential details and embodied actions. It is only in his later work on *Frame Analysis* (1974) and *Forms of Talk* (1981) that Goffman diverges sharply from the others – and he comes back around in the end[21].

The *artificial separation* of social life into micro/macro, the emphasis on dichotomies of various sorts (ideal/real, conceptual/empirical), the insistence on generalizability, the association with size (small/large) and the reduction of sociality to an opposition between individuals and social institutions – as if these social forms lived opposed and apart – has obscured essential interactional and social contract aspects of social life. Conceptualizing the problem in terms of the individual *vs* society – or agency *vs* structure – obscures another order of problem as well: that the fundamental prerequisites of Self-making change in a modern society, and face a different kind of opposition from the prerequisites of formal institutions, which also change.

Parsons (1938) blamed these tendencies on the Chicago School's rejection of Durkheim's social fact position when the *Division* first appeared in 1893[22]. He viewed Durkheim's approach as more inherently sociological, because it focused on social *process*, rather than treating the individual and society as durable givens. When Parsons proposed Durkheim as an antidote to the individualism in US sociology in the 1930's, however, most critics and followers alike twisted Parsons' proposal to fit their prior commitment to a disciplinary canon indebted to durable social facts and overlooked the interactionism in his position. Consequently, Durkheim was turned into a conservative functionalist and his argument that social labor becomes increasingly differentiated in modernity was interpreted as if it referred to the industrial division of labor, when for Durkheim social labor included the interactional work of creating and sustaining family, ordinary interaction, occupations and sciences, law, and religious rituals.

By contrast, Parsons' appreciation of Durkheim made him attractive to Goffman, Garfinkel, and Sacks, who would solidify the focus on interaction and give it substance; carving out an alternate sociological domain in which *orders of interaction sit at the center of social order and meaning*: witnessable empirical orders replacing the durable and conceptualized social facts grounded in consensus that are assumed by the older social theory.

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[21] These two works have been heavily cited (37,000+ citations for *Frame Analysis* and 13,000+ citations for *Forms of Talk*). Goffman's earlier works are also heavily cited (*Presentation of Self* at 77, 500+, *Stigma* 45,000+ and *Asylums* 26,000+). All of Goffman's work is well cited. The problem is that the work really splits into two arguments.

[22] Reviews by American sociologists from the 1890's that are dismissive of or paraphrase Durkheim into a conventional structural functionalist position can be found in the *American Journal of Sociology*. See also Rawls (1996b) for consideration of the most prominent early critics.

The conception of Interaction Orders captures the centrality of interaction to this transition – treating interaction as micro loses the point. Parsons assumed a social contract position as grounding for his voluntaristic sociology. Goffman (1959) proposed a social contract position grounded in what he called a «working consensus» with regard to the prerequisites for Self-making. Garfinkel and Sacks added the interactional demands of Meaning and Object-making to the equation, in a formulation Garfinkel (1963) called «trust conditions» and Sacks' called «preference orders». All four reprise Durkheim's «implicit conditions of contract»[23].

5. Interaction Orders: origin of the idea

Goffman's (1983) conception of Interaction Orders is a succinct distillation of his efforts (and those of the others) to frame an approach to social interaction as situated, embodied, and oriented toward the requirements of making fragile social facts. It is similar to what Garfinkel (2019b) had earlier characterized as treating culture as situated language games. Moreover, while it does not explicitly read as a reconciliation of the divisions that had developed between them, the posthumous Presidential Address in which Goffman announced Interaction Orders freely incorporates descriptions of research by Garfinkel and his students, and could be viewed as a last effort to make a theoretical statement for them all. Garfinkel would certainly have no opportunity to complain to Goffman about it (as he had done in the past)[24].

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[23] My thanks to Jakub Mlynář for pointing out a discussion that took place between Garfinkel and Sacks at the 1962 Ethnomethodology conference in which they referenced an earlier discussion they had in 1960 while both attended a seminar on the sociology of Law at Harvard taught by Parsons. According to Jakub, «The notion of "etcetera" also relates to Durkheim's implicit conditions of contract, although Garfinkel and Sacks understood it differently». In their discussion at the 1962 EM conference, Garfinkel recalls that precisely this topic was the motivation for Sacks and Garfinkel to realize their intellectual affinity during Parsons' seminar on law in society. The seminar Garfinkel said «brought the attention to the fact, in fact he talked about it in this way, saying first that it consisted of adopting a rule and under the auspices of this rule searching them for cases that the – could be referred to the rule as the rule having jurisdiction over these cases» (Garfinkel Archive, Transcript, HG, p. 13), Sacks adds «Of auspicizing», and then talks about Weber, who starts from the point that «he has to live with this, he recognizes a problem and he recognizes it in a particular context which he says we already know about the world» (p. 14-15) – that he says is raising «the sociologist's etcetera problem» which is «not the same thing that we're talking about» (p. 15). The paper they are discussing (Harvey's draft of a 1963 paper) is about whether the sociologist «can look at the etcetera problem and satisfy the claims he makes» (p. 15). They discuss Durkheim's «non-contractual elements of contract», which consists of an etcetera principle, not of another body of rules. Sacks says that this is how Durkheim understood it, and Garfinkel acknowledges that he may «have been reading him for the version of Garfinkel» (p. 19).

[24] Garfinkel was known for complaining about characterizations of his work, even by close collaborators, and had gone through a period of not speaking to Goffman between 1960 and 1961 that Sacks managed to patch-up (Garfinkel Archive correspondence). There did not need to be any significant reason for these complaints. Garfinkel's focus on detail was so intense

When I published my first paper on Goffman's conception of Interaction Orders (Rawls, 1987), Garfinkel called to ask why I had attributed the idea to Goffman, when he (Garfinkel) had come up with it first. Surprised, I said that as far as I knew he had not developed the idea. He insisted he had – as early as 1948 – and that Goffman had read the manuscript in question by 1953 and urged him to publish it. Garfinkel also said he had a copy of that manuscript with Goffman's margin notes, which he later showed me. Confronted unexpectedly with this complaint, I replied that if he had written about Interaction Orders he had certainly not published it, and asked how I (or anyone else) was supposed to know the idea was his? I urged him to share the manuscript with me. It would be fifteen years before he did. Finally, in 2006 we published that manuscript, his first attempt at a PhD proposal in Spring 1947, as *Seeing Sociologically*[25].

Since that conversation, I have used the term Interaction Orders to refer to Garfinkel's position as well as Goffman's, as he insisted. Their work was so closely connected in some ways that they were effectively the joint authors of an important theoretical innovation. But, they were so far out in front of everyone else that few understood what they meant, and the practice of suborning Interaction Orders to micro/macro concerns, or casting them as universal continued (when, as situated sets of constitutive practices that had developed to facilitate coherence in contexts of diversity, that would have defeated their purpose)[26].

The Interaction Order position ultimately hinges on Durkheim's distinction between summary and constitutive rules introduced in the *Division* (Rawls, 2009; 2019; 2021b). In his 1902 «Second Preface», and in the *Elementary Forms*, Durkheim continued to develop the argument that constitutive practices (pioneered by sciences and specialized occupations) would become the principal means of achieving social solidarity across difference in contexts of diversity (he called it differentiation, and communication across groups). This solution did not depend on Individualism as a unifying value. It did require abandoning traditional values in modern spaces. As Durkheim argued in his *Lectures on Pragmatism* (1983), what made modern science «scientific» and distinguished it from religious belief, was the ability that its reliance on constitutive practices gave it to «run ahead of beliefs» (Durkheim, 1983; Rawls, 1997).

The distinction between constitutive practices and a consensus of beliefs (or summary rules) grounds the argument that in modern societies where di-

that any summary statement was almost guaranteed to set him off. Garfinkel went through several periods of not speaking to me as well, so I have first-hand experience of how and why this happened with some frequency.

[25] When he gave me the manuscript Garfinkel said it had been written in 1948, and it has since been referred to as the «1948 Manuscript». While his other dissertation proposals were written in 1948, this one has now been identified as an earlier proposal from February or March 1947 – just after he worked with Jerome Bruner. Nevertheless, for the sake of consistency I have continued referring to it as the 1948 manuscript.

[26] There is a further twist here in that I had myself used the term «Interaction Order» in a paper written in 1977 that Manny Schegloff gave to Goffman that year – and reported back to me that Goffman had read. In early versions of my dissertation (written in 1980-1981) I had used that term with reference to a theory I had been developing since 1975.

verse populations do not share traditions, rules as summaries of tradition must be replaced by constitutive rules/practices that are both situated and tied to immediately relevant tasks. Only constitutive practices can self-regulate free from tradition (rather than being sanctioned by authority) in ways that can include everyone and facilitate the development of sciences and occupations[27].

6. Interaction Orders *versus* «definition of the situation»

The conception of Interaction Orders constitutes an important transformation on the earlier conception of the «definition of the situation»; one that moves away from the perspective of the individual that characterized much early Chicago School Sociology, and toward a conception of interaction as comprised of constitutive embodied practices that belong to and define situations independently of either individuals or institutions. As Goffman explains in the first paragraphs of *The Presentation of Self*, situations have identities and behavioral expectations that belong to them, which he still referred to there with the classic phrase «definition of the situation». Even in the original formulation by W.I. Thomas, these definitions were not matters of individual interpretation. Nor were they small pieces of social structure. Rather, they were sets of social expectations about how particular situations of interaction are organized and which identities, movements, talk, and gestures they make relevant.

In the original, however, these sets of expectations lived in the individual perspective. Interaction Orders are like definitions of the situation in comprising shared situated rule sets, or codes, for making social facts together. They are different, however, in being entirely independent from the perspective of the individual. They are fully collective, belonging to places and situations, not people – and working only by being witnessably exhibited in ways that instruct individuals as to what is required. This is one of the problems with qualitative methods that focus on interviews – most people are not aware of the details involved in creating such social facts and thus cannot talk about them. Consequently, interview data tends to support the fallacy that social order and meaning are conceptual[28]. By contrast, detailed observations of constitutive practices

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[27] In another perverse twist, both Durkheim's emphasis on religious practice in *Division,* and on interactional details essential to occupational practices in *Elementary Forms* have largely been overlooked: the two books consistently being treated as if one was about an economic division of labor, while the other focused on religion. In actuality, the two books work in tandem to ground a coherent theory of modernity in practice-based aspects of social fact making. Neither focused on either economy or religion, but rather on the central role played by constitutive practices in facilitating a social solidarity grounded in implicit conditions that require justice.

[28] For instance, Russell Sage has issued a call for proposals for what they refer to as an «Open qualitative methods»: https://www.russellsage.org/request-articles-building-open-qualitative-science. The principle idea seems to be to generate a large «qualitative data set» that will facilitate the generalization of «qualitative» concerns. This, of course, works in op-

reveal the taken-for-granted orders of embodied practice that underlie surface appearances. Grounded by an implicit social contract, Interaction Orders facilitate the making of Meaning, Objects, and Self, in the situated social worlds they organize.

Durkheim's conception of social facts as the fragile and momentary creations of enacted constitutive features of practices without which they do not exist, grounds Goffman's translation of the classic «definition of the situation» into Interaction Orders. The difference between Goffman's approach and W.I. Thomas' original conception (see Thomas, Thomas, 1928, pp. 571-572), is that Interaction Orders are comprised of witnessable empirical details of sequences of embodied action in situations, and research on these details seeks to discover how their order properties are being used to create meaning in that situation without reference to what individual actors might think they are doing. This is what makes these studies of interaction seem so strange to conventional sociologists. The alternate interactionism completely ignores attitudes, beliefs, and concepts. The objective is to figure out how people are coordinating the work of making coherence by looking at that work. The approach combines the *independence* of interaction as a domain, with a conception of *fragile* social facts achieved moment-by-moment using detailed constitutive expectations in a process that is situated, embodied, and grounded in implicit social contract. Goffman's transformation effects a powerful shift away from the individual and how they define situations, toward the sets of constitutive rules and shared commitments belonging to situations, not individuals, which emerged from the work of Garfinkel and Sacks.

The conception of Interaction Orders can also be seen as a culmination of Parsons' attempt to transition from an early US sociology that privileged the individual and traditional consensus, toward an independent interactional domain that could embrace diversity and dissolve tradition, consensus, and the micro/macro divide that results from assuming tradition and consensus. Robert Park had recognized part of the problem and alluded to the possibility of using a conception of the «definition of the situation» to bridge the qualitative/quantitative divide in his 1925 ASA Presidential Address «The Concept of Position in Society». However, Park treated social facts as relative to their position in situations, such that «position» played a determining role in providing social context for social fact making – not the interaction itself. In making the argument, Park treated position as a pre-determined *quality attached to individuals and things*, such that every individual or thing occupies a different position (or cluster of positions). In other words, Park's approach gave individuals and their positions (and the traditional consensus that determined those positions) precedence over interaction.

Treating position as durable and given by consensus is not a basis for unifying across diversity. By contrast, the Interaction Order approach follows up on Durkheim's argument that a diverse modern society must abandon tradition.

position to the idea that situations are locations for unique organizing practices that will be lost through any attempt to generalize broadly across situations.

Goffman's translation of the argument gives primacy to interaction and its situations in organizing Meaning, Objects, and Self, in modernity.

That interactional expectations comprise sets of constitutive practices that *belong to situations and their tasks* is the principal idea of both Goffman and Garfinkel. Goffman got it into print first, naming an approach that included the work of Garfinkel and Sacks with his own. Interaction Orders are independent from individuals and their interests, from intentions, and from position. They *should* be independent from social traditions that constrain the positions/identities of individuals, but often are not. As situated orders of expectation, Interaction Orders impose their own constraints independent from outside forces. This is the case even when traditional social biases, particularly with regard to identity, are still embedded in Interaction Orders, producing trouble, as in their studies of «passing». The requirements of social fact making remain independent, and resist bias and inequality. But in doing so, in an Interaction Order that embeds tradition, they produce trouble that can result in the formation of alternate and clashing sets of constitutive expectations and the heightened awareness that participation in those alternates confers (Duck, 2015; Rawls, Duck, 2020)[29].

An Interaction Order is recognizable as a socially organized form of life to all competent participants in a given social situation. Competent means familiar with and fluent in their use, which explains the use of the terms «members» and «competent members» to describe such participants. Displays of such competence (and recognition of it by others) are frequent and important in establishing meaningful social objects, and membership, and consequently have become objects of research in their own right. As Garfinkel put it, constitutive rules/expectations are «instructable» and his studies of *how* they are instructable are themselves instructive[30].

The Interaction Order approach addresses Wittgenstein's *dictum* that rules cannot be followed, by documenting how they can nevertheless be anticipated, demonstrated, and displayed. For Goffman constitutive rules/practices are

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[29] Interaction Order expectations can act as constraints on action and understanding independently of social structure. But, they can also embed social inequalities in the expectations that belong to situations. As Joe Feagin argues in *The White Racial Frame* (2009), such definitions can frame situations in ways that import the structural unfairness of society-at-large into its most ordinary situations and situated actions. Furthermore, when societies are structured in ways that oppress and exclude, Interaction Orders can also embed defenses *against* that oppression in the practices used to create Self and mutual understanding (Rawls, Duck, 2017; 2020).

[30] For instance, when outside objects (like trees in a driveway in basketball) intrude into situated action, Interaction Order expectations are quickly amended (the tree can become a boundary, for instance). Thus, definitions of the situation and their Interaction Orders are not static and change constantly. What gives them stability is that every participant who is a member orients toward the same sets and amendments are mutually agreed to – and newcomers instructed. Garfinkel argued that constant change is made possible by the practices of «adhocing», making up new rules to fit the occasion («if the ball hits this tree it is out of bounds»), and, «etcetera» (assuming that the endless revisions needed are part of the original agreement); i.e., that any rule is that rule plus etcetera.

made evident in the descriptions of interaction that populate his books (while confusing critics as to what kind of «scientific» data they are. Are they literary? No, they describe situated interactional practices, competencies, and expectations). To teach awareness of what is taken-for-granted Garfinkel used exercises (tutorials) that produce various forms of «trouble», including one in which a student is asked to clap with a metronome and finds that *following* the metronome entails clapping over the sound of the metronome to make that sound disappear – which is *anticipating* rather than following. Describing such demonstrations in details is both an awareness raising exercise and a research objective (Eisenmann, Rawls, forthcoming).

While the Interaction Order approach treats the apparent concreteness of micro and macro domains as an achievement rather than a given (the opposite of what conventional sociology does) it is not a «flat» theory that reduces everything to one «level». Rather, the Interaction Order argument works out in details Parsons' original 1949 proposal that interaction is independent from the other two domains, the individual level and the level of social structure, *without subsuming them*. Whether one considers the Interaction Order domain the only one, arguing that it absorbs the others – or follows Parsons in treating it as an independent domain that interacts with the other two – *the articulation of a third domain* of social action *should have been earthshattering* – and it has not been. *Why deserves some attention*. Why did social theorists not see the potential, especially given Parsons' involvement, for addressing essential questions of Meaning, Self and social justice? Furthermore, given that they were articulating social justice questions – why did prominent sociologists (e.g., Coser, 1975; Coleman, 1968) maintain that Goffman and Garfinkel had taken no interest in social justice and insist that such questions were best addressed with quantitative data sets that leave the social origin of their categories in interaction unexamined?[31]

Parsons had insisted that a prejudice in pre-war US sociology in favor of durable social facts was to blame for the initial resistance to Durkheim. World War II amplified the effect such that the prejudice in favor of individualism, naturalism/positivism, and quantitative methods, became even stronger (Rawls, 2018). We might now also want to note that a pre-war sociological commitment to the idea that European society is superior to others also helped to hide the inappropriateness of continuing to insist that consensus is necessary. Certainly, the efforts of Black, Jewish and Female scholars to criticize the ex-

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[31] Quantitative data sets assembled by the police and other institutional actors (in prisons, hospitals, universities, police stations, etc.), reflect records kept by persons working in those institutions and because they reflect the local culture of work tend to preserve the *status quo* of the institution. When police assemble crime statistics, for instance, they will show a high crime rate for those whom the police interact with and arrest the most, whether or not they commit the most crime (or even any crime) and a low crime rate for those they do not arrest – regardless of who has committed crimes. Treating such secondary data sets as representing facts in the world – rather than the social practices that created them has been a huge contributor to inequality world-wide. Advocating quantitative research as the most «scientific» approach has been a powerful way of resisting calls by the marginalized for justice and producing the appearance of a fair and just consensus – where the system is actually built to be unfair.

clusivity and lack of justice in the consensus approach were summarily rejected – a practice that continues with the marginalization of studies of Race. Parsons' renewed effort to establish an interaction centered social theory and method in the post-war was again misunderstood, leading to increasing criticism of his position. Goffman, Garfinkel, and Sacks were also marginalized and incorporated into sociology on terms that stripped off their essential critique – much as Durkheim had been. As a result, sociology as a discipline has yet to recognize the study of interaction as an independent domain of social order.

7. Goffman's description of how Interaction Orders constrain social institutions

One of the strongest demonstrations that Interaction Orders are independent is Goffman's description of how the interactional requirements of Self-making limit even what total-institutions can do to what he called the «human materials» that live and work within them. Since he made the argument, other scholars have done important research that builds on and demonstrates those limits. In making this argument in *Asylums* (1961), Goffman focused on the conditions required for achieving and maintaining social Self, describing the compromises that representatives of total institutions (like guards) routinely make to preserve the minimum coherence of the selves assigned to their care. Goffman maintains that these compromises are necessary; that without them the selves housed in such places would be destroyed, leaving the institutions without purpose (Rawls, 1987; 1989; 1990).

This consequence rests squarely on Goffman's (1959) proposal that the Self is fragile because of the detailed constitutive practices of Self-making, the many different Interaction Orders (and definitions of the situation) it must navigate, and the high degree of cooperation and reciprocity required in each situation. Following Durkheim's approach to modern individualism as a social creation, Goffman argues that the Self is an ongoing social accomplishment that, because of its fragility, requires a degree of reciprocity that even total-institutions cannot ignore.

In *Asylums* (1961), Goffman describes how in mental institutions guards/ attendants make informal agreements with inmates allowing them to break small rules, in exchange for which, inmates comply with other requests. It is a gift exchange (Mauss, 1925) that has also been documented in prisons (Sykes, 1958). The prevalence of compromise does not mean that conditions are not harsh – or even deadly – but rather, that institutions are forced to sustain a tenuous reciprocity within the harshness. In concentration camps whose ultimate purpose was to destroy their inmates, such compromises are particularly remarkable[32]. The argument is that inmate selves need some cooperation from

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[32] Garfinkel and Bittner collected information on Hitler's death camps. Bittner was a Holocaust survivor himself (born in Czechoslovakia), and Garfinkel talked about the order properties of the camps in a summer course he taught at Boston University in 1975, and a course

institutions, while institutions also need some cooperation from inmate selves to maintain any stability over time – even just minutes or hours – and even if the ultimate objective is the destruction of the inmates. Survival involves learning the order properties of those compromises.

The argument is not that Interaction Orders make total-institutions (or any institution) fair. These compromises do not produce justice and/or equality. Rather, the point is that Interaction Orders are an independent domain that *cannot be ignored* and, as such, they demand compromise *even from* total-institutions. These demands, not incidentally, work against traditional inequalities and push institutions in the direction of fairness, although usually not far.

The essential point is that Interaction Orders and their requirements are *independent*. While they cannot force institutions to be fair, in their own domain – of ordinary interaction – Interaction Orders do self-regulate to enforce a minimum of equality and reciprocity, without which mutual intelligibility fails and alternate clashing Interaction Orders form (Rawls, Duck, 2020). The need for reciprocity, and the troubles that occur when reciprocity is not achieved, leave *empirical markers of moral obligation* for the marginalized who experience them, as well as for those sociologists who are aware enough to look for them. Durkheim argued that sociology should become the study of such empirical markers of moral requirements. That Interaction Orders respond to their own internal demands for reciprocity/equality and resist external constraint, while also *empirically marking with trouble* the lack of social justice in most existing social arrangements, makes possible an empirical sociological approach to social justice (Rawls, 2019; 2021b).

8. The usefulness of «trouble»: meeting in Los Angeles – 1964

The relationship between Goffman, Garfinkel, Sacks, and Parsons, and their effort to establish an alternate interactional approach to sociology, continued through meetings, friendship, and correspondence until at least 1964. At the last meeting we know of that included all four, on January 10th-11th, 1964, they gathered at Garfinkel's invitation to talk about «Suicide as a Social Object» in Los Angeles, where Garfinkel and Sacks had been engaged in research at the *Suicide Prevention Center* (SPC) for the prior two years[33]. The discussion at this meeting is instructive for clarifying their relationships and mutual interests, and revealing an important difference between Goffman and the others on where and how to locate the meaning of a social fact: whether entirely inside the event – or in some «further reality» (SPC tapes – Garfinkel Archive).

he taught at UCLA titled *Organization in Extreme Settings*. In 1956, Garfinkel had received several volumes of interview transcripts directly from David P. Boder, a UCLA psychologist who conducted over 100 interviews with «displaced persons» in Europe in 1946, most of whom were survivors of concentration camps. These volumes are in the Garfinkel Archive.

[33] Parsons also gave at least two lectures to Garfinkel's seminar at UCLA while he was there for the conference (correspondence from a student named Bult in 1984 reminding Garfinkel that she attended these lectures).

There are many important takeaways from this two-day meeting. But, the first thing to emphasize is that the four sociologists, who are typically portrayed as having little in common, spent 10.2 total audio recorded hours over the course of two days, discussing the interactional processes of social fact making together, skipping several scheduled breaks in the process. They did not want to stop talking. The meeting followed a five-year collaboration between Garfinkel and Parsons and was likely planned around Parsons' availability (Garfinkel, 2019a), as Parsons had written Garfinkel in January 1963 that he wanted to make such a trip.

The SPC was founded by Ed Shneidman, also its director. When in 1958 Garfinkel secured a five-year research grant to study persons who experienced social troubles (with a focus on Gender), he moved to an office near Shneidman in the UCLA medical school (near the Gender clinic). When Shneidman received a grant to study the work of the SPC in 1962 he invited Garfinkel to join him (and Garfinkel asked him to invite Sacks).

It becomes clear over the course of their discussion that the sociologists consider they have gotten together to talk about a social fact, «Suicide», and the interactional details of its achievement. Shneidman, a psychologist, does not share their interest in how social facts are accomplished, focusing instead on the individual intention to commit suicide. Having deferred to Shneidman as Director of the Center, and asked him to present first, the sociologists find him framing the discussion in a way that deeply conflicts with their own social fact approach.

In the event, Shneidman's initial framing of the problem in terms of intention conflicts so seriously with their own, that it produced what could be called a «breaching» experience that elicited many «instructions» to Shneidman from the others about what he was doing wrong. While this was likely frustrating to them all at the time, it is this «trouble» that makes the recording so valuable. Like the experience of trouble in general – this trouble surfaces aspects of their positions that would otherwise have remained unarticulated. In arguing with Shneidman, each made their argument more explicit, clarifying not only their own assumptions, but also Shneidman's. It is a classic case of what Garfinkel called a «natural trouble» that reveals taken-for-granted practices and assumptions.

Shneidman opened his talk with the announcement that he would avoid the terms «suicide» and «death» in talking about suicide and death because the terms are imprecise. This statement of the problem led quickly to multiple interruptions as the others challenged his assertion – asking him to explain why commonsense terms are not good enough. The account Shneidman produced is a rough approximation of the classic philosophical problem of «meaning as reference» as it appeared in John Locke's letter to his friend Stillingfleet (precursor to his 1690 *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*), that a scientific discussion he had participated in was rendered meaningless by the imprecision of the terms used.

The problem, as Locke and Shneidman formulate it, is that the imprecision of the words used in scientific discussion makes communication about scientific problems impossible. The 300+ years of debate since 1690 have made it clear

that the problem cannot be solved by making terms more precise, as Locke originally proposed. In fact, since Wittgenstein (1953), the emphasis has been on getting a more detailed focus on commonsense «use», rather than abandoning commonsense for clearer definitions. *The sociologists are well aware of this*.

Shneidman understands that the words have commonsense meanings, and says so, but he seems to be unaware of the philosophical difficulty. Shneidman's complaint about imprecise terms is not that they lack meaning, but that they carry *too much meaning* to allow for scientific precision. This was also Locke's complaint, and is another problem familiar to the sociologists. Garfinkel had argued in 1946 that the problem is not that words/concepts/symbols lack meaning, but rather, that they carry too much meaning: the question being how Meaning is achieved as a social fact in any actual case. *They agree on this point*. But, for the sociologists, as for Wittgenstein, the solution is to look more closely at commonsense use in context, to see how participants use practices as language games and Interaction Orders to achieve precision *in-situ*.

Shneidman persists in trying to make the terms more precise. The challenge for the group at this point is what to do in the face of this dilemma. Do they spend their time (which they have been looking forward to) on the hopeless task of refining the many possible meanings of the term «suicide» relative to different possible intentions *just to please Shneidman*, or do they insist on discussing how a Suicide is established as a social fact in any particular social context?

Because of Shneidman's breech of their expectations, we are treated to a sustained discussion of the meaning question within very narrow boundaries. It is a discussion with immediate research relevance, the two sides taking very different approaches to both data and analysis. That Goffman starts out on the Wittgensteinian side of the argument and later turns back toward Locke and Shneidman is also instructive.

In the first part of the discussion, Goffman aligned with Parsons, Garfinkel, and Sacks, making the point that Suicide is a social fact, the accomplishment of which occurs through the display and recognition of social practices as with any other social fact. Shneidman, by contrast, continues trying to fine-tune the definitions of words to identify intentions that he says words obscure (such as degrees of «intending lethality»). Attempting to refine concepts first, also involves Shneidman in what he calls «phenomenology». Like Shneidman, conventional sociological approaches (both micro and macro) tend to treat the perspective of the individual as the thing that defines the meaning of an action, and then try to refine commonsense terminology on that basis[34]. This is what Shneidman

[34] Ironically, in the face of Shneidman's declared focus on the intentions of individual persons, and his professed phenomenology (he also calls himself a «person-ologist» and says that Garfinkel leaves persons out), *it becomes clear that Garfinkel was never focusing on persons or phenomenology*, as conventional sociology has supposed. Garfinkel's position on persons/Self is like Goffman's: the Self is an interactional achievement and, as such, a continual work in progress that cannot stand alone. As Garfinkel says of his position in response to Shneidman, «It's not that persons are left out, but that the persons are not looked to for explanatory accounts of how the social structures of action are possible» (Reel 1, A1, lines 16-17). Whereas Shneidman and many conventional sociologists (and Symbolic Interactionists)

means by phenomenology. Ironically, although Goffman, Garfinkel, and Sacks are typically labeled micro and identified with phenomenology, in this discussion they reject what Shneidman calls his «phenomenological» approach in favor of a focus on how members of a situation assemble, recognize, and confirm courses of action as meaningful by orienting sets of rules/expectations for their assembly and display.

As the discussion continues, however, a difference emerges between Goffman and the others. At a point where Sacks makes the analytic point that «everything» an analyst would need in order to decide the status of a Suicide must also have been available to the participants in the situation – and therefore must be available to the analyst in the empirical record of the event – Goffman objects. He insists that there must be something more, that there is some «further reality» Garfinkel and Sacks are leaving out. *It is not clear why Goffman says this*. He may have had something particular in mind. But, when pressed to be specific he says he doesn't know.

HS:　　　　　　　　　　　　　　[What do you- what do you have

　　　　in mind as the sort of thing you- what y-

EG:　　　I don't <u>know</u> yet. [I haven't (looked into suicide)

HS:　　　　　　　　　　　　[But what is- where- where is- What lies

　　　　<u>behind</u> the gap? (That's m-) what do you see sitting behind

　　　　the gap (　　　) that we've left, waiting to rush into the gap

　　　　to fill it up with something?

　　　　(1.1)

HS:　　　So what would be the sort of thing that would fill it up?

EG:　　　I don't know. But that's the crux of it. I think you're

　　　　suggesting that that's it. That there isn't any further reality.

Fɪɢ. 1. From Reel 3 A1 (lines 42-51).

Garfinkel has indeed argued that the Self is a social fact, and if it kills itself, that is also a social fact. This is how what is apparently the most «private» act

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are looking for precisely such person-centered explanations, Garfinkel's repudiation of the position is in itself interesting, given the persistent misinterpretation of Garfinkel as an individualistic phenomenologist, and of Goffman as a micro sociologist. Here, the positions of Goffman and Garfinkel on Self are much the same and both are close to Parsons' position as it emerges in the discussion.

imaginable is social through and through. A «natural» body making itself dead does not earn a social classification until and unless it is evaluated from a social, and not an individual, natural, or phenomenological perspective (as Shneidman calls it). In insisting on a «further reality», Goffman gets into the same trouble Shneidman has gotten into in his effort to define and conceptualize suicide and death in terms of the victims' intentions.

By contrast, Garfinkel and Sacks avoid the problem by recognizing that as a social object, Suicide is not constituted by natural facts, or the victim's intentions, but rather by the way their actions are treated by others as organized to mean Suicide whether or not they *intended* their actions to be considered suicide/suicidal. Like all meaningful social actions, the Meaning of a death does not depend on the wishes or thoughts of the individual who dies, or on the natural facts of the death, but on the sense others make of it – on the accounts they produce, and how those accounts reflexively elaborate the actions they describe[35].

This discussion reveals a complicated array of positions among the four, with Sacks at one extreme, insisting on an entirely situated empirical research approach, and Goffman with Shneidman at the other extreme, apparently advocating for the consideration of some «further realities». That line up, with Garfinkel and Parsons in the middle, is particularly striking. The disagreement exposes a residual naturalism/individualism in Goffman's approach to meaning that does not trouble his position on Self (Rawls, 1990). It is this naturalism with regard to some words/concepts, which separates Goffman from the other three sociologists in this discussion.

It is important to point out that all four agree more than they disagree, as their initial alignment against Shneidman shows, and that ultimately what appear as two extremes in this discussion are *both* situated within an alternate interactionist perspective that is itself revolutionary. Goffman, Garfinkel, Sacks were all developing positions that centered social interaction and Parsons was attempting to do so (see Parsons, 1963)[36]. However, with Goffman the revolutionary aspects of the argument were largely limited to his position on Self. He parted company with the others on some aspects of meaning.

This ironically made Goffman's work, in particular his later arguments about «frames» and «talk», more easily accessible in a way that drove the popularity of studies of social interaction forward – benefiting the others – including

[35] The rules and expectations that the unnamed terms/social facts would refer to, as Goffman describes them, seemed to the others to be analogous to Parsons' Pattern Variable argument (AGIL) and other aspects of Parsons' and Durkheim's social theories, and they also comment on this. Sacks in particular, makes the comparison between what Goffman is saying and Parsons' AGIL.

[36] Parsons did explicitly acknowledge Garfinkel's assistance in editing the revised pattern variable paper in the first footnote to the 1960 publication of that paper (Parsons, 1960). I thank Jakub Mlyná for bringing to my attention that Parsons also acknowledged Garfinkel's assistance in 1979: «I was very ably assisted in this development, which was largely a venture in formalization, not only by Winston White but, it may surprise many, also by Harold Garfinkel» (Parsons, 1979, p. 12).

Garfinkel and Sacks, while, nevertheless, obscuring the theoretical and method-ological import of their work.

It was also consequential that Goffman's approach to Self became popular at just the point in the mid-1960's when Parsons was starting to draw heavy criticism from those who mistakenly identified his position both with structuralism and with semiotic approaches to meaning that were being popularized by Robert Bellah and Clifford Geertz (Rawls, Turowetz, 2021), a timing that obscured the similarity between Parsons and Goffman.

For a time Goffman enjoyed more popularity than the others and could have served as an ambassador to the discipline on their behalf. Unfortunately, his more conventional stance on meaning gave the false impression that his position on Self was less interactional than it was, and studies of «self» that claimed to be inspired by his work have often treated the self as pre-existing interaction. This neutralized much of the good effect of Goffman's popularity, as the fragility of Goffman's Self, was central to the overall project of achieving an alternate interactional approach capable of transcending consensus to ground diversity in modernity.

The conception of Interaction Orders published at the end of Goffman's life could be read as an attempt to use the prestigious occasion of his Presidential Address to give them all a final boost, theorizing work on queues and other situated Interaction Order phenomena that Garfinkel and his students and colleagues had been studying for decades. It was in a sense Goffman availing himself of the privilege, knowing he would not live to hear the complaints, of *speaking for all of them at the end*. It was a masterful statement that made use of his well-deserved prominence to pull together decades of their research under one succinct theoretical rubric.

9. Conclusion

The implications of Goffman's alternate interactionism for research should be obvious. If participants are making fragile social facts by ordering the moves they make according to constitutive expectations they share with other participants – then researchers should focus on *the order properties of situations* to find out just how this is being done. Generalizing across data sets without doing this will lose the phenomenon[37]. This is important, as currently well-funded efforts are underway to create generalized data sets for qualitative research that will not be able to support research on the constitutive practices that make modernity possible. If something participants would identify as an «intention» is being understood by them on the basis of *a series of ordered moves*, then a researcher needs to document the series of moves to show how intention is being conveyed to (or recognized by) others through those moves – rather than

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[37] Although it is also questionable why one would want to generalize afterwards. In most cases understanding what is going on answers the questions that generalization would have been used to answer – and the answer comes out very different.

asking the individual for a narrative account of how they did it[38]. The point is that participants are not using intention to make sense of action – they are *using the orderly character of situated action to derive intentions* – and they typically do this without awareness.

Since most of what participants do in interaction is taken-for-granted, accounts generated by structured interviews are of limited value. Even in cases where trouble has alerted participants that *something* is going on, they often do not know what the trouble is in any detail and tend to fall back on stereotypical and generic accounts to explain the trouble (Rawls, David, 2006). The details of how the marginalized manage trouble that Goffman and Garfinkel were able to reveal through their research required letting go of conventional assumptions about abstraction and generalization and focusing on what most sociologists consider trivial details[39].

It is therefore important to emphasize once again the significance of the heightened awareness generated by the marginality of Jewish, Black Female and Other scholars for alerting them to the situated accomplishment of social order and meaning. It is incorrect to characterize Marx, Durkheim, and Weber as «dead White men». Similarly, Goffman, Garfinkel, and Sacks brought the insights of the marginalized to their work. When we deny this, we all lose out on the special insights these marginalized scholars have had to offer.

During their discussion at the SPC, Parsons showed that he also understood the special relevance of being Jewish to ethnomethodology and the practice of an alternate interactionism. In addition, he demonstrated a deep understanding of Sacks' point that meaning is situated in interaction – the point Goffman had some trouble with. In the disagreement over the meaning of a suicide that ensued, Parsons can be found sometimes siding with Goffman and Shneidman and sometimes with Garfinkel and Sacks. *That in itself is interesting*. Who would have expected to find Parsons occupying the middle ground between Garfinkel and Goffman on the importance of the order properties of social fact making? Or, for that matter on any other point?

Philip Manning speculated that if Goffman and Parsons ever discussed such matters, Goffman would be the clear winner, although he also pointed out

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[38] As Weber (1968, p. 8) noted, if a man with an axe goes to a woodpile in a place where axes are used to cut wood for fires an intention can be attributed to the man. Of course, the attribution can be wrong. But, the constitutive practices of interaction offer many resources for both attribution and correction, and attention to the details of ongoing interaction will show that corrections and sanctions are frequent, orderly, and witnessable.

[39] In our research on Race, Waverly Duck and I used narrative accounts (stories) that are directly tied to interactional trouble to locate witnessable sequential features of interaction that are producing trouble. This procedure was described by Garfinkel in 2002, and referred to as «coat hangers». Instead of asking questions, the researcher tells a story about an interactional trouble, and if the person they are talking to recognizes something about the trouble in the story they will tell the researcher a story about trouble. A collection of such stories can be used to reveal sequential troubles in an interaction that are otherwise not accessible because the constitutive expectations are not known to the researcher. Garfinkel used the procedure in talking to elite scientists about whose work he did not have competence. We used it in interactions involving Race for the same reason.

similarities between their positions: «It is easy to make the mistake of thinking that Goffman was Parsons' nemesis. Once this mistake has been made, then the choice becomes just one or the other. And, it's fair to say that head to head Goffman will win...» (2016, p. 93). However, on the actual occasion of the SPC meeting, when Parsons and Goffman did meet and discuss at length and «head to head» just the sort of issues P. Manning imagined, it was Parsons who took a more thoroughly interactional position than Goffman – showing his understanding of the situated character of meaning to be closer to that of Garfinkel and Sacks.

His main point, however, that those who see Goffman and Parsons in stark opposition are making a mistake, is important. Goffman was indebted to Parsons. But, what this means is confused by misconceptions of Parsons. For P. Manning it means there are structural «Parsonian bones» in Goffman's work (2016, p. 93):

Once the telling phrases and beautiful examples are stripped away, all of Goffman's books have Parsonian bones with (neo-Kantian) classificatory typologies. The difference might just be that in Parsons' hands, they would have become items in an appendix of boxes and boxes within boxes (see Williams, 1988).

A tendency toward typologies does emerge in Goffman's objections to Sacks during the SPC meeting. However, Parsons did not agree with Goffman on this point, and attributing this tendency in Goffman to Parsons' influence is problematic. To be a theorist in the tradition of Parsons does not mean using neo-Kantian typologies, or sorting «items in an appendix of boxes and boxes within boxes». It is true that many who called themselves «Parsonian» have theorized this way. However, Parsons' adoption of Durkheim and his embrace of an independent approach to social interaction, should tell us that Parsons did not.

The tendency to overlook Parsons' interactionism – and his understanding of the order properties of the situated accomplishment of meaning – has obscured his relationship to Goffman. Goffman's position on Self, and Garfinkel's ethnomethodology, were both consistent with the direction Parsons took after 1958. Furthermore, what happens in their actual interaction at the SPC meeting once the conversation turns to how the meaning of a suicide is settled, makes it clear that we need a new interpretation of Parsons (Turowetz, Rawls, 2021b; Rawls, Turowetz, forthcoming). We would expect the Parsons depicted by P. Manning to be the one arguing that there must be a «further reality». However, in the event it is Goffman who argues that at least some acts/concepts can be independent of interaction and timeless in that regard, while Parsons finds himself more in agreement with Garfinkel and Sacks.

The takeaway for researchers is that even within the alternate interactionism the trap of timeless «classifications» and «boxes within boxes» is an ever-looming one that Goffman may himself have fallen into. In the end, in his Presidential Address on the «Interaction Order», he seems to plead with us to work at both extremes and in the middle, as and when the research subject

demands: but, *always* centering interaction and *never as micro or macro sociologists*.

Issues of marginality and injustice can become deeply embedded in the details of *how* particular situated interactions are organized, and are a rich subject for research. So are studies of science, technical work, and language, with a particular focus on what can be revealed by *trouble*. Centering interaction means focusing on what is actually going on between participants: how they are *making their moves evident to one another step-by-step in an interaction*. If interaction is an independent domain of action, with its own ordering practices and constitutive expectations for making fragile social facts, as all four sociologists maintained, then overlooking the order properties of interaction, and instead treating meaning as a quality of concepts, acts, or intentions that exist independently of situations has been a dead end for sociology.

The consequence has been a conventional sociological approach that not only assumes a need for consensus (that is both impossible and unfair in a context of diversity), but obscures the essential practices that actually make coherence and solidarity possible without consensus. Insisting on generalizability and abstraction and treating the details of particular situations as irrelevant to the «big questions» of social order and meaning prevents social theory and research from realizing the potential of the alternate interactional approach[40]. To meet the pressing questions of today, sociology needs to incorporate more awareness of interactional processes, and in particular of those constitutive practices and implicit social commitments that comprise Interaction Orders. Thankfully, younger scholars – more respectful of the heightened awareness that marginalized scholars bring to sociology – are doing just that.

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[40] There are approaches that call themselves semiotic, like Peter K. Manning's, that begin with interaction to build a semiotic analysis. However, classic semiotic approaches begin with an assumption about the timeless qualities of classifications, oppositions, etc. It is the latter that is incompatible with research that centers interaction to focus on the fragile social fact making processes of modernity.

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