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Source: *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 79, No. 3 (Nov., 1973), pp. 589-603
Published by: The University of Chicago Press
Stable URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/2776259
Accessed: 19-02-2018 07:38 UTC

Staged Authenticity: Arrangements of Social Space in Tourist Settings[1]

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The problem of false consciousness and its relationship to the social structure of tourist establishments is analyzed. Accounts of travelers are examined in terms of Erving Goffman's front versus back distinction. It is found that tourists try to enter back regions of the places they visit because these regions are associated with intimacy of relations and authenticity of experiences. It is also found that tourist settings are arranged to produce the impression that a back region has been entered even when this is not the case. In tourist settings, between the front and the back there is a series of special spaces designed to accommodate tourists and to support their beliefs in the authenticity of their experiences. Goffman's front-back dichotomy is shown to be ideal poles of a continuum, or a variable.

A theme in Talcott Parsons's work (1937, 1964) is his insistence on the necessity of integrating social scientific understanding of belief, action, and social structure. By the end of the 1950s, there was some agreement in sociological circles that Parsons's own theoretical system had not succeeded in bringing off this integration. (See the discussions in Gouldner [1970] or Friedrichs [1970].) But this is not the important point to be grasped from Parsons's total project. He left us all with a clearly defined problem to solve. During the 1960s, Berger and Luckmann (1966), Erving Goffman, Harold Garfinkel (1967), and others began constructing bridges that permit analytical passage from social structure to the structure of behavior and beliefs. Now, in the 1970s, we can, I think, begin to study the relationship of social structure and beliefs in specific social situations, using more refined conceptions than have previously been available.

This paper is part of my study of tourism. The central finding of the larger study (in preparation) is that sightseeing is a form of ritual respect for society and that tourism absorbs some of the social functions of religion in the modern world. The dimension of social life analyzed in this paper is its authenticity or, more exactly, the search for authenticity of experience that is everywhere manifest in our society. The concern of moderns for the

[1] Temple University and the Department of Rural Sociology and Center for International Studies at Cornell University have granted the author leaves of absence to gather material for his study of tourism. Some of this material is used in this paper, and the author acknowledges his gratitude. Financial support in writing this paper was provided by the Faculty Research Fund at Temple University.

shallowness of their lives and inauthenticity of their experiences parallels concerns for the sacred in primitive society. Each contributes to the structural solidarity of the society in which it is found. The solidarity of primitives depends on every individual's keeping his place, and this is guaranteed by the sacralization of functionally important aspects of individual behavior such as gift exchange and mate selection. Primitives may, but they need not, worry about the authenticity of their rituals. The very survival of their society stands as internal proof of the victory of good over evil and real over false. By contrast, individual morality is only indirectly linked to the solidarity of modern society in which functionally important relationships are among bureaucracies, communities, and other complex organizations. Under modern conditions, the place of the individual in society is preserved, in part, by newly institutionalized concerns for the authenticity of his social experiences.

I began the analysis of the problem of authenticity by starting across one of the bridges between structure and consciousness that was built by Erving Goffman, and, in the course of the study, I found it necessary to extend his conception a little to make it to the other side.

SOCIAL SPACE AND THE STRUCTURING OF BELIEFS

Paralleling a commonsense division, Goffman has described a structural division of social establishments into what he terms "front" and "back" regions. The front is the meeting place of hosts and guests or customers and service persons, and the back is the place where members of the home team retire between performances to relax and to prepare. Examples of back regions are kitchens, boiler rooms, and executive washrooms, and examples of front regions are reception offices, parlors, and the like. Although architectural arrangements are mobilized to support this division, it is primarily a social one, based on the type of social performance that is staged in a place, and on the social roles found there. In Goffman's own words: "Given a particular performance as the point of reference, we can distinguish three crucial roles on the basis of function: those who perform; those performed to; and outsiders who neither perform in the show nor observe it. . . . [T]he three crucial roles mentioned could be described on the basis of the regions to which the role-player has access: performers appear in the front and back regions; the audience appears only in the front region; and the outsiders are excluded from both regions" (1959, pp. 144–45). The apparent, taken-for-granted reality of a social performance, according to Goffman's theory, is not an unproblematical part of human behavior. Rather, it depends on structural arrangements like this division between front and back. A back region, closed to audiences and outsiders, allows concealment of props and activities that might discredit

the performance out front. In other words, sustaining a firm sense of social reality requires some mystification.

Social reality that is sustained through mystification may be a "false" reality, as occurs in conning. Equally interesting is the case wherein mystification is required to create a sense of "real" reality. Once social structure differentiates into front and back in the movement from primitive to modern arrangements, the truth can no longer speak for itself. It must always be announced and revealed.

A recent example of a mystification designed to generate a sense of real reality is the disclosure that chemical nitrates are injected into hams for cosmetic purposes to keep them more pink, appetizing, and desirable, that is, more hamlike (Minz 1971). Similarly, a respondent of mine reports that some of the go-go girls in San Francisco's North Beach have their breasts injected with silicones in order to conform their size, shape, and firmness to the characteristics of an ideal breast. Novels about novelists and television shows about fictitious television stars are examples on a cultural plane. In each of these cases, a kind of strained truthfulness is similar in most of its particulars to a little lie.

Mystification, then, can be the conscious product of an individual effort to manipulate a social appearance, as occurred in the ham and breast examples. It can also be found where there is no conscious individual-level manipulation. Social structure itself is involved in the construction of mystifications that support social reality.

Examples are found in avoidance behavior surrounding back regions. The possibility that a stranger might penetrate a back region is one major source of social concern in everyday life, as much a concern to the strangers who might do the violating as to the violated. Everyone is waiting for this kind of intrusion not to happen, which is a paradox in that the absence of social relationships between strangers makes back-region secrets unimportant to outsiders or casual and accidental intruders. Just having a back region generates the belief that there is something more than meets the eye; even where no secrets are actually kept, back regions are still the places where it is popularly believed the secrets are. Folklorists discover tales of the horror concealed in attics and cellars, attesting to this belief.

BACK REGIONS, INTIMACY, AND SOCIAL SOLIDARITY

An unexplored aspect of back regions is how their mere existence, and the possibility of their violation, functions to sustain the commonsense polarity of social life into what is taken to be intimate and "real" and what is thought to be "show." The beliefs supported by this division of society into front and back center on popular ideas of the relationship of truth to intimacy. In our society, intimacy and closeness are accorded much im-

portance: they are seen as the core of social solidarity, and they are also thought by some to be morally superior to rationality and distance in social relationships, and more "real." Being "one of them," or at one with "them," means, in part, being permitted to share back regions with "them." This is a sharing which allows one to see behind the others' mere performances, to perceive and accept the others for what they really are.

Touristic experience is circumscribed by the structural tendencies described here. Sightseers are motivated by a desire to see life as it is really lived, even to get in with the natives, and, at the same time, they are deprecated for always failing to achieve these goals. The term "tourist" is increasingly used as a derisive label for someone who seems content with his obviously inauthentic experiences.

The variety of understanding that is held out before tourists as an ideal is an authentic and demystified experience of an aspect of some society or other person. An anonymous writer in an underground periodical breathlessly describes her feelings at a women's liberation, all-female dance where she was able, she thought, to drop the front she usually maintains in the presence of men:

> Finally the men moved beyond the doorway. And We Danced—All of us with all of us. In circles and lines and holding hands and arm in arm, clapping and jumping—a group of whole people. I remember so many other dances, couples, men and women, sitting watching, not even talking. How could I have consented to that hateful, possessive, jealous pairing? So much energy and life, and sensuality, we women have so rarely and ineffectively expressed. But we did, on Saturday. The women in the band were above performing and beyond competition, playing and singing together and with we who were dancing. And We Danced—expressing for and with each other. [Anon., no date, p. 33; all punctuation and capitalization as in the original]

An earlier, one-sided version of this connection among truth, intimacy, and sharing the life behind the scenes is found in descriptions of the ethnographic method of data collection. Margaret Mead has written: "The anthropologist not only records the consumption of sago in the native diet, but eats at least enough to know how heavily it lies upon the stomach; not only records verbally and by photographs the tight clasp of the baby's hands around the neck, but also carries the baby and experiences the constriction of the windpipe; hurries or lags on the way to a ceremony; kneels half-blinded by incense while the spirits of the ancestors speak, or the gods refuse to appear. The anthropologist enters the setting and he observes. . ." (Mead 1955, p. 31). These writers base their comments on an implicit distinction between false fronts and intimate reality, a distinction which is not, for them, problematical: once a person, or an observer, moves off stage, or into the "setting," the real truth begins to reveal itself more or less automatically.

Closer examination of these matters suggests that it might not be so easy to penetrate the true inner workings of other individuals or societies. What is taken to be real might, in fact, be a show that is based on the structure of reality. For example, Goffman warns that under certain conditions it is difficult to separate front from back and that these are sometimes transformed one into the other:

> [W]e can observe the up-grading of domestic establishments, wherein the kitchen, which once possessed its own back regions, is now coming to be the least presentable region of the house while at the same time becoming more and more presentable. We can also trace that peculiar social movement which led some factories, ships, restaurants, and households to clean up their backstages to such an extent that, like monks, Communists, or German aldermen, their guards are always up and there is no place where their front is down, while at the same time members of the audience become sufficiently entranced with the society's id to explore the places that had been cleaned up for them. Paid attendance at symphony orchestra rehearsals is only one of the latest examples. [1959, p. 247]

Under the conditions Goffman documents here, the back-front division no longer allows one to make facile distinctions between mere acts and authentic expressions of true characteristics. In places where tourists concentrate, I am about to show, the issues are even more complex.

AUTHENTICITY IN TOURIST SETTINGS

Everett C. Hughes has suggested to me (in correspondence) that the original tours were religious pilgrimages. The connection between the two is not merely one of organizational similarities. The motive behind a pilgrimage is similar to that behind a tour: both are quests for authentic experiences. Pilgrims attempted to visit a place where an event of religious importance actually occurred. Tourists present themselves at places of social, historical, and cultural importance.

It is worth noting that not all tourists have regarded back regions as socially important places. On occasion, and for some visitors, back regions are obtrusive. Arthur Young, when he visited France in 1787 to make observations for his comparative study of agriculture, also observed the following:

> Mops, brooms, and scrubbing brushes are not in the catalogue of the necessaries of a French inn. Bells there are none; the *fille* must always be bawled for; and when she appears, is neither neat, well dressed, nor handsome. The kitchen is black with smoke; the master commonly the cook, and the less you see of the cooking the more likely you are to have a stomach to your dinner. The mistress rarely classes civility or attention to her guests among the requisites of her trade. We are so unaccustomed in England to live in our bedchambers that it is at first awkward in France to find that people live nowhere else. Here I find that everybody, let his rank be what it may, lives in his bed-chamber. [Young 1910, p. 332]

Among some, especially some American, tourists and sightseers of today, Young's attitude would be considered insensitive and cynical even if there was agreement that his treatment of the facts was accurate, as apparently it was. One finds in the place of Young's attitude much interest in exactly the details Young wanted not to notice.

A tourist's desire to share in the real life of the places visited, or at least to see that life as it is really lived, is reflected in the conclusion of one tourist's report from a little Spanish town: "Finally, Frigliana has no single, spectacular attraction, such as Granada's Alhambra or the cave at Nerja. Frigliana's appeal lies in its atmosphere. It is quaint without being cloying or artificial. It is a living village and not a 'restoration of an authentic Spanish town.' Here one can better see and understand the Andalusian style of life" (Pearson 1969, p. 29). There are vulgar ways of expressing this liberal sentiment, the desire "to get off the beaten path" and "in with the natives." An advertisement for an airline reads: "Take 'De tour.' Swissair's free-wheeling fifteen day Take-a-break Holiday that lets you detour to the off-beat, over-looked and unexpected corners of Switzerland for as little as $315. . . . Including car. Take de tour. But watch out for de sheep, de goats and de chickens" (Advertisement 1970, p. 42).

Some tourists do make incursions into the life of the society they visit, or are at least actually allowed to peek into one of its back regions. In 1963 the manager of the Student Center at the University of California at Berkeley would occasionally invite visitors to the building to join him on his periodic inspection tours which was, for them, a chance to see its kitchens, the place behind the pin-setting machines in the bowling alley, the giant blowing fans on the roof, and so forth, but he was probably not a typical building manager. This kind of hospitality is the rule rather than the exception in the areas of the world that have been civilized the longest, a factor in the popularity of these areas with Anglo-Americans. A respondent of mine told me she was invited by a cloth merchant in the Damascus bazaar to visit his silk factory, and she answered "yes," whereupon he threw open a door behind his counter exposing a little dark room where two men in their underwear sat on the floor on either side of a hand loom passing a shuttle back and forth between them. "It takes a year to weave a bolt of silk like that," the owner explained as he closed the door. This kind of happening, an "experience" in the everyday sense of that term, often occurs by accident. A lady who is a relative of mine, and another lady friend of hers, walked too far into the Canadian Rockies near Banff and found themselves with too much traveling back to town to do in the daytime that was left to do it in. They were rescued by the crew of a freight train, and what they remember most from their experience was being allowed to ride with the engineer in the cab of his locomotive. A young American couple told me of being unable to find a hotel room in Zagreb,

Yugoslavia, and, while discussing their plight on the sidewalk, being approached by an old woman who led them by a circuitous route to a small apartment where they rented a blackmarket room, displacing the family of workers who slept on a couch behind a blanket hung as a curtain in the living room.

Touristic openings into society's back regions are ubiquitous. A certain amount of what is called "personal style" is a product of the way the individual relates to touristic opportunity. Some individuals are always on the lookout for a touristic opening. They are said to have an "adventuresome attitude." A report from the Caribbean suggests that a taste for adventure can be cultivated: " 'But tourists never take the mail boats,' said the hotel manager. That clinched the matter. The next afternoon, I jumped from the dock at Potter's Cay in downtown Nassau to the rusted deck of the Deborah K., swinging idly at her spring lines. . . . [The writer describes island hopping on the mail boat and ends his account with this observation.] The next day, while aloft in a Bahamas Airways plane, I spotted the Deborah K. chugging along in the sound toward Green Turtle Cay. She is no craft for the queasy of stomach and has a minimum of the amenities that most people find indispensable, but she and her sister mail boats offer a wonderfully inexpensive way to see life in the Bahamas—life as the natives live it, not the tourists" (Keller 1970, p. 24). Given the felt value of these experiences, it is not surprising to find social structural arrangements that produce them.

STAGED AUTHENTICITY IN TOURIST SETTINGS

A common reason for taking guided tours of social establishments is that the tour organizes access to areas of the establishment that are ordinarily closed to outsiders. School children's tours of firehouses, banks, newspapers, and dairies, for example, are called "educational" because the inner operations of these important places are shown and explained in the course of the tour. This kind of tour, and the experiences generated by it, provides an interesting set of analytical problems. The tour is characterized by social organization designed to reveal inner workings of the place; on tour, outsiders are allowed further in than regular patrons; children are permitted to enter bank vaults, to see a million dollars, to touch cows' udders, etc. At the same time, there is a staged quality to the proceedings that lends to them an aura of superficiality, albeit a superficiality that is not always perceived as such by the tourist, who is usually forgiving about these matters.

An account from Cape Kennedy provides illustration:

> No sightseers at the Manned Spacecraft Center ever had a more dramatic visit than those who, by design or accident of time, found themselves touring the facility last month during the unforgettable mission of Apollo

> 13. . . . In a garden-like courtyard outside the News Bureau in Building 1, a group of tourists visiting the Manned Spacecraft Center here stared at the working correspondents through the huge plate-glass windows. The visitors, too, could hear the voice of Mission Control. A tall young man, his arm around his mini-skirted blonde girl friend, summed up the feelings of the sightseers when he said, half aloud, "Being here's like being part of it."
>
> "Dear God," his girl whispered earnestly, "please let them come home safe." [Gordon 1970, no page]

The young man in this account is expressing his belief that he is having an almost authentic experience. This type of experience is produced through the use of a new kind of social space that is opening up everywhere in our society. It is a space for outsiders who are permitted to view details of the inner operation of a commercial, domestic, industrial, or public institution. Apparently, entry into this space allows adults to recapture virginal sensations of discovery, or childlike feelings of being half in and half out of society, their faces pressed up against the glass. Also, it can be noted that what is taken by some political radicals and conservatives to be indices of a general relaxation of society's moral standards ("swinging," "massage therapy," wide-screen cunnilingus, etc.) are only special cases of reality displays, public orgasm worked up in the interest of social solidarity.

Other basic (that is, biological process) examples of staged intimacy are provided by the tendency to make restaurants into something more than places to eat:

> The newest eating place in Copenhagen is La Cuisine, strategically located on the Stroeget, the main strolling street of the city. Everyone is flat-nosing it against the windows these days watching the four cooks.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> In order to get to the cozy, wood-paneled restaurant in the back of the house, the guest must pass the kitchen. If he is in a hurry he may eat in the kitchen, hamburger joint–style.
>
> "The kitchen" bit is a come-hither, actually, admits Canadian-born, Swiss-educated Patrick McCurdy, table captain and associate manager. "A casual passer-by is fascinated by cooks at work, preparing a steak or a chicken or a salad." [Sjöby 1971, p. 5]

What is being shown to tourists is not the institutional "backstage," as Goffman defined this term. Rather, it is a staged back region, a kind of living museum for which we have no analytical terms.

THE STRUCTURE OF TOURIST SETTINGS

A student of mine has told me that a new apartment building in New York City exhibits its heating and air conditioning equipment, brightly painted in basic colors, behind a brass rail in its lobby. From the standpoint of the social institutions that are exposed in this way, the structure of their recep-

tion rooms reflects a new concern for truth and morality at the institutional level. Industry, for example, is discovering that the commercial advantages of appearing to be honest and aboveboard can outweigh the disadvantages of having to organize little shows of honesty. An interesting parallel here is with some of the young people of the industrial West who have pressed for simplicity and naturalness in their attire and have found it necessary assiduously to select clothing, jewelry, and hair styles that are especially designed to look natural. In exposing their steel hearts for all to see, and staging their true inner life, important commercial establishments of the industrial West "went hippie" a decade before hippies went hippie. Approached from this standpoint, the hippie movement is not, technically, a movement, but a basic expression of the present stage of the evolution of our industrial society.

The current structural development of industrial society is marked by the appearance everywhere of touristic space. This space can be called a stage set, a tourist setting, or simply a set depending on how purposefully worked up for tourists the display is. The New York Stock Exchange viewed from the balcony set up for sightseers is a tourist setting, as there is no evidence that the show below is for the sightseers. The exhibitions of the back regions of the world at Disneyland in Anaheim, California, are constructed only for sightseers, however, and can be called "stage sets." Characteristics of sets are: the only reason that need be given for visiting them is to see them—in this regard they are unique among social places; they are physically proximal to serious social activity, or serious activity is imitated in them; they contain objects, tools, and machines that have specialized use in specific, often esoteric, social, occupational, and industrial routines; they are open, at least during specified times, to visitation from outsiders.

Touristic consciousness is motivated by its desire for authentic experiences, and the tourist may believe that he is moving in this direction, but often it is very difficult to tell for sure if the experience is authentic in fact. It is always possible that what is taken to be entry into a back region is really entry into a front region that has been totally set up in advance for touristic visitation. In tourist settings, especially in modern society, it may be necessary to discount the importance, and even the existence, of front and back regions except as ideal poles of touristic experience.

To return to Goffman's original front-back dichotomy, tourist settings can be arranged in a continuum starting from the front and ending at the back, reproducing the natural trajectory of an individual's initial entry into a social situation. While distinct empirical indicators of each stage may be somewhat difficult to discover, it is theoretically possible to distinguish six stages to this continuum, and here is a place where the exercise of a little theoretical license might eventually prove to be worthwhile.

Stage 1: Goffman's front region; the kind of social space tourists attempt to overcome, or to get behind.

Stage 2: a touristic front region that has been decorated to appear, in some of its particulars, like a back region: a seafood restaurant with a fish net hanging on the wall; a meat counter in a supermarket with three-dimensional plastic replicas of cheeses and bolognas hanging against the wall. Functionally, this stage (two) is entirely a front region, and it always has been, but it is cosmetically decorated with reminders of back-region activities: mementos, not taken seriously, called "atmosphere."

Stage 3: a front region that is totally organized to look like a back region: simulations of moon walks for television audiences; the live shows above sex shops in Berlin where the customer can pay to watch interracial couples copulating according to his own specific instructions. This is a problematical stage because the better the simulation, the more difficult it is to distinguish it from stage 4.

Stage 4: a back region that is open to outsiders: magazine exposés of the private doings of famous personages; official revelations of the details of secret diplomatic negotiations. It is the open characteristic that distinguishes these especially touristic settings (stages 3 and 4) from other back regions; access to most nontouristic back regions is somewhat restricted.

Stage 5: a back region that may be cleaned up or altered a bit because tourists are permitted an occasional glimpse in: Erving Goffman's kitchen, factory, ship, and orchestra rehearsal cases; news leaks.

Stage 6: Goffman's back region; the kind of social space that motivates touristic consciousness.

That is theory enough. The empirical action in tourist settings is mainly confined to movement between areas decorated to look like back regions, and back regions into which tourists are allowed to peek. Insight, in the everyday, and in some ethnological senses of the term, is what is gotten from one of these peeks into a back region.

TOURISTS AND INTELLECTUALS

There is no serious or functional role in the production awaiting the tourists in the places they visit. Tourists are not made personally responsible for anything that happens in the establishments they visit, and the quality of the insight gained by touristic experience has been criticized as less than profound. David Riesman's "other directed" (1950) and Herbert Marcuse's "one-dimensional" men (1964) are products of a traditional intellectual concern for the superficiality of knowledge in mass industrial society, but the tourist setting per se is just beginning to prompt intellectual commentary. Settings are often not merely copies or replicas of real-life

situations, but copies that are presented as disclosing more about the real thing than the real thing itself discloses. Of course this cannot be the case, at least not from technical standpoints—from the standpoint of ethnography, for example. The Greyline guided tours of the Haight Ashbury when the hippies lived there cannot be substituted for the studies based on participant observation that were undertaken at the same time: the intellectual attitude is firm in this belief. The touristic experience that comes out of the tourist setting is based on inauthenticity, and as such it is superficial when compared with careful study; it is morally inferior to mere experience. A mere experience may be mystified, but a touristic experience is always mystified, and the lie contained in the touristic experience, moreover, presents itself as a truthful revelation, as the vehicle that carries the onlooker behind false fronts into reality. The idea here is that a false back is more insidious and dangerous than a false front, or an inauthentic demystification of social life is not merely a lie but a superlie, the kind that drips with sincerity.

Along these lines, Daniel Boorstin's (1961, pp. 77–117) comments on sightseeing and tourism suggest that critical writing on the subject of modern mass mentality is gaining analytical precision and is moving from the individual-centered concepts of the 1950s to a structural orientation. His concept of "pseudo-event" is a recent addition to a line of specific criticism of tourists that can be traced back to Veblen's "conspicuous leisure" (1953, pp. 41–60), or back still further to Mark Twain's ironic commentary in *The Innocents Abroad.* In his use of the term "pseudo-event" Boorstin wants his reader to understand that there is something about the tourist setting itself that is not intellectually satisfying. In his own words: "These [tourist] 'attractions' offer an elaborately contrived indirect experience, an artificial product to be consumed in the very places where the real thing is as free as air. They are ways for the traveler to remain out of contact with foreign peoples in the very act of 'sight-seeing' them. They keep the natives in quarantine while the tourist in air-conditioned comfort views them through a picture window. They are the cultural mirages now found at tourist oases everywhere" (Boorstin 1961, p. 99). This kind of commentary reminds us that tourist settings, like other areas of institutional life, are often insufficiently policed by liberal concerns for truth and beauty; they are tacky. Another way of approaching the same observations is to suggest that some touristic places overexpress their underlying structure and upset certain of their sensitive visitors thereby: restaurants are decorated like ranch kitchens; bellboys assume and use false, foreign first names; hotel rooms are made to appear like peasant cottages; primitive religious ceremonies are staged as public pageants. This kind of naked tourist setting is probably not as important in the overall picture of mass tourism as Boorstin makes it out to be in his polemic, but it is an ideal type of sorts, and many examples of it exist.

Boorstin is insightful as to the nature of touristic arrangements, but he undercuts what might have developed into a structural analysis of sightseeing and touristic consciousness by falling back onto individual-level interpretations before analyzing fully his "pseudo-event" conception. He claims that tourists themselves cause "pseudo-events." Commenting on the restaurants along superhighways, Boorstin writes: "There people can eat without having to look out on an individualized, localized landscape. The disposable paper mat on which they are served shows no local scenes, but a map of numbered super highways with the location of other 'oases.' *They feel most at home above the highway itself, soothed by the auto stream to which they belong*" (1961, p. 114; my emphasis). None of the accounts in my collection support Boorstin's contention that tourists want superficial, contrived experiences. Rather, tourists demand authenticity, just as Boorstin does. Nevertheless, Boorstin persists in architecting an absolute separation of touristic and intellectual attitudes. On the distinction between work ("traveling") and sightseeing he writes: "The traveler, then, was working at something; the tourist was a pleasure-seeker. The traveler was active; he went strenuously in search of people, of adventure, of experience. The tourist is passive; he expects interesting things to happen to him. He goes 'sight-seeing.' . . . He expects everything to be done to him and for him" (Boorstin 1961, p. 85). As I have already suggested, the attitude Boorstin expresses is a commonplace among tourists and travel writers. It is so prevalent, in fact, that it is a part of the problem of mass tourism, not an analytical reflection on it.

In other words, we still lack adequate technical perspectives for the study of "pseudo-events." The construction of such perspectives necessarily begins with the tourists themselves and a close examination of the facts of sightseeing. The writers of the accounts cited in the first sections of this paper express Boorstin's disappointment that their experiences are sometimes fleeting and insulated and a desire to get in with the natives, but, more important here, a willingness to accept disappointment when they feel they are stopped from penetrating into the real life of the place they are visiting. In fact, some tourists are able to laugh off Boorstin's disappointment. The account of a trip to Tangier from which the following is excerpted was given by a writer who clearly expected the false backwardness she found there and is relaxed about relating it: "A young Arab pulled a chair up to our table. He had rugs to sell, but we insisted we were not interested. He unrolled his entire collection and spread them out on the ground. He wouldn't leave. I could see beneath his robes that he was wearing well-tailored navy blue slacks and a baby blue cashmere sweater" (Thompson 1970, p. 3). Similarly, the visitor to Las Vegas who wrote the following has seen through the structure of tourist settings and is laughing

about it: "[A]long with winter vacationists by the thousands, I will return to lively Las Vegas, if only to learn whether Howard Hughes, like the Mint Casino, has begun issuing free coupons entitling the visitor to a backstage tour of his moneymaking establishment" (Goodman 1970, p. 11). For these tourists, exposure of back regions is a casual part of their touristic experience. What they see in the back is only another show: it does not shock, trick, or anger them, and they do not express any feelings of having been made less pure by their discovery.

CONCLUSION

In highly developed tourist settings, such as San Francisco and Switzerland, every detail of touristic experience can take on a showy, back-region aspect, at last for fleeting moments. Tourists enter tourist areas precisely because their experiences there will not, for them, be routine. The local people in the places they visit, by contrast, have long discounted the presence of tourists and go about their business as usual, even their tourist business, as best they can, treating tourists as a part of the regional scenery. Tourists often do see routine aspects of life as it is really lived in the places they visit, although few tourists express much interest in this. In the give-and-take of urban streetlife in tourist areas, the question of who is watching whom and who is responding to whom can be as complex as it is in the give-and-take between ethnographers and their respondents. It is only when a person makes an effort to penetrate into the real life of the areas he visits that he ends up in places especially designed to generate feelings of intimacy and experiences that can be talked about as "participation." No one can "participate" in his own life, he can only participate in the lives of others.

And once tourists have entered touristic space, there is no way out for them so long as they press their search for authenticity. Near each tourist setting there are others like the last. Each one may be visited, and each one promises real and convincing shows of local life and culture. Even the infamously clean Istanbul Hilton has not excluded all aspects of Turkish culture (the cocktail waitresses wear harem pants, or did in 1968) and, for some Europeans I know, an American superhighway is an attraction of the first rank, the more barren the better, because it is more American.

Daniel Boorstin was the first to study these matters. His approach elevates to the level of analysis a nostalgia for an earlier time with more clear-cut divisions between the classes, and simpler social values based on a programmatic, back versus front view of the true and the false. This classic position is morally superior to the one presented here, but it cannot lead to the scientific study of sightseeing. Specifically, Boorstin's and other

intellectual approaches do not help us to analyze the expansion of the tourist class under industrialization, and the development on an international scale of activities and social structural arrangements for tourists, social changes Boorstin himself documents. Rather than confronting the issues he raises, Boorstin only expresses a long-standing touristic attitude, a pronounced dislike, bordering on hatred, for other tourists, an attitude that turns man against man in a they-are-the-tourists-I-am-not equation. (For an excellent discussion of this aspect of the intellectual approach, see Burgelin [1967, pp. 66–69].) Additional study of sightseeing, using analytical models that are up to the task, will show that the touristic attitude, and the structures that produce it, contributes to the destruction of interpersonal solidarity that is such a notable feature of the life of the educated masses in advanced industrial society.

Daniel Boorstin calls places like American superhighways and the Istanbul Hilton "pseudo," a hopeful appellation that suggests they are insubstantial, or transitory, which they are not, and suggests also that somewhere in tourist settings there are real events accessible to intellectual elites, and perhaps there are. In this paper I have argued that a more helpful way of approaching the same facts is in terms of a modification of Erving Goffman's front-back distinction. Specifically, I have suggested that for the study of tourist settings front and back be treated as ideal poles of a continuum, poles that are linked by a series of front regions decorated to appear as back regions, and back regions set up to accommodate outsiders. I have suggested the term "stage setting" for these intermediary types of social space, but there is no need to be rigid about the matter of the name of this place, so long as its structural features and their influences on ideas are understood.

I have claimed that the structure of this social space is intimately linked to touristic attitudes, and I want to pursue this: the touristic way of getting in with the natives is to enter into a quest for authentic experiences, perceptions, and insights. The quest is marked off in stages in the passage from front to back. Movement from stage to stage corresponds to growing touristic understanding. This continuum is sufficiently developed in some areas of the world that it appears as an infinite regression of stage sets. Once in this manifold, the tourist is trapped; his road does not end abruptly in some conversion process that transforms him into Boorstin's "traveler," "working at something" as he breaks the bounds of all that is pseudo and penetrates, finally, into a real back region. Tourists make brave sorties out from their hotels hoping, perhaps, for an authentic experience, but their paths can be traced in advance over small increments of what is for them increasingly apparent authenticity proffered by tourist settings. Adventuresome tourists progress from stage to stage, always in the public eye, and greeted everywhere by their obliging hosts.

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