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On loyalty and betrayal in postwar social science, mainly in Chicago

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Abstract

This article examines the writings on loyalty and betrayal of sociologist Erving Goffman and political scientist Morton Grodzins. Both thinkers made unique contributions to the understanding of those topics while simultaneously offering critical appraisals of early Cold War America. Examining these writings in historical and intellectual context, and reading them against each other, reveals important elements of this work that are worthy of a fresh appreciation. Within this analysis, the article reflects on social criticism during treacherous times, from open resistance to subtle intellectual legerdemain.

Keywords

Anticommunism, betrayal, brainwashing, disloyalty, Erving Goffman, loyalty, McCarthyism, Morton Grodzins

Introduction

This article examines early Cold War social science literature on loyalty and betrayal, with special focus on the writings of Erving Goffman. It examines those subjects as they are expressed mainly in his writings of the 1950s and surrounding years. The examination is partly analytical and partly historical. It explores the concepts that Goffman employed to understand issues of loyalty and betrayal as well as the social and intellectual context of that work. The article turns on key features of the early Cold War America within which Goffman wrote, though not just on the general context of those times but, more importantly, on key features of Goffman's specific situation at Chicago and later as he conducted research for the chapters that made up his book *Asylums* (Goffman, 1961a). The special burden of this article is to show that examining Goffman's work within these particular social and historical contexts provides fresh insight into his work.

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In an effort to identify Goffman's distinctive approach to these subjects, the analysis compares Goffman's writings on loyalty and betrayal to those of political scientist Morton Grodzins. Grodzins is not well known among contemporary sociologists. He was a University of Chicago political scientist whose academic star was ascendant in the 1950s, and who died prematurely in 1964 at age 46.[1] Despite the inattention to his work today, there are several important reasons to revisit his writings in this context. First, he was not a minor character in the years of interest here. Grodzins was one of the most articulate and productive postwar social scientists writing on loyalty and treason. In *Americans Betrayed* (Grodzins, 1949), a revision of his doctoral dissertation, he set forth a rare critique of the official treatment of Japanese-Americans after Pearl Harbor. He argues there that certain conditions of America, and some of the country's most central groups and agencies, created disloyal behavior in its members. His later study, *The Loyal and Disloyal: Social Boundaries of Patriotism and Treason* (Grodzins, 1956), is a classic of social science analysis. Second, he was deeply connected to the University of Chicago faculty in the Social Sciences Division, serving briefly as its dean (1953–1954) and even as head of the University of Chicago Press for a while (1951–1953). He was one of the most outspoken representatives of the pluralist philosophy of many of the faculty, especially as that philosophy applied to the subject of loyalty. As Goffman too came from this fertile soil, this comparison provides a way to examine how Goffman's approach stands out as distinctive from those others. And, last, Grodzins set forth a view that locates the wellsprings of loyalty and disloyalty in face-to-face relations. Here we introduce the term "Chicago consensus" to identify a distinct academic focus on the role of "primary groups" in the stability of western democracies, a focus that employed the shorthand "face-to-face" in a way that differed from Goffman's use of the term but with which Goffman was, often enough, mistakenly allied.

It is admitted that Edward A. Shils might also have served these comparative purposes. His penetrating book *The Torment of Secrecy: The Background and Consequences of American Security Policies* (Shils, 1956) directly examined the roots of the loyalty/security crisis of the postwar and early Cold War America. Indeed, Shils there argued for the distinction between loyalty and security, affirming the need for the latter and deriding efforts to enforce the former. As they were published in the same year, his book was often reviewed along with Grodzins' *The Loyal and the Disloyal*. But the problems that Shils examined were posed at his usual macro level of analysis and, as such, they do not provide easy comparison to Goffman's work. Shils wrote of "spheres" and Goffman of situations. Grodzins on the other hand specifically analyzes loyalty in its expression in face-to-face groups and relations. Although the political scientist defined these terms differently than did Goffman, those differences are revealing and instructive for our purposes. A full examination of Goffman and Shils is truly needed but beyond the bounds of the specific purpose of the present investigation. Still, Shils does occupy a limited though important role here in the current analysis, as will soon be clear.

After an opening section examining the view of Goffman's work that is advanced here, the analysis continues with three other main sections. The first examines the 20th century anticommunism crusades aimed at the University of Chicago. These crusades recurred irregularly from the 1930s through the 1950s but always focused on the faculty and curriculum. The last such crusade in 1953, the year of Goffman's dissertation

defense, impacted two of Goffman's professors, Ernest W. Burgess and Donald Horton, both of whom actively resisted not only the charges against them but also the very right of government commissions to make those charges. These circumstances, it is argued, formed the specific background conditions of Goffman's writings on loyalty and resistance. The second examines Grodzins' writings on loyalty and disloyalty, including his book *Americans Betrayed*, published in 1949—just as the loyalty/security crisis of those years was coming to a head. Communist spies in government positions were uncovered in Canada, England, and the U.S. and government hearing and trials—including the first nationally televised congressional hearing of Whittaker Chambers and Alger Hiss in 1948 (Tanenhaus, 1997: 266)—were underway to expose other such spies. In this section, Grodzins' approach to loyalty and disloyalty is further examined in relationship to the Japanese-American Evacuation and Resettlement Study led by Dorothy Swaine Thomas of the University of California, Berkeley. Thomas was a member of Grodzins' dissertation committee, but subsequently they ended up in a heated feud and parted both personally and intellectually. Our purpose in layering these comparisons, one upon the other, is to bring to light distinguishing features of the texts that might be lost by looking at them alone.

An examination of Goffman's own writing on loyalty and betrayal makes up the next section of the article. The distinctive examination of loyalty in *Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* becomes sharpened when contrasted to the "Chicago consensus" as found in Grodzins' writings. Special attention is given to the ways that Goffman's approach transcended the polarity between loyal and disloyal, patriot, and spy, that is found in the consensus approach. Grodzins was stuck in the polarity and ended up arguing that most people were, as Riesman put it in his memorial address, "a little bit loyal and a little bit disloyal," an ultimately unsatisfying position. Goffman, in contrast, explored the reality of interactional resistance—a third way through the loyalty/security crisis of the early Cold War. This section also explores the problem of American soldiers returning home from the Korean War and Goffman's brief contact with early researchers into "brainwashing" and mind control at Walter Reed Army Institute of Research in Washington, DC. The relationships Goffman formed there, and the brainwashing research he reviewed, helped to shape his own views as expressed in *Asylums*. In a conclusion, we reflect on all of these analyses in terms of their role as social criticism in times of national crisis. At bottom, the article examines the ways social scientists wrote in the chill of the early Cold War in ways that shielded them from scrutiny while still offering powerful critiques against the status quo.

A view of Goffman

In the "Conclusion" to *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, Goffman summarizes the framework that he has presented in the book's six chapters. He writes about teams of performers who present to an audience a given definition of the situation. This will include, he writes, "the conception of own team and of audience and *assumptions concerning the ethos that is to be maintained by rules of politeness and decorum*" (Goffman, 1959: 238, italics added). When Goffman was conceiving and writing these words, the "ethos" of American society had drastically changed. Rules of politeness and decorum were undermined while

society was in the throes of years of anti-communist fervor. The University of Chicago itself, along with some of its top professors, including two of Goffman's, was raked over the coals in two inquisitions during Goffman's time there alone. But more broadly, the House Un-American Activities Committee, since 1938, and Senator Joseph McCarthy's accusations and investigations, from 1950 to 1954, sanctified anti-communism as the country's ruling credo, relentlessly destroying lives and livelihoods while upending bonds of the liberal social order (Schrecker, 1986, 1998). In Goffman's (1959: 167) words, this was one of society's "moments of great crisis."

Gone were the sentiments voiced by novelist E M Forster (1938: 66) on the eve of World War II, "If I had to choose between betraying my country and betraying my friend, I hope I should have the guts to betray my country." In its place were subjects compelled by congressional committee and FBI investigators to betray friends and associates, naming them as communist, communist sympathizers, or fellow travelers (e.g. Navasky, 2003). For many, under wide-spread fear of communist subversion, loyalty to the nation supplanted loyalty to family and friends. Moreover, the secrets one learns about others through the normal course of life, and which are usually left unsaid thanks to rules of discretion, were now pried open by congressional committee and revealed out of fear for career and livelihood. Learning peoples' secrets was so widespread it even became entertainment, as is evidenced by the popular American television game show, "I've Got A Secret" (1952–1967). The ethos of the emerging national security state supplanted the liberal order of Goffman's youth, which had been protected by the politeness and decorum he so admired. In place of decency and discretion, in place of a general right to know and standards of fair play, were now secrecy, distrust, doubt, suspicion, uncertainty, aggression. Not only distrust of one nation to another, but of person to person. For Goffman this meant, most centrally, a deep distrust of what people say with their words. It naturally leads to questions of loyalty and trust and how those can be demonstrated. The years of total war had been followed by decades of ongoing aggression just short of all-out war. In his dissertation, Goffman (1953: 40) would famously describe social interaction as "an arrangement for pursuing a cold war." The American ethos had indeed changed.

In 1954, the year Goffman shared a typescript of his first book with select friends,[2] Senator McCarthy was squelched at the Army-McCarthy hearings, censored by his colleagues in the Senate and ostracized by his party. Tellingly, it was McCarthy's violation of senatorial politesse, not his rabid anticommunism, that provided the warrant for his censure (Tye, 2020: 447–457). As the long nightmare of attacks on decency and decorum was ending, new threats were looming. The Cold War between the U.S. and the Soviet Union was heating up. The Korean War of 1950–1953 sought to contain the spread of communism beyond the 38th parallel, while the returning POWs sparked fears of a new fifth column threatening the country (Kinkead, 1957, 1959). In this same year as McCarthy's decline, the U.S. carried out Operation Castle, a new series of tests of terribly powerful thermonuclear weapons at the Bikini Atoll. The nuclear arms race carried implications for every aspect of social life; indeed, it imperiled the very existence of the human situation.

Goffman's entire intellectual and professional development was carried out within this Cold War. If with historians we mark the beginning of the Cold War with the Truman

Doctrine in 1947 and ending with the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, then the adult Goffman never knew a world outside of that great and fearsome divide. He died in 1982.

Others (Cavan, 2014; Shalin, 2014; Winkin, 2010) have explored Goffman's experiences and encounters as a youth, but global events and actions created the America that formed the fertile backdrop of his work as an adult. From the Marshall Plan of 1947 to the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 and beyond, Goffman's writings in this period took soundings deep into the world he encountered and took careful measure of the times. This article is focused mainly on President Truman's America during the early years of the Cold War. His "Loyalty Order," Executive Order 9835 of 1947, both legitimated and empowered the loyalty investigations that followed, including the culmination in McCarthyism. And his war in Korea impacted not just the world abroad but also at home, shaping America's historical path and cultural constructs. These and other decisions of his presidency helped to create the range of problems—secrecy, aggression, loyalty, and subversion—on which Goffman would work and even at times the language with which he would write about it (e.g. Jaworski, 2021). Take a look at Goffman's early work and one sees a wide cast of Cold War characters: conspirators, spies, interrogators, informers, eves-droppers, colluders, traitors, communists, conscientious objectors, and more.

Some of Goffman's most astute critics and commentators have charged his work as deficient because it fails to articulate levels of analysis beyond face-to-face interaction. Focused as it is on the interactional minutia of social life, these commentators maintain, Goffman's work fails to include an examination of the institutional and societal levels of analysis. His work is thus seen as limited at best and wrong at worst. But these criticisms mostly miss Goffman's thinking on this matter. It does little service to describe Goffman's subject matter as dealing with the "mundane" aspects of social life. To be sure, his examples often include commonplace activities, such as commerce in cigarettes (Goffman, 1961a: 271), staring at others (Goffman, 1963: 88), or asking for the time of day (Goffman, 1981: 63). Goffman conceded that his subject matter can often be seen as "picayune and petty" (Goffman, 1963: 247). Even Simmel himself addressed the small and inconsequential qualities of the dyad—the way the stuff of close relationships can be so often repeated that they attain a "tone of triviality" (Simmel, 1950: 125–126). Still, however trivial these conversational games may be, Goffman (1981: 327) reminds us, they occupy a significant part of our lives.

It would be wrong to suppose that these trivial interactions are the only subject of Goffman's study. They are but entry points into the profound matters he was unquestionably analyzing. Whether he was exploring "small acts of living" in *Asylums* (discussed below), or alienation from the "sociable moment" in *Interaction Ritual*, or the "little maneuvers" of radio announcers in *Forms of Talk*, Goffman hinted that his investigations provided insight into "wider matters" (Goffman, 1967: 138). Turn again to the opening discussion of some of the greatest challenges in the post-World War II era: secrecy, distrust, doubt, suspicion, uncertainty, aggression, loyalty, and disloyalty. All of these "wider matters" were examined in countless studies by postwar social and behavioral scientists. We will discuss some of them in this article. But these same issues are cogently examined in Goffman's work as well—all within the interaction order. Goffman's originality was to explore the central issues of the age uniquely at the interactional level. Accordingly, he examined secrecy not by studying the Atomic Energy Commission but

via the multiple kinds of secrecy at the level of face-to-face interaction, including the "dark secrets" we carry within us (e.g. Goffman, 1959: 141–166). In an era of patriotism, he wrote original analyses of interactional loyalty and betrayal. And in a time of anticommunism, he carefully crafted a sociology that was critical of Anglo-American society. In contrast, then, to the view of Goffman as a master of mundane matters, the view advanced here is that Goffman was one of the Cold War's most perceptive and profound social theorists.

In this perspective lay both his originality and his security. For in the politically treacherous times of the Cold War, Goffman could seem to be writing about politically antiseptic issues of mundane social life, when in fact it was anything but that. The very mundanity of his subjects shielded from view the subversive elements of his work.[3] Goffman's work was a response to, an engagement with, and a commentary on the American Cold War. But more than this, his engagement created an opportunity for conceiving an original sociology of everyday life. By extracting Goffman from his roots in Cold War America, commentators have often missed important elements of this sociology, including his analysis of loyalty and betrayal. This article endeavors to make a modest effort to correct this omission.

The University of Chicago and 20th century anticommunism crusades

Over the course of almost 20 years, the University of Chicago was a target of three successive waves—1935, 1949, and 1953—of anticommunist crusades. In each case, faculty and curricula were investigated, publicly and in secret, for spreading subversive ideas and supporting seditious activities. Further, in each crusade the university community mounted a vigorous defense, though the manner of defense would change in each successive attack.

The first was the Walgreen investigation of 1935, a full-blown public inquisition of the University of Chicago with backing by professional patriots, red-baiting Hearst newspapers, and the Illinois State Senate (Boyer, 2015: 267–276; Howe, 1935). The target was the Great Books approach of Social Science I, which, although subsequently charged with conservatism, was then charged with radicalism. The curriculum was singled out for its "subversive" entries, such as including sections of the *Communist Manifesto* on its reading lists. The faculty were employing these texts to indoctrinate their students, or so argued Chicago businessman Charles Walgreen, his young niece and the Illinois State Senate. A vigorous defense was waged by university President Robert Maynard Hutchins, faculty and administration, who framed the matter as an attack on academic freedom. After pointing out that the university had 901 teachers who taught 3492 courses, Hutchins announced that he could find nothing subversive in the outlines of 161 of those courses that deal with social economic and political problems. "On behalf of the faculty," he concluded, "I repudiate the charges made against them" (quoted in Howe, 1935: 346). In the end, the university was exonerated of the charges. Having gained national attention, a triumphant Hutchins was featured on the cover of a June 1935 *Time* magazine, and was flatteringly profiled within it.

Subsequent attacks on the university were made during far more dangerous times. President Roosevelt had died on April 12, 1945 and Harry S. Truman was then in office at a time when the Republican Party controlled Congress and made anticommunism its driving dogma (McCullough, 1992: 551–553). It was at this time that Joseph McCarthy and Richard M. Nixon came into national power. In March of 1947, President Truman issued Executive Order 9835 establishing the Federal Employee Loyalty Program, which gave Presidential imprimatur to loyalty investigations, broad-reaching authority to a Loyalty Review Board, and a charge to the Department of Justice to draw up a list of "each foreign or domestic organization, association, movement, group or combination of persons which the Attorney General. . .designates as totalitarian, Fascist, Communist or subversive" (quoted in Fried, 1997: 29–30).

Many academics, including those in the social sciences, had been in consulting positions during Roosevelt's New Deal era in a wide range of federal agencies, such as the Consumers' Advisory Board, Census Bureau, Federal Relief Administration, Children's Bureau and Bureau of Labor Statistics, among many others. Government service and academic scholarship were then viewed as not only compatible but patriotic (e.g. Burgess, 1935: 211). In this new era under Truman's Executive Order, past information on employees collected by the government as provided for by the Hatch Act of 1939, as well as information gathered from new investigations, were scrutinized under a broadened conception of subversion.[4] Even political liberalism and past alignment with Roosevelt's New Deal policies were then considered suspicious positions. Further, one had to contend not only with the specious lists produced by "super patriots," such as Dilling (1934), whose self-published *The Red Network* registered a "who's who" in radicalism, but also with the U.S. Attorney General's still suspect but official and extensive list of subversive organizations, including so-called communist "front" organizations (see Schrecker, 2002: 191–196). In his penetrating study of loyalty tests in American history, Hyman (1960: 333) identified the post-World War II era as a time of "unprecedented search for disloyalty in America."

For Goffman, 1949 was a pivotal year (Winkin, forthcoming). He submitted his Master's thesis and, in October, left Chicago for Edinburgh on way to the Shetland Islands for his dissertation research. But in the spring of that year, accusations of subversion and attempts to impose loyalty oaths again shook the University of Chicago. This time, the attacks came from the Broyles Commission, an Illinois State anticommunist crusade, now with the full weight of the federal government behind it. Officially named the "The Seditious Activities Investigation Commission," the inquisition "devoted two years to secret investigation of subversive activities throughout the state" (Harsha, 1952: 55) and then a series of public investigations in April and May into alleged subversion at the University of Chicago and Roosevelt College. In response to the charges, seven full professors at the university who had been mentioned by name in one of the accusations were instructed to file affidavits in reply. Goffman's former professor, Ernest W. Burgess, the noted sociologist and then chairman of the Department of Sociology, was one of those professors. He and the others were subpoenaed by the Broyles Commission and called for interrogation during the public hearing. The university community, facing fresh charges that its professors were indoctrinating students with subversive ideas, mounted an organized resistance and defense, again led by Hutchins who was now

university chancellor, and Laird Bell, the new chairman of the board of trustees (Boyer, 2015: 279).

Burgess had long shown an interest in Russian society, especially the post-revolution family. He knew the Russian language and, in the 1930s joined by his sister, twice visited Soviet Russia. Moreover, he was affiliated with an organization promoting amity between Russia and the U.S.—the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship, which made the U.S. Attorney General's subversive list. For the arch anticommunists of the era, this was sufficient evidence of Burgess's danger. He was listed as a "radical" in Dilling's (1934: 269) *The Red Network* and repeatedly investigated by the FBI from 1943 to 1953. Shils (1981: 184–185) described Burgess as a "gentle little man, with a soft, shy smile"; but he was anything but a pushover. He was twice placed on the FBI Security Index and, as a result of his forceful challenges, twice removed (Keen, 1999: 33–53). Experienced in dealing with Red-baiters, Burgess was the first of the professors to testify at the public inquisition.

There would be no question of his position on the accusations: "I have never been and am not now a communist," Burgess's testimony begins. "I have never been and am not now in sympathy with Communism" (Harsha, 1952: 118). On the matter of his affiliation with the listed organization, Burgess "admitted the charge and referred to the endorsement of the organization by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in November, 1944 and by General Dwight D. Eisenhower in November, 1945" (Harsha, 1952: 123). Moreover, he stated, "I further believe that the Attorney General made a mistake when he listed this organization as subversive, and I hold also, as an American citizen, I have a free right to judge what evidence there is" (Harsha, 1952: 123).

A contemporaneous evaluation of the Broyles Commission that examined all public testimony as well as transcripts of the commission's secret sessions, which had been remarkably made available, had this to say about the hearings: "Despite vague references to education as the 'danger spot' for communist infiltration and unsubstantiated allegations of 'redness' in schools, the startling fact emerges that the commission could not discover a single teacher in Illinois who was a Communist or advocated communism in his teaching" (Harsha, 1952: 136). In the end, this evaluation concludes, "the Broyles commission stands condemned by its own record as an anti-subversive investigation agency which failed to find subversion yet lacked the good grace to say so" (Harsha, 1952: 139).

It didn't take long for the next wave of anticommunist hysteria to hit the University of Chicago. As mentioned earlier, Goffman had left Chicago in late 1949 to conduct research for his doctoral dissertation on an island in the Shetlands. He spent Fall 1951 through Spring 1952 in Paris writing it up and returned to Chicago in 1952. That year, he married Angelica Schuyler Choate, became a father and worked as research assistant to Edward Shils (Winkin, forthcoming). The next year, he was ready to submit his doctoral thesis, stand for its defense, and take his French language examination. While these final steps were being taken, a new anti-communism investigation was launched and his former professor Burgess was again interrogated, as was Donald Horton, a young assistant professor in the Department of Sociology who was to serve on Goffman's dissertation committee and administer his French language examination that very year. Horton had come to Chicago via Penn and Yale, where he took a PhD in anthropology (1943). During part of World War II, he was a researcher with Carl Hovland's team in the Experimental Section of Samuel Stouffer's project with the U.S. War Department, working on evaluating the

U.S. Army's training films for troops in the U.S. and European theater (Shepard, 1998: 254). Further, he co-wrote *Fear in Battle* with Yale's John Dollard (Dollard and Horton, 1944), a study of fear and courage in battle. Horton's own battle with the anticommunist inquisition was soon to come.

The approach of the university this time was not to defend its academic freedom as in 1935, nor to forcefully deny accusations of communist sympathy as in 1949, but open and outright resistance. During the hearings the faculty, now accompanied by university-provided expert legal counsel, employed the legal defense of the fifth amendment to the Constitution and made outright attacks on the Jenner Committee's legitimacy. At every turn, the hearing transcripts show, the professors and university-appointed counsel objected to the committee's procedures and challenged its authority. Donald Horton's statement, after being instructed by the interrogator to name names, is emblematic of the resistance:

> I regret to say that I must decline to answer this question on three grounds: One, on the ground of my privilege against self-incrimination under the fifth amendment of the Constitution; secondly, a moral ground, that it is deeply repugnant to one of my strongest convictions to play the role of informer; and thirdly, because I challenge the authority of this committee to conduct the inquiry (Subversive Influence, 1953: 344).

Horton's statement, the official transcript reveals, led to a "demonstration by the audience" of mostly students. Repeated attempts to get Horton to name names were unsuccessful: he repeated his three objections and was, ultimately, excused. Had Horton been charged and tried, he most certainly would have been jailed. Although Horton emerged as something of a folk hero, his status came with a warning about the potentially ruinous consequences of revelations about past allegiances.

Even the committee's secret executive sessions were openly and brazenly challenged. "Wants No Secrecy" was the caption above the photograph of Ernest W. Burgess in the *Chicago Daily Tribune* on June 9, 1953, the day Burgess was in court facing charges (Wood, 1953: A2). He was one of ten people who were called before the committee's executive session, which was held in private "merely for the protection of the innocent," the committee chairman stated (Subversive Influence, 1953: 337). Burgess and two other professors were questioned there but they were not called before the public session later that day. But Burgess and the others wanted their day in court, so they protested and issued a statement to the press. Burgess wanted an open hearing "in order to do what I can to counteract the rising tide of public hysteria in the United States," he said to reporters (Wood, 1953: A2). "My life in this great city of Chicago and in freedom-loving United States has been an open book. I have nothing to conceal," Burgess said. However, the only hearing he got was in the press.

As public events, university students were surely aware of these hearings and acts of resistance. For Goffman they were likely to be even more salient, as Horton would serve on his dissertation committee and, only 1 month after the hearing, administer his French language examination. I postulate that these events stayed with Goffman and entered into his own developing intellectual point of view. The antipode to this view is that Goffman was unaware of the world around him, a stance that is inconsistent with all that is known about him.

Of course, none of these waves of anticommunism were just local to Chicago; they were a grave national concern. The story of these decades in America is one of repression in all its forms, as well as of resistance to that repression. It is a story of not just the congressional hearings, but also of those who resisted them by refusing to name names. It was not only the internment of people of Japanese descent but also of those who sought to critically analyze the conditions of that injustice. The purge of radicals from government and schools, the denunciations, arrests, suicides, suspicion and secrecy—the common denominator of all these is war, or being on the brink of it, and the need to impose loyalty in a population to maintain order.

There is little question, then, why loyalty became a subject of social science interest during those years at the University of Chicago. Problems of loyalty and disloyalty defined the times. Among those who engaged these subjects were Chicago political scientist Morton Grodzins, who wrote on the wartime internment of Americans of Japanese ancestry in his book, *Americans Betrayed: Politics and the Japanese Evacuation* (Grodzins, 1949) and continued the investigation more broadly in *The Loyal and the Disloyal: Social Boundaries of Patriotism and Treason* (Grodzins, 1956). Goffman's *Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (Goffman, 1959), and other publications are also relevant in this context, as they too address the issue of loyalty and disloyalty in mid-20th century America. Grodzins' title *Americans Betrayed* reveals the moral reversal the author would make: the betrayal symbolized by the internment camps was made by U.S. politicians against the Japanese-Americans, not the other way around. Goffman would also make pointed moral and sociological critiques of mid-century America, as later sections will show.

Morton Grodzins and the social sources of loyalty and disloyalty

The "Chicago consensus"

Grodzins (1956) argues that the question of loyalty to a nation must begin with an understanding of people's loyalty to other social groups. Over the course of history, the author shows, echoing Toennies' argument about the shift from community to society, social conditions have changed in fundamental ways. The first is the proliferation of groups to which an individual may belong and to which the person may build allegiances. Expanding beyond the family, village and guild of the early community, individuals in modern societies may build allegiance to a plurality of primary groups, voluntary associations, and formal organizations, along with the nation state. To this new "diversity of loyalties" (Grodzins, 1956: 14) is added a second recent development, the "softening of loyalties." Here Grodzins points to a new sensitivity to group opinion of what Riesman et al. (1950) had called the "other-directed" character type. This new propensity to conform to group opinion, Grodzins suggests, makes individuals more likely to be collaborators, acquiescing to morally suspect trends, but less likely to be traitors, standing out from the crowd in their heterodox beliefs and actions (Grodzins, 1956: 16).

Grodzins (1956: 27) underscores the view that the sources of loyalty and disloyalty are located in "face-to-face relations of everyday living." But his understanding of this

term is unlike the view advanced by Goffman. For Grodzins, and for other postwar social scientists at the University of Chicago, "face-to-face" was something of a shorthand or code for the problem of primary groups as sources of attachment to the larger society, a view that I call here the "Chicago consensus." Primary groups are those small groups—such as family, club, and friendship—where close, personal, and enduring relationships obtain. These kinds of relations provide satisfactions that larger, more impersonal groups cannot sustain. To quote Grodzins (1956: 129), "[Loyalty] comes largely from [a person's] face-to-face groups. Loyalty to nation is shaped by loyalty to other groups and other ideas." The "Chicago consensus" was a research program on primary groups as providing both a source of solidarity and a needed reinforcing function to larger social and cultural forces at work.

Goffman's notion of the interaction order was a decidedly face-to-face domain (Goffman, 1983: 2). But for Goffman this quality was unrelated to the notion of primary groups as articulated in the "Chicago consensus" view, a research program that examined face-to-face groups as sources of affection and solidarity. But for Goffman "face-to-face" relations can also be collusive and undermining, such as the "illicit transmission systems" employed by some of the patients discussed in *Asylums* (e.g. Goffman, 1961a: 257–262). But more than this, Goffman rejected the primary/secondary group distinction in sociology. He called it an "insight sociology must escape from" (Goffman, 1983: 11). For the rules of the interaction order that were of interest to him directly cut across those made by this distinction.

The postwar sociological examination of primary groups as a source of solidarity was spearheaded by Edward A. Shils, the postwar *éminence gris* of social sciences at the University of Chicago. Shils was then grappling intellectually with the problem of the sources of postwar social stability. He writes, "In the decade following the war. . .I was concerned to delineate the place of personal primary groups in the minimal cohesion of the larger society" (Shils, 1982: xi). Traces of this effort are found in a course of lectures he gave in 1947 and again in 1948 at the London School of Economics on "Primary Groups in the Social Structure" (see Shils, 1957: 137), and in a series of postwar writings on the subject (e.g. Shils, 1950, 1951, 1957). All these efforts critically examine the ways that social thinkers of many persuasions considered or failed to consider what Shils (1951: 46) called, "the very important problem which has more recently come to the fore—the influence of primary group membership on the operation of 'great society'."

Shils had surveyed much of social thought from the 18th through 20th centuries in his effort to come to a satisfactory answer to this problem. He had considered Tönnies, Schmalenbach, Simmel, Le Play, and Weber; Mayo, Lewin, Moreno, and Warner; Stouffer, Bales, Bavelas, and Merton. But two sources stand out as relevant and significant for present purposes. The first is Edmund Burke, the 18th century politician and political philosopher. It is Burke who Shils is quoting, without attribution, in the above line when he employs the term "great society." The notion comes from the philosopher's A Philosophical Enquiry (1757) where he distinguished between "two sorts of societies." One is "the society of sex," with its corresponding passions of love and lust. The other is the "great society," whose corresponding feelings are affection and tenderness (Burke, 1998: 97). Shils was searching in those years for the sources of such affection and tenderness in modern, urbanized, and highly individualized societies.

The second thinker of importance in this context is Charles Horton Cooley, whose book *Social Organization* (first published in 1909) was the first to clearly define and develop ideas on primary groups and the moral ideals they create and sustain. It was Cooley who added the words "face-to-face" to his definition of primary groups, thereby including spatial propinquity into the very core of the term. Shils was mindful of the limitations of Cooley's ideas, such as a too facile connection between primary groups and the larger society, a vision that Philip Rieff characterized as "a serene vision of the self lying peacefully in the maternal bed of society" (Cooley, 1983: xxi).[5] But Shils credits the Progressive-era American sociologist with accurately conveying a central element of such groups. As Shils wrote, for Cooley,

> . . .the small face-to-face group was primary in the sense that moral standards which constitute the consensual framework even of an individualistic society were formed in such groups. . .and are renewed and strengthened by membership in such groups (Shils, 1950: 45; see also Shils, 1957: 133).

This view of the importance of primary groups on social structure was institutionalized at the University of Chicago in the late 1940s and 1950s and became something of a consensus view there. It was incorporated into the curriculum of Chicago's Social Sciences Division, explored in doctoral dissertations, developed in publications of the University of Chicago Press (including Grodzins own books) and debated in extra-classroom conversations.[6] When Grodzins (1956: 262) reflected on the inspiration for his larger investigation of loyalty and disloyalty, he credited, first, the University of Chicago itself, and especially "the learning process that made possible by teaching in the exciting program of general education after World War II." The interdisciplinary program of study had educated him. He then thanked the scholars that were grouped in the university's Social Sciences Division, many of whom—Shils, Riesman, Strauss, among many others—he consulted along the way (Grodzins, 1956: 263).

Representative of this research program was Herbert Goldhamer, Edward Shils's student, and later co-author and colleague, whose 1942 dissertation on participation in voluntary organizations represents an early product of this research problem. There the link between levels of society was conveyed via a mechanistic analogy of a "communication belt" between social groups and the state (Goldhamer, 1964: 225). Later, he would integrate this research problem into his teaching program, such as his "Communication and Social Solidarity" (1948–49), which examined "the analysis of social solidarity with special reference to the communication process in primary and secondary groups" (Announcements, 1948–1949: 285).[7] Grodzins absorbed this approach; his notion of "reinforcing loyalties" (Grodzins, 1956: 68, 277) elevated and extended Goldhamer's mechanical view and emphasized the importance of satisfying domestic or local relationships as mutually reinforcing to national loyalty. This stance was also built upon Edmund Burke's analysis in *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, first published in 1790. There Burke famously wrote about the importance of domestic life and local loyalties providing "mutually reflected" feelings that reinforce ties to the nation (Burke, 2001: 185). Family, club, and friendship provide strong reinforcing links in a series that leads to the nation. While Grodzins was not satisfied with Burke's all-too-easy convergence of

local and larger loyalties, his argument for the importance of multiple loyalties is tied directly to the political philosopher's treatise on the French Revolution (see Grodzins, 1956: 252).

Accordingly, for an understanding of loyalty and disloyalty in mid-20th century America, prominent Chicago social scientists turned to the thinking of the 18th century founder of modern conservatism and the early-20th century Midwestern progressive who sought secular sources of moral guidance. These unlikely sources, however, when viewed in the context of America's Cold War, yield a surprising legacy: they tacitly support subversive conclusions. By underscoring the notion that loyalty to family and friends was vital to a healthy democracy, this perspective ran counter to efforts by the anticommunist accusers to undermine those bonds by, for example, rewarding informers who testify against friends and also by enforcing oaths of direct loyalty to the nation (Hyman, 1960). The segments of society that were under attack by the anticommunism crusades, so this perspective held, were the necessary glue that holds individual to society and state.

Americans betrayed

As a graduate student, Grodzins had participated as a research assistant in the University of California Japanese-American Evacuation and Resettlement Study that was led by Dorothy Swaine Thomas, the sociologist and demographer (Roscoe, 1991). This extraordinary project examined each phase of the military and civilian efforts to intern and administer persons of Japanese descent, both aliens and citizens, after the attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941. The complex project continued throughout and after the war years and resulted in three official published studies: *The Spoilage* (Thomas and Nishimoto, 1946), *The Salvage* (Thomas, 1952), and *Prejudice, War, and the Constitution* (TenBroek et al., 1954). Grodzins (1945) completed his doctoral dissertation at the University of California, Berkeley with materials he collected while he was a research assistant with this study. In fact, Thomas was on his dissertation committee. But the book he wrote with those same materials, *Americans Betrayed: Politics and the Japanese Evacuation* (Grodzins, 1949), was published over the objection of both Thomas and the University of California as a violation of the study's rules. The full story of this episode is a young PhD's worst nightmare—he experienced sustained attacks on his research and reputation by the very people who underwrote his doctoral work. For our purposes, it is sufficient that say that Grodzins emerged as victorious in his battle with Thomas, who unsuccessfully fought to keep the study data from unauthorized use and herself as the study's main author (for detailed studies of the Grodzins affair, see Murray, 1991; Suzuki, 1989).

The purpose of *Americans Betrayed* was not to examine the process of relocation and internment of Americans of Japanese descent, as Thomas and Nishimoto did in *The Spoilage*. Nor was it to examine the life histories of those who were later dispersed and settled in the Chicago area and elsewhere in the Midwest, as was accomplished in the companion volume, *The Salvage*. Grodzins' subject was the political decision to evacuate. As such, *Americans Betrayed* is a study of policy-making during a crisis. In a volume rich with detail, Grodzins analyzes the long-standing and deep-seated animosity against

the Japanese in the Pacific states and the role of opposition groups in fomenting race hatred and pressuring politicians to act against the Japanese. As he writes, "the record demonstrates clearly that state and local officials, in effect, became powerful influences upon federal officials in fostering the evacuation." Ultimately, the decisions of the U.S. President, Congress, and even of the Supreme Court, Grodzins maintains, were driven by the "racial viewpoint of the West Coast" (Grodzins, 1949: 5), and under the cover of national defense: the U.S. military maintained that the evacuation was a "military necessity."

Americans Betrayed also adds elements of what came to be called "decision theory" by exploring the role that ambiguity or lack of adequate information entered into those decisions. Two areas of such ambiguity specifically are discussed. Politicians were uninformed about the actual state of public opinion on the question of the evacuation—the majority of Americans were not in favor of it. In addition, there was inadequate knowledge of the Japanese themselves. The culture and social lives of the people were a virtual unknown to most Americans. Thus, driven by racial prejudice and cultural ignorance, the federal decision to evacuate demonstrates a "negation of political rationality" (Grodzins, 1949: 371). As such, Grodzins (1949: 374) pointedly states, the political decision to evacuate Americans of Japanese descent from their communities and relocate them in concentration camp-style settings for the duration of the war "betrayed all Americans."

Thus understood, there is no inherent conflict between the thesis of *Americans Betrayed* and the Thomas-directed volumes; they examine different subjects and different aspects of the fateful historical episode. It is possible to imagine them as complementary works rather than ones at odds, and indeed this is how they were originally conceived. Examining, on the one hand, the role of racial prejudice and irrationality of the political decision-making process and, on the other, the mad instrumental rationality of the process by which that decision was carried out, seems emblematic of the times. But Thomas's efforts to first silence the book and then discredit it surely accounts for Grodzins' disinclination to go along with Thomas's approach. After *Americans Betrayed*, Grodzins embarked on an investigation of "the nature of national loyalty and disloyalty" (Grodzins, 1955: 580). Thomas and colleagues had no such ontological aspirations.

"Loyalty" and "disloyalty" as administrative designations

For in the Thomas volumes, loyalty, and disloyalty would be examined not as natural classes of behavior or belief but as categories of government administration and control. The study's first published volume, *The Spoilage*, is an extraordinary document. It surveys each stage of evacuation and overall administration of about 110,000 Americans of Japanese descent as they were, first, forcibly removed from their communities, second, moved to "relocation centers," and, finally, interned in concentration camp-style facilities in the U.S. for the duration of the war. Significantly, *The Spoilage* discusses "loyalty" and "disloyalty" only in quotation marks. The book examines those terms not as behavior or belief but as "administrative determinations" (Thomas and Nishimoto, 1946: 53). And it explores how those designations were defined and implemented by the U.S. War Department and the War Relocation Board (WRA) via the rational social science tool of a questionnaire. Two questions in particular were critical to the administrative

determination of "loyalty" or "disloyalty." They were constructed using what survey designers now call a forced-choice response format: yes or no.

- Are you willing to serve in the armed forces of the United States on combat duty, wherever ordered?
- Will you swear unqualified allegiance to the United States of America and. . . foreswear any form of allegiance or obedience to the Japanese emperor?

For the WRA officials who were administering the questionnaire, the answers to these questions simply reflected a person's essential loyalty or disloyalty. But to the individuals and families answering those questions many other considerations entered into their response. Some parents pressured their sons to answer "no" not because of disloyalty but because they feared it spelled certain death in battle; answering "no" would mean that the family would remain intact when the war concluded. Some children did not want to abandon their elderly parents and answered "no" to keep the family together. Some were resentful toward the U.S. for the way they were being treated as U.S. citizens and answered "no" in protest. Some feared answering "yes" would result in reprisal from the Japanese government should they win the war. In all, the questions didn't measure what they were designed to measure; instead the answers revealed allegiances to parents and family, reasonable calculations of outcomes, fears, and resentments (Grodzins, 1955: 572–575; Thomas and Nishimoto, 1946: 53–83).

Thomas's study adumbrates the position most famously advanced later by Foucault (1980) on the relationship between knowledge and power, examining the way systems of classification are linked to the exercise of domination. Admittedly, in a key passage *The Spoilage* seemingly absolves the War Department and WRA of responsibility by characterizing the injustices as "unanticipated" and "almost fortuitous" effects of the government processing of people (Thomas and Nishimoto, 1946: 53). But these words, meant for the censors, barely mask the story that the book tells overall: it exposes an egregious wartime example of the administrative processing of people. Indeed, the phrase "almost fortuitous" belies the implied exoneration, for something that is "almost fortuitous" is almost certainly by design.[8] We see here a tactic devised by intellectuals for escaping from jeopardy during treacherous times. A word or two of exculpation will fool the censors; but scholars who read the entire book carefully will not be equally misled. *The Spoilage* is a condemnation of the very thing those few words seemingly absolve. Considered in this way, Thomas's ideas connect to a different lesson in Burke's *Reflections on the French Revolution*: its critique of rational systems of control. Burke's antipathy to the French Revolution was based not only on the violence of the upheaval but also on the rationalistic rebuilding of the country's political system. As historian and Burke biographer Lock (2006: 291) writes, the "new electoral system created artificial units thereby destroying the regional loyalties and identities, the 'little platoons', that Burke cherished." In its place were divisions derived from abstract principle. Returning to the American wartime moment here under consideration, the U. S. War Department and WRA fashioned a questionnaire—a clumsy tool for a complex job—that similarly abstracted people from their actual social relationships. Embodying the view that national loyalty and disloyalty were as easily identifiable as "yes" and "no," the

questionnaire, as shown above, missed nearly everything about the lives of the people they were administering.

Whereas government agencies defined loyalty and disloyalty within their own administrative categories, and the Chicago social scientists defined them as behavior that reflects conflicting loyalties to primary groups that are aligned or unaligned with the national spirit, the Thomas study detached the terms from individual minds and revealed for posterity how bureaucratic categories entered into social repression. It may be concluded that neither the wartime agencies nor the Chicago social scientists offered reliable answers to the question of loyalty and betrayal. Into this environment, Goffman entered with his own take on these matters.

Goffman on loyalty and betrayal

Goffman's country

There is no sociology of patriotism in Goffman; no concept of the nation or citizenship; no statement of obligations to one's country. This is perhaps not unusual as Goffman had left his native Canada for the U.S. and felt that he was a guest in America.[9] Goffman's relationship to country and citizenry was problematic. Robert Habenstein, a friend from graduate school days at the University of Chicago who stayed in touch with him, had this to say while reminiscing about Goffman's time at the University of California, Berkeley: "While student protest was in high gear and professors' typewriters [were] tossed out of five-story windows, I can't remember Goffman being interested very much as a sociologist or a citizen of California. For all I know, he wasn't a citizen of anywhere" (Habenstein, Letter to Yves Winkin, January 27–29, 1988 courtesy of Dr. Winkin). But Goffman did have a "country" to which he was ever loyal: his life's work in sociology. One sociologist writes about his oeuvre as "Goffman's country" (Flanagan, 2004: 36) and another as "Goffman territory" (Dawe, 1973: 246). Goffman himself viewed his relation to sociology in these same terms. He reflected on his own "bad citizenship" toward sociology in response to a letter from Irving Louis Horowitz, who had written to Goffman about a small service he had provided to the profession (Goffman and Horowitz, 1972).

Goffman (1983) had indeed carved out his intellectual territory—the interaction order—and was totally dedicated to its development. True, Goffman visited other countries, other theoretical approaches, such as game theory and conversation analysis. But when he stepped on the soil of those other lands he was not warmly received, either by the native tribes or by his fellow sociologists. Illustrative is the rather critical response Goffman received at the 1964 conference on "Strategic Interaction and Conflict," where Goffman confronted the leading game theorists of not just his time but all time. When it was Goffman's turn to lead the discussion session on "Enforcement and Communication Systems," it did not go especially well for him, despite having Thomas Schelling as an ally. It appears that the session chairman cut him short (Archibald, 1966: 208) and labeled him as a sorcerer's "apprentice" (Jaworski, 2019).

These issues of country and the interaction order are nicely illustrated in the wartime novel of love and spying, *The Heat of the Day*, by Bowen (1948), one of Goffman's

favorite mid-20th century novelists (according to Dennis Wrong). Stella asks Robert, her lover-spy, why he sold government secrets to the enemy.

> Stella: [W]hy are you against this country?
> Robert: Country?
> Stellla: This is where we are.
> Robert: I don't see what you mean—what *do* you mean? Country?—there are no more countries left; nothing but names. *What country have you and I outside this room?* (Bowen, 1948: 301, italics added)

From the perspective of the interaction order, any social gathering contains no countries or nation states only persons in interaction, with allies at our side and betrayers at our back. Goffman (1983: 6) had this to say about the relation between interactional worlds and nation states: "the interaction order prevailing even in the most public places is not a creation of the apparatus of a state. Certainly, most of this order comes into being and is sustained from below as it were." From this perspective, Goffman argued, the "grander forms of loyalty and treachery" are set aside in favor of examining "small acts of living" (Goffman, 1961a: 181). It is these "small acts" of loyalty and betrayal, of treachery, and resistance, that occupy the pages of Goffman's Cold War writings throughout the 1950s.

In this approach, Goffman revealed his affinity to Ivy Compton-Burnett, the 20th century English novelist of the interwar years (Spurling, 1984).[10] She took as her theme, the poet and novelist Edwin Muir wrote, "the tyrannies and internecine battles of English family life in leisured well-conducted country houses. . . [where] the family conflict is intimate, unrelenting, very often indecisive and fought out mainly in conversation" (Muir, 1949: 3). In a footnote in *Presentation*, Goffman (1959: 203n18)) briefly illustrates interactional betrayal via a side glance by citing Compton-Burnett's (1948) *A Family and a Fortune.* This novel tells the story of one extended family as the members interact exclusively with each other, over the course of 14 months, through loss and gain. The story line features betrayal, sacrifice, gratitude, envy, loyalty, disloyalty, conspiracy, embarrassment, heroism, front, dignity, courage, bravery, insult, courtesy—all within the confines of their little conversational world. A main character Dudley voiced the novel's point of view when he says, "[m]y strong point is those little things which are more important than big ones, because they make up life. It seems that big ones do not do that. . ." (Compton-Burnett, 1948: 46). This was Goffman's point of view as well, as he reveals the issues of the day as they are expressed in microcosm in the small interactional worlds he called gatherings (Goffman, 1963: 244).

Beyond patriot and spy

Goffman's *Presentation* prioritizes teams as the dramaturgical perspective's "fundamental point of reference" (Goffman, 1959: 80), as opposed to the perspective of the individual actor. "When we turn from a one-man team to a larger one," Goffman (1959: 85) writes, so much changes. Instead of the "rich definition of the situation" presented by the individual performer, reality may become "reduced to a thin party line." On the other hand, he admits, "there will be the new factor of loyalty to one's team and one's

teammates to provide support for the team's line." Much of the book's argument hinges on this notion of team loyalty and its fragility. For in the book's chapter on "Discrepant Roles," we find that teams are plagued by disloyal members, such as informers, who have access to team secrets and are willing to inappropriately share them with others. There is also the "go-between," who "tends to give each side the false impression that he is more loyal to it than to the other" (Goffman, 1959: 149).

But the story Goffman presents is more complex than this. *Presentation* breaks with the loyalty-disloyalty frame of reference of the Chicago consensus discussed earlier. Admittedly, democracy is unstable because of the very structure of social interaction: its back regions are fairly bursting with secrets, and team members who are involved under false guise, and those who are legitimately involved, so often gain access to those secrets, and so often reveal them. But survival through troubled times is still possible. The interactional options in life are broader than being loyal or disloyal, a patriot or a spy. Goffman reveals a wide range of survival options. In addition to "techniques of derogation," he identifies secret communications, derisive collusion, "going away" and other ways "in which teammates can free themselves a little from the restrictive requirements of interaction between teams" (Goffman, 1959: 190). Besides these "safe channels of discontent," there are also opportunities for "guarded disclosure" by which two members of an intimate society make themselves known to each other'.[11] He also introduces the term "dramaturgical loyalty," whereby teammates act "as if" they have accepted the obligations of the group (Goffman, 1959: 212–216). Under normal conditions people need no recourse to these evasions and secret communications. But Goffman was not writing in such times. "[A]t times of crisis," he writes, standard collective understandings momentarily break and these forms of "communication out of character" rise in importance (Goffman, 1959: 204). From this perspective, *Presentation* is righty considered a manual of resistance to a time of crisis now called the McCarthy era.[12]

It is plain that Garfinkel's (1956) "Conditions of Successful Degradation Ceremonies" speaks to the many state and congressional hearings of the 1950s. Garfinkel rightly addresses the locus of such denunciation in the courts, the denunciation of "Reds" and the counter-denunciation of informers. He also proposes that this knowledge of the conditions of successful degradation ceremonies can assist in doing something about them, that is to "render denunciation useless" (Garfinkel, 1956: 424). Later examinations of the HUAC hearings and McCarthy era, such as Navasky's study of the blacklisting of the "Hollywood Ten," readily employ Garfinkel's term in their own analyses. "We judge from the nature of the congressional hearings themselves," Navasky (2003: 425) observes, "that their purpose was the obverse of what it was advertised to be. These were not information-gathering investigations so much as they were degradation ceremonies." But Goffman's writings of the 1950s are usually read as detached from this same context, as though the author somehow stood outside of his own time.

Yet, there are almost no features of Cold War culture that don't find their way into Goffman's works.

The theme of resistance to social obligations and constraints runs strong in his work. It represents a third way through the central polarity of the time: the obligation to demonstrate loyalty and to repudiate disloyalty. Not long after the 1956 publication of *Presentation*, Goffman presented a paper at the 1957 annual meeting of the American

Sociological Society, "The Underlife of a Public Institution: A Study of Ways of Making Out in a Mental Hospital" (hereafter "Underlife"), which in an expanded version was published in his *Asylums* (Goffman, 1961a: 170–320). It is ostensibly a study of what he calls the *underlife* of "Central Hospital," which is now known to be St. Elizabeths Hospital, a federal psychiatric hospital in Washington, DC. By *underlife* Goffman meant the collection of practices—he called them "secondary adjustments"—by which the inmate resists or escapes organizational "assumptions as to what he should do and get and hence what he should be" (Goffman, 1961a: 189). It is curious that in this essay about a mental hospital, Goffman would broach the question of "collaboration with the enemy" (Goffman, 1961a: 181). Despite his commitment to the ethnography of a specific research site, Goffman clearly had "wider matters" in mind on which he was to take an unmistakably moral stance (Gamson, 1985).

McCarthyism, brainwashing, and Goffman's Asylums

"Collaboration with the enemy" signals Goffman's engagement with the issues of POWs returning home from the Korean War. In the same years as McCarthyism and anticommunist fervor, America faced widespread concern about national moral decline, a loss of toughness, and national pride (Biderman, 1963: 1–12; Gleason, 1995: 92). These issues were stimulated by rumors and reports from Korea during the conflict, and more forcefully after the armistice of 1953 and repatriation of the POWs, that American soldiers had been easily broken by Chinese interrogators in prison camps and had collaborated with the enemy by signing peace petitions, making radio appeals, participating in peace rallies, accepting special privileges or favors, making false confessions, and so on (Schein, 1956: 164). It was also believed that few soldiers followed the duty to escape; that no organized resistance was made. More than this, 21 Americans decided not to repatriate and remained in Korea after the war. To the super patriots of the day—in the U.S. military, government, and larger public—all of these were anathema and a sign of the country's moral decline. The methods the Chinese used in their interrogations and indoctrination were closely scrutinized and the word "brainwashing" was introduced by Hunter (1951), "a CIA propaganda operator who worked undercover as a journalist" (Marks, 1979: 133), to describe what was happening. Brainwashing quickly developed into a major Cold War cultural motif; much like a funhouse mirror, the fears, and anxieties of the times were distorted into frightful shapes. Questions were asked: What if those returning soldiers were spies who could be activated back at home and programmed to create havoc? That was the issue posed by Condon's (1959) fictional portrayal of Korean War POWS in *The Manchurian Candidate*; but it was also posed by the doomsayers of the press (e.g. Kinkead, 1959: 188).

By 1955, the U.S. media coverage of brainwashing had reached a fever pitch (Gleason, 1995: 101–102). Coincidently, this is when Goffman was a consultant at the nation's center of brainwashing research—Walter Reed Army Institute of Research in Washington, DC. He was there by invitation from David Rioch, the Institute's leader of neuropsychiatry. Rioch had earlier been director of research at Chestnut Lodge psychiatric hospital in Rockville, Maryland, and had been a close associate of Harry Stack Sullivan and his Washington School of Psychiatry. While Sullivan had died by this time (he died in 1949),

there was plenty of opportunity for Rioch to learn that Goffman was in the area and engaged in a study of mental patients at St. Elizabeths Hospital. At Walter Reed, Rioch was building an interdisciplinary team whose members were at the forefront of the emerging field of neuropsychiatry. During the Korean conflict, he sent teams of researchers to the battle area and had himself twice visited the soldiers fighting there, including those who fought the battle of Pork Chop Hill. His empathy for the terrible plight of the soldiers grew on those visits. At Walter Reed he was supportive of research on what was then called shell shock and other forms of severe mental illness among the soldiers. And he welcomed and supported early researchers on Chinese "thought control" or brainwashing: Robert Jay Lifton and Edgar H. Schein.[13] In his published memoir, Schein (2016: 103) recalled, "Rioch regularly brought in academics like Erving Goffman, Fred Fiedler, and Leon Festinger to consult with us on our projects. Goffman was around a lot because at that time he was studying socialization processes at St. Elizabeths Hospital, the big psychiatric facility in Washington." Schein (August 19, 2020, interview with the author) recently shared that, in addition to an occasional group lecture, Goffman would have visited the Institute monthly to meet with those researchers who had signed up to talk with him.

Goffman presented early results of his research in St. Elizabeths Hospital at the October 1956 "Group Processes" conference in Princeton, NJ, organized by Margaret Mead and focused on the problem of communication and persuasion (Schaffner, 1957). His presence as a speaker at the conference, and his presentation on "Interpersonal Persuasion," reveals his connection to the issues faced by the POWs and his interaction with Rioch, Schein, and the others. The transcript of Goffman's presentation shows that his talk covered a lot of territory. He discussed the definition and examples of total institutions, the administrative processing of people, the contingencies that land some people in the hospital and not others, the structure and process of the ward system and other subjects. It also shows that when he covers the area in the title of the talk—interpersonal persuasion—Goffman discussed total institutions as following a similar process that Schein (1956) described is involved in brainwashing, in a paper that Goffman cited in the references of his talk. Total institutions are "impositional systems," Goffman said, where a person enters already with a culture and the total institution "breaks it down" and "builds up" the person with a new culture—here in line with the psychiatric model and in Chinese brainwashing in line with communist ideology.

Other similarities of behavior between mental patients and Korean war POWs may be identified. Schein, Lifton, and other early brainwashing researchers noted that the predominant reaction of prisoners of war to the complex challenges they faced was a kind of behavior the soldiers called "playing it cool." This consisted, Schein (1956: 165) reported, "primarily in a physical and emotional withdrawal" from both the Chinese captors and from the rest of the prisoner group. Goffman (1961a: 64–65, 65n123) relied on the evidence presented by Schein and Lifton in his own discussion of "playing it cool" as the most common form of adaptation to total institutions more generally. Writing of these inmates, Goffman explained, "they may learn to cut their ties to the outside world just enough to give cultural reality to the world inside but not enough to lead to colonization."

It is also at the conference that Goffman first discussed his ideas on betrayal and what he calls there a "treachery funnel" and in *Asylums* a "betrayal funnel" (in Goffman,

1961a: 140, 141n20; Schaffner, 1957: 140). In the institutional passage from person to patient, each figure in the process—from family member, say, to police, to psychiatrist, to the admission suite of the mental hospital—betrays the patient's trust by not only promising that all will be okay, but implicitly asking the patient to go along with the process; with each successive removal of rights and freedoms the patient is expected not to make a fuss. Here too we see parallels with brainwashing victims, such as those singled out for thought reform during the early years of the People's Republic of China reported on by Hunter. One such person was a student assigned to a hard labor camp that included reeducation. The student told Hunter (1951: 39) that "you had to put yourself into the mind of agreeing that you are going there voluntarily to improve yourself." We see that Goffman had gone much further in his thinking about betrayal than was shown in *Presentation*. There, betrayal was shown in a glance; here, it is a sequence of interactional steps that leads, ultimately, to a person's institutionalization in a mental hospital and transformation into a psychiatric patient. Like Grodzins on interned Japanese-Americans, here too Americans were being betrayed.

A final step in Goffman's (1963: 179–190) thinking about these ideas is shown in *Behavior in Public Places*, which draws extensively on the ethnographic material on mental patients that he analyzed in *Asylums*. Here he discusses disloyalty and betrayal while adding in the notion of containment. Containment, of course, denotes the dominant geopolitical strategy of Truman's Cold War America, the policy of actively halting the spread of communism around the world. Goffman discusses everyday encounters as arenas of containment: fragile little worlds whose boundaries—just like larger social entities—require loyalty to go smoothly. Only here loyalty is to the occasion and threat comes not from communism but from corruption, such as the infiltration of fame and money into social occasions. Goffman cites Ross's (2002, but originally published in 1952) account of the U.S. film industry as an illustration of how Hollywood had corrupted everyday morality by leading people who were dining at a famous restaurant to be more interested in the coming and goings of film stars than in the intimates with whom they were dining. Indeed, Ross's own lunch partner, a Hollywood mogul, was, she reports, "the only man in Chasen's who was not at that moment looking around at someone other than the person he was talking to" (Ross, 2002: 23). These and other examples of "engagement disloyalty" illustrated for Goffman (1963: 179) a creeping demoralization, a turning away from "obligations of participants to withhold attention from matters outside of the engagement."[14] Here again we see Goffman's approach to the interaction order, examining the same issues occurring in the larger world only here observed in the little worlds of encounters. Mirroring the concerns about containment, disloyalty, and betrayal in Truman's America were the same issues *mutatis mutandis* at the level of the interaction order.

Goffman's central contribution was to shift the locus of the sociology of loyalty from the nation and the primary group to the occasion.

Although Schein was not present at the "Group Processes" conference, Lifton was there and presented his own talk on "Chinese Communist Thought Reform" (in Schaffner, 1957). Goffman was especially solicitous of Lifton, and he would draw a connection between his own arguments and Lifton's research interest throughout his presentation. Also present was Columbia University psychiatrist Joost A. M. Meerloo (Goodman,

1976). During World War II, Meerloo had served as Chief of the Psychology Department of the Netherlands Forces in England and maintained on interest in the "sociopsychological problems created by a world in upheaval," as he stated in his autobiographical sketch for the conference. Meerloo (1956) had just published a controversial and rather sensational account of brainwashing as "rape of the mind," a position which Schein (1959) would soon debunk. Others present and active in the discussion were anthropologists Gregory Bateson, Ray Birdwhistell, and Margaret Mead, experimental social psychologist Alex Bavelas, research pediatrician Helen Blauvelt, psychiatrist and humanist Jerome D. Frank, the Macy Foundation's Medical Director Frank Fremont-Smith, Chestnut Lodge psychiatrist Frieda Fromm-Reichman, Pavlovian psychologist Howard S. Liddell, public health psychiatrist Harris B. Peck, psychiatrist and editor of the conference proceedings Bertram Schaffner, and Harvard psychiatrist John P. Spiegel.

As this account shows, Goffman's intellectual network was expanding, and it included many who were looking critically at what Schein et al. (1961) called "coercive persuasion" and Lifton (1961) "totalism." Indeed, all these terms being developed then—total institutions, totalitarianism, totalism, coercive persuasion—were tapping into the same central social and political processes of the Cold War: ideological persuasion. All were also rhetorical devices for commenting on and persuasively arguing a point of view. While the term "totalitarianism" was coopted into an ideological device for building support for anticommunism, the others undercut the explicit exoneration of America in that term. In contrast, Goffman, Lifton, and Schein were highlighting phenomena in the West—McCarthyism, prisons, mental institutions, basic training centers, boarding schools, orthodox religious orders—that paralleled the soul-crushing forms in the East. Goffman, Lifton, and Schein found support in the shared critical sensibility of each other's work (e.g. Lifton, 2011: 71–73).[15]

Goffman had also connected with the world of research funded by military and CIA money. Lifton's (1956) research on Chinese thought reform had been partially funded by a grant from the Asia Foundation, which he later learned was a CIA front organization (Lifton, 2011: 46). Biderman's (1956) early work was conducted for the U.S. Airforce, and in 1957 he received a 1-year grant from the Society for the Investigation of Human Ecology, also a conduit of secret CIA money (Biderman, 1963: 275; on Human Ecology, see Price, 2007). Schein had the closest association with the Human Ecology group. As a Harvard-trained experimental social psychologist, and one of the first brainwashing researchers at Walter Reed Army Institute of Research, he became consultant to the Human Ecology group, working closely with administrator James L. Munroe in reviewing and recommending research projects to be funded (Schein, interview with the author, September 10, 2020). It was during this time that Goffman received a grant from the Society for the Study of Human Ecology, whose support, he acknowledged, "allowed me to spend the summer of 1959 working on the manuscript" of *Behavior in Public Places*; he had earlier acknowledged the grant in both "Fun in Games" and "Role Distance," which were published in his *Encounters* (quotation in Goffman, 1963: "Acknowledgments"; citations in Goffman, 1961b: 15n1, 83n1). Thus, the Human Ecology Society took partial funding credit for three of Goffman's publications.[16]

Goffman's "Underlife" essay and chapter is similarly concerned not only with mental patients but with all of us. The subtitle of *Asylums* includes "other inmates," and Goffman

was clearly thinking of individuals not just within but beyond total institutions. "I have argued the same case [as Milosz (1953) on the importance of internal revolt as being essential to spiritual health] in regard to total institutions," Goffman writes. "May this not be the situation, however, in free society, too" (Goffman, 1961a: 320)? Indeed, the whole point of the "secondary adjustments" he catalogs is to show how inmates are similar to those who are not similarly institutionalized.

It was the study of persons *in extremis* that brought out the connections between inmates and everyday life most forcefully for him. "Extreme situations," Goffman (1961a: 181) wrote, "do provide instruction for us." Through the memoirs of "meticulous idealists," he continues, "we come to see the self-defining implications of even the minor give-and-take in organizations." He had in mind the story of anarchist poet and artist Naeve (1950), a conscientious objector during World War II who wrote about his experience in prison. Goffman (1961a: 181) summarizes Naeve's story in this way:

> . . . to move one's body in response to a polite request, let alone a command, is partly to grant the legitimacy of the other's line of action. To accept privileges like yard exercise or art materials while in jail is to accept in part the captor's view of what one's desires and needs are, placing one in a position of having to show a little gratitude and cooperativeness. . .and through this some acknowledgement of the right of the captor to make assumptions about oneself.

Furthermore, he adds,

> [e]ven a kind warden's polite request to show one's paintings to visitors may have to be rejected, lest this degree of cooperativeness seems to underwrite the legitimacy of the jailor's position and, incidentally, the legitimacy of his conception of oneself.

The "meticulous idealists" that Goffman admired evoke the stance of resistance by University of Chicago professors to the anticommunism crusades, especially the 1953 Jenner Commission hearings—where the authority of the accusers was actively questioned; where it was insisted that the television cameras and harsh lights were turned off; where the very right to ask questions was rebuffed; and where the command to name names was met with outright refusal. In the "Underlife" essay, Goffman writes that in agreeing to answer a captor's questions, you are accepting their definition of who you are and acceding to their right to define your identity. Therefore, by rejecting their questions, you are rejecting that definition of self and all of its implications. The "Underlife" essay can be read today in allegorical terms, as a story about a time when the forces of anticommunism tried to define American citizens, and some of them refused to submit through clever means, including outright resistance.

Conclusion

The hunt for disloyal citizens in Cold War America posed a dilemma for many social scientists. How does one write critically about loyalty and disloyalty during treacherous times while avoiding becoming a potential target? Grodzins and Goffman represent two ways of resolving this challenge. Grodzins was personally and professionally courageous. He took on renowned professors of the University of California, and indeed the

university itself, by gamefully aligning with top University of Chicago professors and administrators and crafting rhetorically winning arguments. With this challenge, his entire career was at stake—and he prevailed. At his memorial service referenced earlier, the speakers consistently and vigorously hailed Grodzins' virtue of courage. Intellectually, his examination of loyalty and disloyalty followed the Chicago consensus line; indeed, he was its most articulate advocate. But this consensus view was itself subtly subversive in that it bolstered the very elements of society that the anticommunism crusades tried to undermine: fealty to family and friends above nation. Goffman, on the other hand, was personally and professionally cautious. Whatever qualities he may have had, courage is not one that is mentioned in student and colleague remembrances located in the online Erving Goffman Archives. But intellectually he was original and penetrating, and his writings of the 1950s were subversive in their own way.

Goffman (and Lifton and Schein) were charting the parallel paths of McCarthyism and communist brainwashing, on the one hand, and legitimate American institutions and arrangements, on the other. In this sense, these works were doubly subversive: attacks on both houses, so to speak. Goffman did so subtly, artfully, and through studied legerdemain. He was adept at hiding in open sight, as it were. He found a way to write on loyalty and betrayal without appearing himself to be disloyal: his critique of loyalty was written in the language of the theater, thereby distancing the subject from the serious, real world. If life's a stage, then the analysis doesn't really matter. He was skilled at what Strauss (1952: 36) called writing "between the lines." Goffman placed the search for freedom in the mouths of mental patients, who spoke as proxies for all of us. His shape-shifting works employed first this analogy and then that, and then another, each time covering similar territory but in a new language. He was the master of the "brief indication," burying a passing statement in a long essay that pointed the way only to the devoted reader. Grodzins may have been openly courageous, but Goffman in his careful ways may prevail.

Tellingly, Grodzins intellectual opponents were also careful in crafting their writings. While brazenly engaged in intellectual confrontation, where practically no holds were barred, both Thomas and tenBroek et al., in carefully worded sentences, exonerated key historical actors in one of the most shameful episodes of 20th century American history, the wartime internment of Japanese-Americans. But those brief words of exoneration are mostly contradicted by their own books, whose overall thrust was damning. From these instances, it is possible to draw the conclusion that "writing between the lines" was something of an occupational necessity during those most treacherous times. This obviously raises the important question of interpretation and how to get at the heart of what they said, if the heart is mostly hidden.

In *Presentation*, Goffman highlights the importance of teams and the alignment with teams as a critical element of everyday life. Here we see this same phenomenon at work in the networks revealed within Grodzins and Goffman's writings. Grodzins aligned himself with key University of Chicago professors, such as Riesman and Shils, who represented a Chicago consensus view on the crucial importance of primary groups to democratic social order. This was not the only view on the matter, as is shown by Goffman, who did not follow it, and de Grazia, who strenuously argued against it, much to the annoyance of Shils. Goffman was himself building links to the

researchers at Walter Reed Army Institute of Research and the scholars of the "Group Processes" meetings. For both Grodzins and Goffman, those communities provided the intellectual and moral support associated with being part of a tribe. They also perhaps help solve the knotty problem of interpretation of writing between the lines. Looking at the tribes reveals patterns: similarities of approach, tactics, and answers. In this gestalt we see the unity and uniqueness of all the writings on loyalty and disloyalty examined here. And we see many styles of challenge and opposition in all those writings.

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Notes

1. The author thanks Ann Grodzins Gold for sharing the text of unpublished talks given at a Memorial Service for her father on March 12, 1964. The speakers were Edward Levi, David Riesman, Eugene Rabinowitch, and Hans Morgenthau. I draw on these texts as needed below.
2. Recipients of Goffman's manuscript include friends Robert W. Habenstein (PhD, University of Chicago, 1954), Warren A. Peterson (PhD, University of Chicago, 1956) and Harold Garfinkel. Goffman's (1954) book manuscript was then titled "The Management of Impressions in Social Establishments" and is dated March 1954. Garfinkel's hand-written notes are located in the Harold Garfinkel papers (Collection 1273), Box 157, Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles.
3. Marx (1984: 656) writes of Goffman as a teacher: "Writing, he taught us, could offer a way to quietly and safely express your personality and beliefs. . .under the mantle of being a sociologist. . ."
4. In addition to restricting political campaign activities by federal employees, the Hatch Act also prohibits federal employees from membership in far left or far right organizations, and thus the private political activities and affiliations of those employees are open to investigation.
5. It is fitting that Rieff, who was a product of those years at Chicago (MA 1947, PhD 1954), and later a principal figure there, wrote the "Introduction" to a reprint of Cooley's *Social Organization*. In that introduction, Rieff described Cooley as "a village intellectual, trying to save city civilization from an historic incapacity to generate emotional warmth" (Cooley, 1983: xxii; see also Rieff, 1990: 294–321).

6. A notable exception was Sebastian de Grazia. As a young assistant professor in the Division of the Social Sciences of the University of Chicago, he published *The Political Community: A Study of Anomie*, (De Grazia, 1948), an explicitly anti-pluralist tract that was highly critical of this view of competing loyalties and, in the process, incurred the considerable wrath of Shils (1948). The letter from Shils I viewed by courtesy of Jefferson Pooley.
7. For this and several other archival sources referenced in the paper, I am grateful to Yves Winkin.
8. *Prejudice, War, and the Constitution* was the third official volume of the Japanese-American Evacuation and Resettlement Study. It echoes and reinforces Thomas's bid to exonerate powerful California business and political interests by stating that the dereliction "was one of folly, not knavery" (TenBroek et al., 1954: 208). But the book's Conclusion argues for broad responsibility for the undermining of constitutionally protected rights. In those pages, the responsible parties include the U.S. President, Congress, and Supreme Court, as well as a prejudiced public and military. Incredibly, the only category of historical actors exonerated by tenBroek and his colleagues was California business and political interests, an area emphasized in Grodzins' study. See Suzuki (1989) for an examination of this and other efforts by Thomas and her colleagues to discredit Grodzins' study and thereby protect powerful allies.
9. In a more comprehensive study of Goffman's work, which would obviously exceed the limits of a single essay, there are other considerations that might be relevant, such as the complex cosmopolitan orientation of Reform Jews in Canada. The author thanks a reviewer for suggesting this line of inquiry.
10. In a review of *Forms of Talk*, Bennett (1981) comments that certain lines from Goffman become "Ivy Compton-Burnett meets Gilbert Ryle," an observation that deserves a dissertation.
11. Goffman (1959: 194–195) also mentions "double-talk," a kind of collusive communication between superordinate and subordinate, wherein information that the latter is not privy to is nevertheless shared by the boss out of organizational necessity: the place can't run without the information to which the subordinate isn't officially privy. This formulation was an extension of ideas in the classic article on the foreman by Roethlisberger (1945). Goffman (1959: 194n6), however, adds in a note that in everyday speech, double-talk also denotes "protectively ambiguous answers to questions for which the asker desired a clear-cut response"—a regular practice in the public anti-communism hearings and trials of the period, particularly those involving convicted perjurer and suspected communist spy Alger Hiss, a famous double-talker (in the everyday sense) of the time.
12. That these lessons are there in the book is unquestionable; Goffman's sly way of handling the subject is also without doubt—it is there for people to see for themselves but never openly stated. Countless commentators missed it, but the cognoscenti were aware. In the mid-70s, during politically more active times, British sociologists Cohen and Taylor (1976) published their book, *Escape Attempts: The Theory and Practice of Resistance to Everyday Life*, whose intellectual heroes are announced as Georg Simmel and Erving Goffman.
13. In her biography of Harry Stack Sullivan, Perry (1982: 391) comments that Rioch and his sister had grown up with parents who were missionaries of the strict "Campbellite" Christian sect, had attended a sectarian college, and had intimate experience of "escaping from the restrictions of rigid belief systems."
14. Goffman had earlier discussed these issues as "alienation from interaction," in an essay where he wrote of a conversation as "a little social system with its own boundary-maintaining tendencies; it is a little patch of commitment and loyalty with its own heroes and its own villains" (Goffman, 1957: 47).
15. Other scholars at this time who drew on thought control research in examining their subject include Erikson's (1958: 133–135) discussion of Martin Luther's religious conversion and Strauss (1959: 120–125) on secular forms of conversion.

16. In his exposé, *The Search for the "Manchurian Candidate": The CIA and Mind Control*, former State Department staffer Marks (1979: 171) writes, quoting a source, that grants like these "bought legitimacy" for the Society and made the recipients "grateful" and more willing to talk with operatives. He continues, CIA psychologist John Gittinger "mentions the Society's relationship with Erwin [sic] Goffman of the University of Pennsylvania. . .. The Society gave him a small grant to help finish a book that would have been published anyway. As a result, Gittinger was able to spend hours talking with him about, among other things, an article he had written earlier on confidence men. These hucksters were experts at manipulating behavior, according to Gittinger, and Goffman unwittingly 'gave us a better understanding of the techniques people use to establish phony relationships'—a subject of interest to the CIA."

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