

# Self in Everyday Life

William Stephenson

*ABSTRACT: Play theory and Goffman's frame analysis provide the theoretical structure for this self-study of the author at the time of his retirement. Rather than Goffman's self as a product of behavior, self is conceived as always at issue (although usually implicitly), rooted in values, and requiring Q methodology to bring it to light. N=45 statements drawn from Goffman provide the Q sample, which is used under 10 conditions of instruction focused on the issues of retirement. Three factors emerge and are interpreted in terms of both their overt and covert meanings. The results are discussed in terms of Goffman's thesis and play theory.*

We are told that the pleasure in this world outweighs the pain, or, at all events, that they balance. If you wish to discover whether this is true, consider the case of two animals, one of which is eating the other. (Schopenhauer)

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Editor's note: This article is chapter 6 in a collection of unpublished papers originally labeled *Operant Subjectivity: Q-methodology, Quantum Theory, and Newton's Fifth Rule* (1984) and retitled *Q-methodology and the Romanesque Concourse* (1985). This article is published with the permission of the literary executor of the William Stephenson estate.

## **Frame Analysis**

What enters most into the formation of an ego system?

My bets are placed upon two laws, of social control and convergent selectivity, and imply another, concerning the place of *self* as a causative influence in human behavior. In the present paper I shall develop what is at issue in the latter connection, doing so in terms of work from the Chicago School of Sociology, picking up the pieces, so to speak, with Erving Goffman.

Goffman is author of *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959) and of related works, including *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience* (1975). He maintains that in social life people are acting parts, as on a stage, and that the stamp of this is upon every facet of everyday behavior. He agrees that all the world is not a stage; but he adds that it is difficult to specify ways in which this isn't the case.

My "play theory" of communicability (Stephenson, 1967, 1973) has much in common with Goffman's thesis, but also important differences. Since I am embarking upon a science for subjectivity, and as this is directed especially at the everyday, common life of people, it is important to look at Goffman's thesis in the light of our own, particularly in view of the fact that his work stems from the important University of Chicago School of Sociology of the 1950s.

Goffman's concern is with "social establishments," with "social encounters," as in family life and businesses, where there is a certain regularity of behavior. The Chicago sociologists dealt with social behavior of a somewhat colorful kind, as indicated by the titles of studies to which Goffman makes reference: "The Merchant Seaman," "The Junk Business and the Junk Pedlar," "The Police," "Osteopathy," "The American Funeral Director," "House Detective," "Pharmacy as a Business in Wisconsin," "The Fate of Idealism in Medical School" and the like. In all of these, "play" is obvious: it seems that everyone is bent on fooling everyone else. The seaman's deckhand swearing is out of place when he returns to the bosom of his family; the funeral director's lugubrious demeanor is for bereavement and profit alike. In these social encounters the participants are playing parts, "putting on a face," like characters on a stage.

An example used by Goffman, amongst many others, is of a surgeon and nurse whose patient falls off the operating table:

Let us hope that it was not a "regular" mishap, but it serves to illustrate Goffman's thesis, that there is interaction (person-in-interaction-society). Everyone suffers (surgeon, nurse, patient, hospital); excuses are readily at hand, acted out like a play, in which the surgeon stands upon his professional and ethical dignity; so does the nurse; the hospital disclaims any blame; and the patient, with legal advice, sues the hospital for a million dollars. In reality, the doctor and nurse might have pleaded overwork, and the hospital authorities lack of funding for adequate operating facilities. But, whatever the realities, the event is acted out with unreal rather than real accountability, as in a play. The excuses are characteristically moralistic -- ethics, blame, claims, are much in evidence. In a striking conclusion, Goffman says that "we are merchants of moralities." Is "play," indeed, moralistic?

Goffman's methodology (frame analysis) has several components. At its base there are the *impressions* of the individuals who enter into the social encounters. However, Goffman has no particular technique for documenting these impressions, which he gathers by participant observation and the like: in Q they are the basis of concurrence.

Next in frame analysis there is a description of the "play," the social conventions and play-characters being acted out. Thus, the sailor swears lustily on deck, and finds himself in trouble on shore, in his home, where he has to conform to the family's decorum -- often with comical consequences.

Then there is an account of the *claims* made, the moralities at issue: in the sailor's case his vulgarity at sea is bred by the necessity for manliness (whereas inadequacy, rather than manhood, is perhaps at issue).

Finally, the person's self is conceived by Goffman as a *product*, not a *cause* of behavior. He distinguishes between the person as a performer and as actor. The former is cast into the various roles of everyday life; and although Goffman grants that the performer may have dreams, wishes, and feelings, etc., these, for him, are "inside" and do not constitute self. Goffman writes:

The self, then, as a performed character is not an organic thing that has a specific location, whose fundamental fate is to be born, to mature, and to die; it is a dramatic effect arising diffusely from the scene that is presented, and the characteristic

issue, the crucial concern, is whether it will be credited or discredited. (Goffman, 1975, p. 253)

We shall not follow Goffman into the various applications of frame analysis, where the concern is with the manipulation of human conduct; instead, its methodological assumptions have to be considered in comparison with those of Q methodology, and in particular with regard to play theory as this is developed in *The Play Theory of Mass Communication* (Stephenson, 1967), which applies to communication quite generally.

### "Play Theory"

We, too, see everyday life in "playful" terms, habitual or not, but in relation to Huizinga's *Homo Ludens* (1950), as culture-forming and culture-maintaining. The many constraints put upon a person in society are subsumed under the law of social control and conditions of self-worth (the public "good" is really fundamentally at issue): the person's own freedoms are referred to the law of convergent selectivity and self-pleasing. These principles enter into everyday life, including the social encounter behavior defined by Goffman. The individual, in action, is quite unaware of the influences of social control and convergency.

We see "play" as a mode of conduct in all our institutions, in the home (Bernstein's [1965] socio-linguistic thesis is a case in point), the school, the church, the courts, the armed forces, as well as in the newly-forming institutions of mass communication (advertising), politics and sports. It is no less characteristic of all cultures, at all levels, as in Mary Douglas' "explorations in cosmology" (1970). "Play" enters language -- you "play a game" suggests that playing is not merely "doing." As Huizinga put it (p. 37), you do not *do* a game as you *do* or *go* fishing, hunting, or Morris-dancing, or woodwork -- you "*play*" it. *The act of playing lies outside ordinary categories of action.* Where, then, does it lie?

*It lies, we propose, in our subjectivity: The self is always at issue, usually implicitly, and Q brings it into daylight.* In this, of course, we part company with Huizinga.

The laws of social control and convergency are guides to help us in this quest for what is implicit. Thus, in the example provided in "Homo Ludens: The Play Theory of Advertising" (Ste-

phenson, 1979), two young married women, Sandra and Joye, are not conscious of the roles they play as homemaking consumers; the Q study shows that one is subject to social control and the other to convergent selectivity. Sandra identifies with her quality-conscious mother and social control is everywhere characteristic of her; Joye is pleasing herself. Both, however, are performing appropriately; neither is wanting anything of social control, or of freedom from it. Each is acting naturally, expressive of her way of life. The selves at issue are implicit.

There is not a page of Huizinga's masterpiece, *Homo Ludens*, that is not subject to this analysis, whether of archaic culture or modern civilization. He defined play...

as an activity which proceeds within certain limits of time and space, in a visible order, according to rules freely accepted, and outside the sphere of necessity or material utility. The play-mood is one of rapture and enthusiasm, and is sacred or festive in accordance with the occasion. A feeling of exaltation and tension accompanies the action, mirth and relaxation follow. (p. 132)

But included in play is what Huizinga called an "innate habit of mind," to create imaginary worlds of our own, "a playing of the mind, a mental game" (p. 136). So we play mentally every time we enjoy (as we say) a movie, whether of comedy or ultra-future war games. The very language of this paper is more than a formalization of knowledge: it is written with cadence, rhythm, as if to measure. It is in some sense lyrical, stylized, with emphasis and even dance-like steps with which ideas are fashioned. Poetry is the apotheosis of all such: it plays with images, and puts puzzles and mystery into language, today as ever in mankind's history. "Play," it seems, preceded our cultures, and even our speech: personification and imagination "have their origins in the remotest past onwards." Personification -- the attribution of human qualities to animals and inanimate objects -- is but a "playing of the mind" (Huizinga, 1950, p. 139). Present-day philosophy and psychology remain locked in allegorical modes of expression (p. 141), every bit as much as my written words are locked in playful cadence and literary nuances. Philosophy remains largely agonistic: the problem of universals remains unsolved (p. 186). As for music, we "play" it: our forefathers reckoned it as *Paideia* -- education and culture, as something

neither necessary nor useful, like reading and writing, but only serving to pass one's free time (p. 161). Plastic arts, constructed by work, are nevertheless matters for enjoyment, "playful" imaginings, by lovers of art. Huizinga could well conclude that civilization, in its earliest phases, is played:

It does not come *from* play like a babe detaching itself from the womb: it arises *in* and *as* play, and never leaves it. (p. 173)

He asks, Is the play-spirit still alive in Western Civilization? -- and answers that it is, *sub specie ludi* (*Homo Ludens*, chapter 11). Certainly the Middle Ages were "brimful of play" -- full of pagan elements, transformed into "the solemn and pompous play of chivalry, the sophisticated play of courtly love, etc." (p. 179). The Renaissance was playful -- as artistic perfection -- *in excelsis*. The Humanists aped an imagined antiquity: they even rewrote Christianity in classical Latin, to add the spice of paganism to their faith. And Rabelais -- who could be more the play-spirit incarnate? ... but so it goes, into the Baroque, with its comical wig! Into the 18th century, with its "clubs, secret societies, literary salons, artistic coteries, brotherhoods, circles and conventicles" -- every conceivable interest or occupation becomes a focus for voluntary association (p. 187). And all of it intrinsically "playful." Then, in the 19th century, culture ceases to be playful -- dresses, factories, lives, all colorless, formless, stultified. Gay colors disappear; black, bleak cloth takes over.

The "play" has ended.

"The play-element in contemporary civilization" is the final chapter of *Homo Ludens*: It asks, how far does Western civilization continue to live in play-forms? It might seem that the spread of leisure-time sports has kept the play-spirit alive, but there are now few amateurs and "the spirit of the professional is no longer the true play-spirit; it is lacking in spontaneity and carelessness" (p. 197). Professionals count their earnings in the millions: spectators, like those in Rome's amphitheatres in which gladiators butchered and were butchered, seem purient, mindless, and scarcely culture-forming.

For an activity to be called "play," in Huizinga's terms, more is at issue than a set of rules (as in tennis): it is time-bound (has a beginning and end); it is outside reality; its performance is an end in itself. It is consciously pleasurable, in relaxation from the everyday chores and strains of life. None of this, he says, applies

to science, which is perpetually seeking contact with reality and utility (p. 203); this, however, is to confuse ends and means. Scientists are "playful" in the pursuit of science. Hagstrom (1965) attests to this, in eponymy, Nobel prize-giving, and the like. I take it much father, to show that scientific thinking is itself largely communication-pleasure, that is, essentially "playful." An example was provided by Helsenberg's autobiography, *Physics and Beyond: Encounters and Conversations* (1971). He describes his conversations with Max Planck, Einstein, Bohr, Pauli, Fermi and others, in which the talk ranged over every aspect of current culture, all in relation to physics, but covering politics, history, religion, pragmatism, Kantian philosophy, atomic power, individual and scientific responsibility, positivism and so on, back to Platonic philosophy. All this and mathematics too. *It is from this concourse that quantum theory and relativity took shape, not from mathematical-statistical theory alone* (Stephenson, 1978).

Thus, far from accepting Huizinga's conclusion that "play" doesn't characterize science, I would say the reverse, that science is its most salient exemplar. Without "play" there would have been no quantum mechanics or modern physics of the universe.

Which raises, for me, a most fundamental question in the domain of historical concepts. Without denying gross inequities and terrible ignorances, the centuries of the Renaissance, of the Baroque and the Rococo, were pre-eminently "playful." The 19th century was not -- except for a slice of history dominated by the British Empire and British politics, which "played" empire and politics with a certain element of "fair-play" -- Huizinga has to admit the "fair-play" of the British two-party political system (p. 207). But what will history say of the 20th century? Will it not echo Winston Churchill's remarks:

...What a disappointment the Twentieth Century has been. We have seen in every country a dissolution, a weakening of those bonds, a challenge to those principles, a decay of faith, an abridgement of hope, on which structure and ultimate purpose of civilized society depends. We have seen in every part of the globe one country after another relapsing in hideous succession into bankruptcy, barbarism or anarchy. (quoted by R. Blake, 1983)

Has it not been a century of utter barbarism? Can anything in history surpass the slaughters of millions in two world wars? The tyranny of Stalin? The holocaust of Germany's Hitler? The bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki? The wars in their dozens every year in most regions of the world, in Vietnam, Laos, Afghanistan, Angola, El Salvador, Lebanon, Guatemala, Somaliland, and many more? Can anything be worse, in history, than the butchery of thousands of decent humans in Argentina, Chile, Iran, Guatemala, and the rest, on purely political grounds?

The history of the modern world is the topic of Paul Johnson's (1983) volume: it portrays a world of massacres, misery, and slaughter, *in excelsis*. But he puts the origins in the Russian Revolution of 1917. Since then the Western world has achieved peace, some prosperity and liberty; the Moscow dominated world, also, has had peace since 1965. But the rest of the world, in the Middle East, Asia, Africa, South America, has suffered continuous war:

Terrorism, poverty, fanaticism, torture, slaughter and cruelty have become the normal currency of life in great areas of the globe, and there is no sign of a change. (Baker, 1952, p. 84)

The 20th century has seen enormous advances in science and technology, in medicine, communications, weaponry. But this is restricted to a small proportion of the world's people: for the vast majority "life remains nasty, brutish and short."

What, then, explains this modern barbarism? Johnson attributes it to the increasing hegemony of governments, to "total control" as in the World Wars, continued into after-war years. Add to this a decline in religious belief, and nations become indifferent to moralities and humanity. He suggests that Einstein's theory of relativity was misapplied as moral relativism, with no absolute standards of right and wrong. The relativism was fed, according to Johnson, notably by three German thinkers, Freud, Marx and Nietzsche -- Freud pandering to sex, Marx to economics, and Nietzsche to fascism. "Social engineering," Johnson concludes, under a Lenin, Stalin, Mussolini, Hitler and a host of lesser others, has been sinister, responsible for more misery than anything else in our century.

We suggest that the roots are deeper: they are embedded in the Cartesian split of nature into mind and matter, mind with self, matter without. The human being is intrinsically *mindful*,



intrinsically communicating in everyday affairs as a self-involving person, however tenuously, and, in relation to myths, by no less a token of implicit self-reference. Real civilization, Huizinga wrote, cannot exist without a "play-element" as fundamental to it, adding...

...for civilization presupposes limitation and mastery of the self, the ability not to confuse its own tendencies with the ultimate and highest goal, but to understand that it is enclosed with certain bounds freely accepted. (Huizinga, 1950, p. 211)

The only value at issue is "fair-play."

What we achieve in Q is an operant positiveness in this very matter: "Mastery of the self" is not, in our methodology, a conscious assertion of will, but an implicit acceptance of self as *inconsequential*, in due place in factor structure, bound only by "fair-play" conditions and not by any other values.

This is a very difficult concept to express in simple terms. Michael Polanyi, in *Personal Knowledge* (1958), considered "personal knowledge" to be an intuitive grasp of "objective unity" and therefore of a certain objectivity for values in human life: The prototype for it, he said, is our everyday perceptual knowledge, that is, the way we perceive things around us without logic or reason (Stephenson, 1980a). But this is not enough. Indeed, although we say that grass is green and crows are black, *functionally* these statements are arbitrary: instead we should say that grass is "greening," crows "blackening," to remind us of the multitudinous functional conditions under which we observe objects -- grass can be many hues, from brown to blue, from pink to yellow; and crows are many shades of grey, with iridescent sheens and glosses to add to the greyness, depending on the interactional conditions, that is, on the "psychological events" at issue. At bottom all is a matter of communicability, and in probing into this, in all its functional richness, we can find when self-reference is purely fantasy, or in touch with reality. In this direction we can replace "personal knowledge" by operations. And in the process we can indeed find a place for objectivity in values -- not in general, but for an individual person as such. This we shall attend to in the sequel.

## Exemplification

After this rapid account of "play" theory, we can return to Goffman's frame analysis.

Q methodological studies are basically for the "single case"; the purpose is not to prove generalities, but to use them. Many general conclusions from previous work, or principles acceptable on rational grounds, are accepted as laws for Q purposes, such as James' law (of *me* and *mine* in self-reference) and Rogers' law (of ideal-self congruity). Conditions of instruction for Q sorts can serve to elicit these laws.

But if the purpose in Q is not to determine general conclusions, what, then, is it seeking? The answer is that the search is for new ways in which known laws find expression in subjectivity, and in behavior. What, for example, could possibly be common ground between a factory worker declared redundant at 55 years of age, and myself, officially retired at 70? The search is for the way self presents itself in such conditions, and that is an expectancy that some new laws or principles might be found, or new ways of thinking of old principles.

The suggestion just made, that common ground might be found between a factory worker declared redundant at 55, and a professor who voluntarily has to retire at 65 or 70, is a case in point. Undoubtedly, objective matters will be at issue and may seem to have by far the most significant impact in these conditions, in that incomes have dropped drastically and may be a matter of considerable concern to factory worker and professor alike. Demographic data may show, indeed, that life expectancy is influenced by enforced retirement. The concern in Q is not with such objective matters, but with what is subjective in the situations.

It is a profound discovery that the self, in Q, is implicit. Even if the person is conscious of self, or is deliberately "putting on an act" and performing as a character in a play, implicitly, there is self-structuring behind the scenes. The mysterious something, Self, that everyone believes in but the psychologist cannot find (Natsoulas, 1978) turns out to be real enough, but has to be found, like all else in nature.

In frame analysis, the self is the communicator of claims, and these seem to be highly predictable. The Junk Pedlar always puts on his front, the Surgeon always attests to professional

standards. That moralities are everywhere involved is apparent. In Q, however, the self is unpredictable, but not lawless, and it always involves moralities, the belief systems by which the person lives.

Thus, in spite of a common acceptance of "play," Goffman's thesis and ours are very different. They come together, however, in recognizing the significance of moralities, and the statement "we are merchants of moralities" applies to Q as much as to Goffman's thesis.

It is of some interest, then, to have available an example of how this is approached by Q and its body of theory, and for this I again choose myself as an experimental subject, on the grounds that I know most about Q, and more about myself than I can possibly know about anyone else. I shall no doubt hide something, of my pettiness or whatever, but enough can be shown to illustrate the methodology, to throw light into some of the darker corners of everyday life, and to answer the question as to the causal function of Self.

### *Presentation of Self*

I propose, then, to consider myself in the above connections in relation to my retirement.

A suitable concourse for an approach to this consisted of statements made about work in general terms. I assumed that there is a cultural position about retirement, that is, statements of a folklore character, understood by all retirees. A ready source was found in Goffman's *Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959) by browsing through its pages and jotting down statements which could have reference to everyday "working" life, typically as follows:

If you try to create a new position for yourself, you are likely to land in difficulties.

Familiarity may breed contempt: it is a good thing to keep social distances.

The status of any social institution may be justifiably relied upon without investigation.

- (a) **The greatest good is communion with others: the more friendships the better.**

**Regardless of objective, one tries to control the conduct of others, especially with respect to oneself.**

**Only a fool will expect common honesty.**

**Much of what we do is "make-work," to make an impression.**

**My life has been orderly, routine, and I like it that way.**

**There are conditions which imprison a man in what he has to be, not what he really is -- this I find applicable to me to a degree.**

- (b) **We are all "old boys" when we meet our peers socially: horseplay and the dropping of one's customary pose is commonplace.**

**You can't let anyone get the upper hand on you, or you're through. It is better to be tough.**

**We all participate on teams in one way or another: in this context we are necessarily somewhat conspiratorial, a little guilty about our secrets.**

**My present proficiency is something that I've always had -- I've rarely had to fumble my way through anything.**

- (c) **I expect people to treat me in a manner that I have a right to expect.**

**... and so on.**

**They are from Goffman's pages, and all are statements anyone might make on a common, everyday basis. There must be thousands of them, all meaningful to almost everyone in the culture.**

**I collected 50, each written on an index card, and looked them over to see what logical structure they could support. They were of three categories, statements of morality on a straightforward basis, like statement (a); statements fitting the playful category, for example (b); and a more personal matter, such as statement (c). These are very rough categorizations, to help Q-**

**Table 1**  
**Fisherian Design**

Effects	Levels		
Morality	straightforward (a)	playful (b)	personal (c)
Valency	positive (e)	negative (f)	

sample construction on a systematic basis by way of a Fisherian balance block design, which in the present case was therefore as shown in Table 1. There are six combinations of the design, and for seven replications a Q sample of size 42 results. I was able to compose the sample from the 50 statements I had collected. Three more were added, as statements of interest, knowing that this would not upset the valency significantly. The result is a sample N=45. On this basis the Q sample could be replicated at will, with any other sets of statements from Goffman's works, or from other sources, such as from interviews conducted with retirees in any study of voluntary and involuntary retirement.

The statements were typed on 3x5-inch cards, randomized, and Q sorting undertaken with the following frequency distribution of scores:

Score	<i>Pleasure</i>				<i>Neutral</i>				<i>Unpleasure</i>		
	+5	+4	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5
Frequency	2	3	4	5	5	7	5	5	4	3	2
N=45											

I began Q sorting myself, with conditions of instruction decided upon as I proceeded: After completing one Q sort, I decided what the instruction would be for the next. Thus, I did not know at any time what subsequent conditions of instruction would be during the two days over which I completed the following 10 Q sorts:

1. What was your feeling at your official retirement?
2. What, in your view, was the prevailing feeling about this amongst other retirees?
3. What was the impression left on you by the Administration's "welfare" intentions?
4. What should be an ideal impression on retirement?
5. What, in your view, had been most under the influence of social control (i.e., about which you had no say)?
6. What is Goffman's "dramaturgical" position with respect to you?
7. What is your impression of the "efficiency" of the system?
8. What of the future, your own?
9. What character do you feel others about you attributed to you?
10. Describe yourself as best you can.

These fit into Kantor's (1959) scheme: The overall psychological event (PE) begins with Q sort 1, as a stimulus function (sf); the response function, Q sort 8, is rf. The historical function begins with Q sort 6 (hi); the immediate setting involves Q sorts 2, 3 (st); the medium of interbehavior, Q sorts 6, 7, 9 (md). The Q-sort instructions, however, were chosen on other particular grounds:

Conditions 1, 2, 3 represent the immediate situation, as described above: Each is lawful in that the impressions are well fixed -- I would have given much the same Q sorts at any time since retirement.

Condition 4 is predicated on Rogers' law, that self and ideal are likely to be related.

Condition 5 is based on my principle (as well as Goffman's) of social control. It is a reductionist concept, and basically lawful.

Condition 6 is a representation of Goffman's thesis, and therefore in some sense theoretical.

Condition 7 covers Goffman's analysis, that any social establishment can be appraised for "efficiency." Here I do the appraisal.

Condition 8 covers Goffman again, who saw a relation between what we do now, and what we are most likely to do in the future.

Condition 9 is also from Goffman, using his concept of character.

The 10th asks the subject to describe himself as he feels he or she is.

The whole sequence of probes is into self and it is only sensible to ask the subject to provide an account of himself or herself as in Q sort 10: indeed, we are apt to use this to validate the very self we are tapping into with the other Q sorts.

**Table 2**  
**Operant Structure**

<i>Conditions of Instruction</i>	<i>Operant Factors</i>		
	<i>I</i>	<i>II</i>	<i>III</i>
1 my retirement	-	X	-
2 others' retirement	X	-	-
3 impression as welfare	-	-	-
4 ideal	-	X	-
5 social control	X	-	-
6 Goffman	X	-	-
7 efficiency	-	-	-
8 my future	-	X	X
9 character (as given)	-	-	X
10 self	-	-	X

(X=significant loadings; all others insignificant)

Factor analysis of the matrix for the 10 Q sorts gave the operant factor structure in Table 2. The factors are operant: much the same structure is to be expected from any replication of the study, even with a different Q sample and other but related conditions of instruction. It indicates that three main factors are

involved in the situation. Each factor is a theoretical Q sort, for which an empirical estimate is possible, in terms of the actual Q sorts defining it: Factor I is defined by Q sorts 2, 5, 6, and is a composite Q sort composed from these three. Similarly, factor II is provided by Q sorts 1, 4, 8; and factor III by Q sorts 8, 9, 10. The outcome is a table of standard scores (quantsal units) for the 45 statements of the Q sample, each statement given a standard score on each factor. An example for one of the 45 statements is as follows:

*Factor Scores*

<i>I</i>	<i>II</i>	<i>III</i>
+4	-1	+1

We tend to maintain standards of conduct because of what is expected of us.

(Note: Standard scores have been transformed to Q-technique scores for convenience.)

Clearly this matters much in factor I, but little in the other two factors.

### *Interpretation*

Both the structure and the underlying feeling of each factor have to be interpreted.

We begin by recognizing that three different (uncorrelated) states of feeling are involved, for factors I, II, and III, respectively.

The reminder is necessary that there is no way in which these factors could have been influenced by conscious effort on my part -- I didn't even know what the conditions of instruction would be when the study began, except for conditions (1) and (10). The factors are implicit, also operant, from a computer program. They are normally not chancelike flukes of subjectivity, but indications of lawfully conditioned processes of communicability, representing matters of importance to the Q sorters, which have been long in forming in the present case because of my reflections upon a lengthy past.

It can be said at the outset that factor I appears related to Goffman's thesis [a matter of social control (5), and Goffman's



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+4	-1	+1

We tend to maintain standards of conduct because of what is expected of us.

(Note: Standard scores have been transformed to Q-technique scores for convenience.)

Clearly this matters much in factor I, but little in the other two factors.

### *Interpretation*

Both the structure and the underlying feeling of each factor have to be interpreted.

We begin by recognizing that three different (uncorrelated) states of feeling are involved, for factors I, II, and III, respectively.

The reminder is necessary that there is no way in which these factors could have been influenced by conscious effort on my part -- I didn't even know what the conditions of instruction would be when the study began, except for conditions (1) and (10). The factors are implicit, also operant, from a computer program. They are normally not chancelike flukes of subjectivity, but indications of lawfully conditioned processes of communicability, representing matters of importance to the Q sorters, which have been long in forming in the present case because of my reflections upon a lengthy past.

It can be said at the outset that factor I appears related to Goffman's thesis [a matter of social control (5), and Goffman's

position (6), and my understanding of other people's retirement (2)].

Factor II is a conception of my retirement situation (1), which I consider ideal (4), and which is likely to continue into the future (8).

Factor III is apparently myself as such (10), which I consider to be how other people characterize me (9), and which is stable -- it, too, will continue into the future (8).

It is convenient to begin interpretation with factor I, by picking out the particular statements of the theoretical Q sort which distinguish it most from the other two factors. The statements, with their factor scores, are the following:

<i>I</i>	<i>II</i>	<i>III</i>	
+5	+3	-1	Everyone is always and everywhere more or less consciously playing a role: it is by these roles that we know ourselves and each other.
+5	-2	-2	Appearances are relied upon instead of realities.
+4	-1	+1	We tend to maintain standards of conduct because of what is expected of us.
+4	+4	+1	It is important to uphold the dignity of one's position in life.
+3	+2	-1	Regardless of objective, one tends to control the conduct of others, especially with respect to conduct toward oneself.
+3	-4	-5	You have to be "in the know," a member of the "clique," to succeed in things: it is part of the game.

The first statement is a direct expression of Goffman's thesis that in everyday life we are actors, as on a stage; and it gains the highest positive score on the factor. The other statements can be regarded as consequences of role-playing: I am saying, in effect, that other retirees have to rely upon appearances, maintain their roles, and that in the process it is necessary to stand on one's dignity, to remind people of whom you are; also, you need

to be a "wise guy" in the situation. The overall feeling would seem to be one of implied pretension, even vanity. I attribute it to others, not to me, or so it seems.

Next, we consider factor III, because understanding it helps also to explicate II. The statements discriminative for factor III are as follows:

<i>I</i>	<i>II</i>	<i>III</i>	
-5	+1	+5	(a) I entered into the core of my work to defend my self-identity.
+4	-5	+5	There are conditions which imprison a man in what he has to do, not what he really is: this I find applicable to me to a degree.
0	+2	+4	I expect consistency between appearance and manner: no falsity for me.
-4	-1	+4	The terms used to designate one's colleagues tend to be negative in flavor.
-2	-4	+3	We do not lead our lives, make our decisions, and reach our goals in life in an orderly manner: it is a matter of chance.
-1	+2	+3	You can become cynical about much in the "social establishment."

Statement (a) was added to the Q sample as my own contribution to it, all others being from Goffman's book, and the statement has gathered around it others which concern the need to defend my self-identity. It was a surprise to me to find, as most characteristic of myself (Q sort 10), that something had imprisoned me, that I was derogatory towards others, that I gave much to chance, and that I am really cynical. True, I had to admit it.

The reasons were also evident. Since the early 1930s, Q, and by association myself, had been "controversial." Indeed before that my switch in career from physics to psychology placed me in academic difficulties. It happens that I was right about Q and my antagonist, Professor Burt, wrong; but my logic was ahead of the times. I was in the forefront of the new approach to science, that of quantum theory, relativity, and inductive inference, as distinct from the deductivism of Karl Popper's *The Logic of*

*Scientific Discovery* (1959). The hypothetico-deductive method was everywhere *de rigueur*, and Q had to fight from the outset against its dominance in social and psychological sciences. I began without the resources needed to match those of the establishment. My main concern had to be to fashion a living for my family, with excursions into business, war services, and organizational opportunities at Oxford University, where I was largely responsible for the development of the Institute of Experimental Psychology there, as well as for founding the Honours School of Psychology, Philosophy, and Physiology (PPP), both viable at the University. Because of the controversy with Professor Burt, I left England, feeling in some sense an outcast from what should have been mine at Oxford. My Northern personality (like that of Shakespeare's Henry Percy) could brook no "falsity." Hence the reaction, to a certain cynicism and negative view of associates in the U.S.A., with whom I have always felt more a refugee than an accepted colleague. At least I could rationalize matters this way. In England I had been close to Spearman and to others I greatly admired: Maxwell Garnett and Lewis F. Richardson used to come to my laboratory at the Institute of Experimental Psychology at Oxford. In the United States I found none such. Factor III is thus tapping into a deep and sore wound; and it is very much *me*, not merely *mine*, and Q sort (10) expresses it. I assume, apparently, that others will think of me this way (9), and that as it is, so it will be in future (8).

The overall feeling is of being hurt.

Clearly, no one but myself could have given this understanding of the factor, and readers may well feel that I have made the most of it. Yet in no possible way could these particular statements be woven together consciously by me to come together as they have; and what I have written above is a direct association with the feeling of hurt.

Now we can attend to factor II, the discriminating statements for which are as below:

I	II	III	
0	+5	+3	It is a worthy impulse to show the world a better or idealized aspect of ourselves.
-5	+5	+3	The conception I have of myself, as what I am striving to live up to, is the self I want to be.

- 4 +4 -2 It is hard for me to think of dramatizing my work: it should speak for itself.
- +1 +4 +2 One has gone through life with honesty, representing oneself as one really is.
- 1 +3 -1 You have to accept a great deal on faith.
- 1 +3 0 My office is consistent with my mind: untidy, but alive.

This, apparently, represents an ideal (Q sort 4), and what I think of myself in retirement (Q sort 1): it is what will continue with me into the future (Q sort 8). My work: it should speak for itself. I have been honest about it. I may be confused at times, but that goes with being creative. I live by a certain faith, as a scholarly person -- the idealized aspect of myself. The overall feeling is of honest endeavor, with a "stiff upper lip," and faith that all will come out well, in my favor, in the end. But it also says that this is not really me; my real self is not finding expression in such a retirement.

So far matters seem straightforward: I can recognize aspects of my everyday life in these factors -- that I am cynical about other retirees' motives (I), cynical about even close colleagues (II), ideally presenting a "stiff upper lip" by hard work (II). *However, it is necessary to enter the caveat that factors are essentially implicit, and that they hide more than they display so obviously in the above interpretations.* There is likely to be more to the factors than I have so far disclosed.

### *Implicitness*

The "presentation of self," in Q, is always implicit, even when it seems otherwise, as when a person is "putting on an act." All subjective behavior is transformable to operant factor structure, and the factors are always indicative of self-reference, some *me* particularly, others *mine* only. Yet they are intrinsically implicit, unknown to the Q sorter. They are not to be conceived as "unconscious," or "preconscious," or "subconscious," but as *forms* which have subserved the situation under inquiry.

Consider, then, factors I, II, and III again.

First factor I: I attributed it to others, not to myself, and almost anyone would so interpret it. But I hazard a guess that it is the way others are apt to think of me: I say this in part from knowledge of Sullivan's me-you law, that there is reciprocity in such situations. But when I look at the factor in detail I begin to face up to the fact that others must see me "acting up" my English nationality for what it is worth. Also, that I *do* uphold the dignity of my position, to judge by my style of life and standard of living. Also, that I am considered clever enough to be "in the know" with authorities in the university, because I had been a member of important committees. All of which I denied as me in factor I. Yet there is evidence to support this as really me, "acting-up": I fight shy of any associations with clubs, rotary, churches, political parties, or leisure groups. I have no close friends. My ties are with my family. I may be considered to be a "loner," but this doesn't matter to me. However one looks at it, factor I is the very opposite of what it seems to be on the surface! It is not others who are acting parts, but me -- except that I deny it to myself.

Factor II claims honest effort. My work is important, I feel, and should speak for itself. I am indeed honorable; and it is hard to think I am dramatic. It has important variables to define it, representing what I feel about my retirement (Q sort 1), my ideal (Q sort 4), and what seems ordained for me in future (Q sort 8). I can claim that my ideal is the pursuit of knowledge, and that I am living up to it. Indeed, it is now a profound claim, to provide what Plato couldn't in his *Theatetus* (see the conceit coming through!): I can prove that certain ideas have independent validity whereas Plato only assumed it. Yet I claim that this is not me, not really at the core of my self!

Which is suspect, because of Rogers' law. What is implicit is that I really do dramatize my work upon any opportunity to do so, in lectures, hot discussions, and my writing style. And it is scarcely true that I have gone through life representing myself as I really am, because I have had to defend myself and to conform for the sake of livelihood and opportunity. This interpretation again reverses what is manifest.

Factor III embraces a life's work, still far from complete, of an offensive against disbelief. Insofar as Q was suspect, then so was its author. The "imprisonment" was my ties to Professor Spearman.

Who could have thought that a young physicist, a maker of vacuum pumps and low-tension discharge tubes, would have to support Spearman's scholasticism in search for an explanation of consciousness? I *had* to do so -- though at one point I fought against it and almost took an appointment in London's Science Museum. My acceptance at Oxford came from Dr. William Brown's association with Spearman, and myself as Spearman's assistant. I disagreed with Spearman about an important matter, and was deeply interested in psychoanalysis when I was Spearman's assistant and at a time when he considered psychoanalysis to be an enemy of sound psychology. I was also one of three co-founders of the Rorschach Forum in England, when projective tests were *infra dignitatem* in psychometric circles. My controversy with Professor Burt was soon evident. Thus, I was a resistive, kicking child against my superiors Burt and Spearman, yet in admiration of their scholarship and technical prowess, and excited at the opening I saw with Q as an off-shoot of the psychophysical methods (of which I was an expert). What, then, was "merchandised"? I expected consistency between appearance and manner -- there was to be no "falsity" for me. Implicitly, however, falseness became my very being: I was in rebellion against all *status quo* psychology, against psychoanalysis and existentialism, against behaviorism and objectivism, and could see a place for subjectivity by returning to some of the tenets of general psychology then completely out of fashion, some roots of which remained in James Ward's *Psychological Principles* (1920). Thinking this, I had to put on as good a face as I could along conforming lines, to maintain a foothold in academia.

My early education had fostered humanitarian pursuits, it is true, with an interest in English, and a wonderful year in teacher-training, for a Diploma in Secondary School Teaching of the British Board of Education, which had introduced me to the Renaissance Educators and to psychology. There, in educational theory, if anywhere, lay my real academic interests. My first book, indeed, is *Testing School Children* (1949), and my deep interest remains in a manuscript *Quiddity College*, a college in which facts are taken for granted and education pursued in terms of subjective science: also in a truly astonishing paper on the application of concurrence theory to educational practice in general in *American Psychologist* (1980b).



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All three factors, therefore, are the reverse of what they seemed to be at first sight. Yet when I face up to them, they are all true aspects of my everyday life. And we should recall the principle of complementariness discussed earlier, foreshadowed by Freud's observation that contrary ideas find themselves side-by-side in the unconscious. I am all of factors I, II, III, overt and covert alike.

This is not to say, of course, that what is implicit will inevitably be the opposite of what is explicit for everyone: On the contrary, mine is perhaps a special case, a conclusion I shall support before I end this paper. What is important is that the investigator has to look at operant factors for what is implicit. In the above example the key to understanding is the Rogerian principle, that a break between my self and my ideal-self is indicative of maladjustment. And so it seems. I might have attained adjustment with *Quiddity College* as nearest to my deepest interests. Even so, maladjusted as I may be, it is my way of life, and has a point of interest, as we shall see.

### **"Merchandising of Moralities"**

How, then, does this relate to Goffman's thesis, and to our own theories?

Factor I is clearly subject to the kind of social controls entering into Goffman's thesis: The concern is with "professionalism" however one looks at it, and it has the look of acting -- one is playing parts.

The other factors, if "play," are on a grand scale, life-long, slowly evolving. This would be looked at by Goffman to determine the "barriers to perception" which gave rise to them. He would search amongst political, social-class, and similar cultural influences as causes of the "play." Thus, in my case, Cyril Burt notes my Northumbrian voice (not the gloss of an Oxford accent), and, for Goffman, a "social-class" influence could have made me into the aggressive, kicking person I was by common repute. However, I must confess that I never felt other than the equal of anyone else. I spoke a cultured Northern manner, neither Scottish nor Oxfordish, but something in between and indigenous to Northumbria. The barriers seem to have been of my own making, and they were in relation to *values*. Those, indeed, went back deeply into my life. At age 16, at the end of

World War I in 1918, I wrote an essay on how to celebrate the ending: it was published in the *London Times Literary Supplement*, and was clearly in the style of Carlyle, Ruskin, and Edmund Burke's *Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful*. It was a romantic, youthful cry for peace in a troubled world. Something of the same merchandising of morality has continued throughout my life -- and, as in 1918, it is *sans* religion, *sans* race, *sans* politics, *sans* social-class-consciousness.

Even so I "played the game," a "communication game," on a large scale. By good fortune, I happened to be where Spearman was in London and found him supportive; also where Burt was, and could differ with him on rational grounds; also at Oxford, where William Brown grandly supported me. World War II intervened, where I served the Royal Air Force and the British Army as Consultant Psychologist, with a Brigadier's rank even though, by creed, I was a pacifist. I was released from the Army in 1947, when I visited the U.S.A. as guest of the American Psychological Association, and was invited to the University of Chicago as Visiting Professor of Psychology in 1948. I brought my family over for a holiday and stayed. Times were from then difficult, with a growing family to educate and no real academic roots anywhere. For more than 30 years, however, going from one place to another, I have continued work on Q and its many facets, and have made it into subjective science.

For Goffman, self is not a cause of behavior, but a product of a part played, acted by a performer. It is not, as Goffman put it, "an organic thing" with a specific location that is born, lives and dies, but only a "dramatic effect" arising from the social encounter by which it is evoked. Moreover, all that matters is whether the "play" is credible or not as "play." The performer is granted his dreams and wishes; only an ego, and no self, is permitted.

For Q, matters are more complex. Self is rooted in all subjective behavior, social encounters included, but is mainly implicit. After all, how many of us go about crowing loudly of ourselves, like cock-birds crowing in the early morning? Is it not nearer the truth to say that we are oblivious of self in most of our everyday life? It is only when we look at ourselves, as in a mirror, that we become aware of the "organic thing," us as persons. What Q proposes as "presentation of self" is mainly tacit, and only on reflection is it made explicit, if at all. More-

over, in this context, self-reference is always rooted in values, as causal agents. Self is therefore a cause of behavior, and not merely a reaction to it. Thus, I ventured from the north of England bent on expressing certain values without knowing it, and found a way to do so in scholarly adventure. I have described it elsewhere as a deep-seated intentionality (Stephenson, 1983). Values and moralities presaged all else at the outset. If it is argued that values are socially determined, I would have to demur, and in any case could grant value autonomy by the time a young person, in our culture, is adolescent. As outcries against abortion and much else in American culture attest, adult moralities and values are fixtures rather than merely reactive forces. At least, it is as well to look carefully at the tacit conditions of self as such from a causal standpoint.

Which of course raises the question of the interaction between myself and my opportunities. Fundamentally, the operant factor structure upon which the above is based is a matter of quantum theory, forced upon us because of the complexity of subjectivity. If smashing an atom to reach quarks is difficult, probing a person's mind to reach its gyroscopic value-roots is no less likely to be intricate. We make theory and laws serve as the probes; and in this context the universality of form has been discovered by factor theory, the counterpart of quantum theory in physics. This is fundamental. But upon this we have found it important to accept, with Huizinga, that all culture begins in play. Thus, where Goffman postulates political, social class and cultural "barriers to perception," we see all such as formed in "play," and to good purposes. Man's institutions, of family, school, church, army, law courts, business corporations, are formed and maintained by social controls imposed upon us for the "good" of society. New institutions are forming, for example advertising and mass communication, and these are largely "playful," that is, not under social controls or for the "good" of society (although there are many who wish they were) so much as having freedom to be expressive of enjoyment and leisure, rather than of work. I maintain a theory of *self-worth* under stable institutional conditions, and of *self-pleasing* when free of them. It isn't difficult to unfold these aspects of self in every situation in which a person finds purposes: I provide an example in "Homo Ludens: The Play Theory of Advertising" (Stephenson, 1979). But another example is apparent in the analysis of my own everyday

life, above. Factor I, admittedly, could be conditioned by social controlling influences, such as Goffman intimated. Factors II and III were resistive to such controls, with rejection of the disciplines, cliques, professional ties, socializing, etc., characteristic of my peers and superiors. Yet I boded no harm to the latter, but respected the controls, not least the scholarship of men of the stamp of Spearman, Burt, Lewis Richardson, and Maxwell Garnett. I was free, however, by the same token, to converge on my own interests, with a full sail of *feeling* to carry me along. This is convergent selectivity, which undoubtedly made possible what is creative in my work. So I believe: New ideas are born, fundamentally, in concourse and feeling. Thus, again, I take a different course than Goffman's: His ends in moralities and claims, mine begins with them.

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*Q sorts don't just put ideas into empty heads. The factors are vectors of existence. (William Stephenson)*