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Paying Forward and Paying Back

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Twenty years after the conclusion of a fieldwork study, a member of the family that once served as my informant came to live with me. This reflexive account of Ari's stay in our home juxtaposes his socialist kibbutz life with that of my own hypercommodified individualistic urban life. His experiences of working in the illegal economy raise questions about my own hiring practices. In short, we confront ourselves through our respondents' cultural vision. Ultimately, in revisiting a study I had thought complete, this account raises the question of what we owe those people who help us to gain knowledge about their culture, the currency of our careers.

Most of us think a lot about the people we study. After all, our careers are built on what we know and write about them. But what do our respondents think about what we write? What if they showed up in our classrooms or at our front doors looking for an accounting? In a tongue-in-cheek essay entitled "The Last Seminar," Stanley Cohen (1979) imagined just such an improbable (and potentially nightmarish) scenario. Their former subjects visit him and other faculty in their classrooms. Peasants, factory workers, gang members, and the like invade the researchers' turf, demanding the return of their native identities and challenging the theories the authorities have advanced about them.¹

I have never shared Cohen's hallucinations, but not long ago the son of one of my closest informants showed up on my front door with a backpack, a duffel bag, and plans to stay for a year. His arrival occasioned a host of questions for me, particularly about what can happen when the "field" comes to you. In this article, I examine three questions about the relationships we enter into when doing fieldwork. First, what, if anything, do we owe the people we study? Second, what do we learn about ourselves when we look through their eyes? Third, what do we learn about our culture refracted through their experience?

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WHEN THE FIELD RETURNS

In January 1999 I received an e-mail from Ari, the eldest son of an Israeli couple whose kibbutz I had studied over twenty years earlier.² His note read, "I am finishing the military in a few months. I would like to know if it is possible to come and live with you and work in the U.S. I want to make money so I can travel." The past flashed before me. I recalled my job as a child care worker on the kibbutz and how each day I bent down to double-knot the shoelaces of one particular toddler. I remembered his big gap-tooth smile and his warm hugs. Soon, if my husband and I consented, he would show up at our front door.

DIFFERENT INTERPRETATIONS OF THE REALITY THAT WAS

Ari's request prompted the first of several episodes in which I revisited understandings I had negotiated while in the field. None of these episodes of self-reflection led me to dramatically revise, or even reject, conclusions I had reached at the time of the original research. However, each in its own way underscored just how tricky perception is and how deeply rooted assumptions and ideological preferences can challenge even the most ardent efforts at openness.

Friend or Family?

I became a volunteer in 1977-78 to gain insight into gender relations in an Israeli kibbutz. The role of volunteer is a popular one for participant observers since it is socially sanctioned and appreciated. Participating in the kibbutz's host family program, which assigned me to a family, would enhance my study of the community. My kibbutz host family was very appealing from that perspective: both the father and the mother had been born on the kibbutz; they were a settled married couple with two children; and although only a few years older than me, they were not my peers (e.g., I was single and a student). By coincidence, I wound up working at the children's house in which this couple's son lived.³

From the outset, I viewed my relationship with my host family as a transaction bound by the length of my stay on the kibbutz. They gave me data and connections; I provided them with the opportunity to speak English and to learn more about the world beyond the gates of their fairly insular community. As one kibbutz member put it, volunteers like me kept gossip from becoming stale. It seemed to me like a "workable identity" (Maines, Shaffir, and Turowetz 1980:278), a role definition that made sense to me and to the people with whom I would routinely interact. Moreover, I felt like I had struck a bargain that would leave me largely unencumbered when it came time to leave (cf. Maines, Shaffir, and Turowetz 1980).

I did not anticipate that my host family would come to see me as a family member or that, some twenty years later, their son would make a request that presumed deeper, familial ties (or obligations). I had kept in touch with Ari's parents

over the intervening years through birthday cards and letters and occasional brief visits. Still, I did not think of them as family. Family is a permanent set of mutual obligations with love as a binding tie. I was one of a series of volunteers whom they “adopted” for a short time. I thought of myself as interchangeable with the other foreigners: I filled a slot in their family, but I always wondered what place, if any, I had in their hearts. They used to tease me, “You’ll leave and we will never see you again.” The defiant part of myself wanted to prove them wrong, but I also felt vaguely like a foster child whose attachments were supposed to be severed when she moved on. Ironically, I was an adult cast as a child in the host family program. That is, when another kibbutz member had a complaint about me or just wanted more information they would ask my kibbutz parents. They spoke for me and my actions reflected on them. I was very conscious of this; yet I presumed they acted out of duty, not love.

Although Ari had always been a warm and loving child, it had been two decades since I had spent time with him. My husband and I agreed to host Ari in a spare room in our home, but we were surprised that immediately on arrival, he behaved toward me not as a guest but more like I was his older sister or a favored aunt. Our offer of a place to stay did not shape his assumptions, we came to learn, but his parents’ view did: I was not a friend, I was family. This might seem like a contradiction, but I think it took Ari’s stay with us to cement our mutual obligations and responsibilities to one another as family members, including his parents and siblings. Since I was no longer in the role of field-worker and had decided that I would not write about the kibbutz again (or so I thought), I could allow myself the necessary emotional space to discover a more authentic view of this particular family. I emphasize “particular” because I thought the research project was frozen in time (not my thoughts about it) even as my correspondence with this family continued. Skeptical readers will argue that I still needed to prove to this family that I differed from all the other volunteers who passed through their house.

Research, then, is not static but a process of ever-changing bargains between one’s own needs and those we study. Certainly Ari’s stay demonstrated familial reciprocity. I now realize agreeing to have Ari live with us proved that I shared feelings of family obligations. I had mistaken my understanding of field-worker for that of a detached participant, although I now know this is a fieldwork myth (see Kleinman and Copp 1993).

As I looked back on my days in the kibbutz, however, I realized that I had been drawn deeply into the rhythm of this family’s life—deeply enough that I qualified in their eyes as a family member. By sharing their rituals, maintaining the family pace, and synchronizing my routines with theirs, I tried to earn a place in their family. For example, before Shabbat dinner in the communal dining room I would join the rest of the family to visit grandparents, who served us small cakes or other specially prepared foods and coffee. These ritual family gatherings always included uncles, aunts, and their children. During the week, I visited the family when I had time. If I missed visiting for a few days my kibbutz father would show up at my place of work and tell

me the children missed me. Without saying it directly, he was telling me that I was being lax about my priorities and that I needed to make time to visit.

Twenty years later, I recognize that even as I attempted to maintain a level of detachment I slipped into family-like behaviors. For example, after only a few weeks with my adoptive family, I stopped writing field notes about them. Being with them became a haven from the fieldwork. Shabbat gatherings not only provided opportunities to question more kibbutz members about gender and work, they also served as a way to give and receive laughter and caring. I did not go “native”—a perennial source of concern to field-workers and those who supervise them—because I continued to write field notes about everything else and to doggedly pursue insights related to my theoretical interests.

My definition of our relationship as one of friendship rather than family helped me to manage the duality of my roles in the community—participant *and* observer, insider *and* outsider—and also to fulfill my own needs for affiliation. At the time I understood the obligation of a social scientist (at least in my fieldwork training in the 1970s) to be fairly modest and restricted. I imagined that most field-workers developed relationships that resembled the ones I had (e.g., William Foote Whyte and Doc maintained contact). Even as my relationship to this family changed from formality to friendship (one that I hoped to maintain when I left the community), I clung to the idea that this was still a transaction, a *quid pro quo*.⁴

Agreeing to host Ari in our home initially did not feel like a “family thing” to do (even though we had not hosted long-term guests before), but Ari interpreted it as such. He referred to us as his “American family” when explaining our relationship to other Israelis he met in the United States. That quickly changed: he sought our advice on personal and deeply felt matters, for example, how to cope with homesickness, how to respond to his parents’ desire for more letters and phone calls, and how to ask an American woman for a date. Ari admitted that he was not a particularly open or revealing person, yet he felt he could share his worries and questions with us because we were family.

So we were (and are) family, despite my rationalizations while in the field. From his and his parents’ perspective, I acted like family and therefore I was family—whatever I might have thought I was.

The Meaning of Motherhood

From the outset of my research, I was interested in how the social and economic organization of the kibbutz, especially the system of communal child care, influenced gender roles and power. I hypothesized that the children’s houses gave women freedom to achieve gender equality. Free and continuously available child care meant that women could participate fully in the kibbutz. Because they did not have to care for children in the evening, women could attend the community meetings in which kibbutz policies were set. Moreover, with child care obligations detached from motherhood, men and women could take much more equal roles in child rearing.

Since my attention focused on gender relations in an egalitarian community, I underplayed the meaning of motherhood in the kibbutz. However, having had a child of my own since leaving the field, Ari's presence in our home caused my memories to surface and to make connections that had eluded me twenty years earlier. For example, I recalled that when I visited my kibbutz sponsor's home, Yael (Ari's mother) often asked me how her son's afternoon had been. She told me that she could tell when I had been the child care worker on the last shift because I was the only one who made double-knots in shoelaces to keep her child from tripping. Moreover, she could tell from Ari's mood and behavior who had worked the afternoon shifts each day. As a mother she had limited control over her children's caregivers. The kibbutz ideology of socialization gave child care providers quite a lot of power in those days.

Not until Ari took up residence in my home and I compared his child care experiences with those of my daughter did I fully comprehend how closely my adopted kibbutz mother looked for clues about who had cared for her child each day. I remembered that communal child care was such a source of tension for my kibbutz parents that they had considered leaving the kibbutz. I had not learned about this until several months into being adopted into their family, after I had learned enough Hebrew and had earned Yael's trust. She told me that she hated relinquishing her children to the care of others so much that she would sit outside the children's houses where they slept to make sure they did not cry out in need of her comfort. Her anxieties about parent-child separation were not uncommon and caused some families to leave the kibbutz. The nightly separation stoked in Yael a deep yearning to watch over her children as they slept. I did not understand that her pain resulted from her inability to embrace this core ideological component of kibbutz life. She hungered for her children because she never had enough time with them. Yael's desire to nurture conflicted with the organization of communal life, despite her own experience as a kibbutz daughter who had been born and socialized into this system. She wanted more control over her children's lives than was allowed by the communal system, wherein committees decided about child rearing, talent, personality, and intelligence. In short, our shifting personal experiences enable a similar shifting of our fieldwork analyses. The conclusions we draw, I learned, are at best partial and situated in historical moments that reflect our own life circumstances as much as those of the people we study.

Independence and Dependence

When I was a field-worker in the late 1970s I observed that household work in the kibbutz—work that women in the United States did in the privacy of their homes—was accomplished in a communal fashion, and no one received pay for their labor. In this socialist community, a woman's economic well-being was not dependent on her spouse's ability to earn a living, although at the time I conducted my fieldwork jobs were divided along gender lines. It was only after Ari arrived in our

home that I began to recognize I had overlooked other kinds of trade-offs—of dependence and independence—that men and women make in a socialist community.

Despite three years of military service, Ari depended on us to help him negotiate the world of transactions most of us take for granted in a capitalist society. Whereas our eleven-year-old daughter learned from an early age that virtually everything gets valued in one currency or another (e.g., time or money), Ari thought in terms of one big exchange: work for life. In the kibbutz and in the military, he had little experience with money and felt no need to calculate the equivalence of exchanges. Quite simply, his clothes got washed; his food got cooked and served because he belonged to the community. While living in our home, he behaved as if Coca-Cola, his favorite drink, just appeared by itself in the refrigerator. He knew that someone had to go to the grocery store, pay for it, and stock the shelves. However, in the kibbutz, someone else had done it; it was their job. Likewise, I had to show Ari how to work our washing machine and dryer. He grasped the process easily enough, but then he asked me, "How do I get my jeans ironed?" His question startled me at first, and then I told him, "I have an ironing board and an iron. You can use it to iron your jeans, but to be honest, few people I know iron blue jeans." He acknowledged my point but replied that the kibbutz needed to create work for people, especially old people, and ironing allowed them to continue to feel productive. What I had seen twenty years earlier as a breakthrough for women may have had less to do with an ideology of gender equality than with the need to employ older members.

Governance in kibbutz community and economy looked different when I viewed it through the lens of Ari's experience. Kibbutz members, I recalled, did not enjoy a full range of choices when it came to consumption and material objects. I concluded that members traded individual choice for collective well-being. Ari was accustomed to having a committee make most consumer decisions. Certainly, he had likes and dislikes, but he had learned to live within the parameters set by committees. Individuals like Ari who ventured "outside" the community remained less able to choose on their own. Bedeviled and sometimes embarrassed by his discomfort with making choices from a restaurant menu, Ari would ask us to choose for him.

These three instances of insight that occurred when the "field returned" both heartened and chastened me. I was heartened by knowing that I could "revisit" the data, my memories as well as my field notes, and recognize my omissions. I was chastened as I recognized again how complex and incomplete I had been as an instrument for observation.⁵

DIFFERENT INTERPRETATIONS OF CURRENT REALITY

When the field returns it can bring a feeling of disorientation—akin to the feeling you get when you see yourself in a television monitor but do not know the location of the camera that captures your image. In this case, Ari was the observational instrument observing me, my family, and our society. The disorientation came from

recognizing the images he described but not always recognizing myself (or ourselves) in the description.⁶

A Planned Life

As Ari became a member of our family, he began to reveal more to us about ourselves. For example, he grew more openly critical of our lives: "You work too much" and "You have to make a plan to see anyone" were common complaints wrapped in the language of observation. At first his comments jolted me. But then I realized his astuteness. These two observations characterized our daily life as part of the dual-career lifestyle that ruled us. Time was scarce and friends were scheduled, as was everything else. Academic work is endless, and I had allowed it to overtake my life. During the months Ari lived with us, my husband, Bob, worked in India as a consultant a great deal. Ari viewed us as slaves to our jobs. While he criticized "lazy" people who took advantage of the community by working only when they felt like it, we represented the other extreme: people who are starved for leisure and thus a full life.

Ari was also right about our friendships. We make a plan. We leave little to spontaneity. I know what I am doing six months in advance. No one just stops in without phoning first, not even neighbors. Our daughter plays in an after-school program where she selects from activities that adults supervise, and on weekends she, too, schedules "play-dates." In the kibbutz people just stop by all the time. They do not have appointment books that control their lives. Children play unsupervised, though all community members watch out for them.

The Underground Economy

Not unlike Alexis de Toqueville and Wu Tingfang,⁷ Ari's observation revealed facets of American culture that were only dimly visible to me or that had become so much a part of my world that they disappeared from view and from memory. Most profound were Ari's adventures in the underground economy.

Ari's tourist visa made it difficult for him to find work, as it prohibits employment. I figured that through friends with small businesses, someone would hire Ari and pay him under the table. Had his sister been the child living with us, she could have found work as a nanny; but for a man it was different. Though Help Wanted signs were everywhere in 1999, cash work was hard to find. I placed an ad in my daughter's school newspaper and a call on the college's e-mail bulletin saying that a young man living in our home was available for any kind of work from weeding to child care. Ari found a few weeks of gardening work, but gardening was not a lucrative occupation. Also, Ari did not like working by himself because he was used to working on teams; it made him even lonelier.

Ari found a local Israeli café where he felt comfortable. Similar to other ethnic groups, Israelis rely on each other to learn the local culture and to find employment,

especially when the work is illegal. At the café Ari met an Israeli who worked for a local moving company owned by an Israeli (who was married to an American). The man offered Ari a job, and he thought it would pay good money (in cash). His boss knew illegally employed Israelis had no recourse, so he exploited his employees. He paid eight dollars an hour for literally backbreaking work moving furniture. Ari thought he would get rich quick. However, he was paid per job and often had to sit around most of the day doing nothing but waiting. His boss did not guarantee him a set wage per day or week; and his boss knew he would need additional employees in a month's time when leases turned over. The hours he did work caused back pain; fellow employees said that his body would eventually get used to the heavy lifting.

Ari made more in tips than in hourly wages. After a month, he became fed up with the limited hours and thought about finding another job. When the boss heard rumors that Ari might go to work for a rival Israeli moving company, he offered him a promotion. Moving season would soon begin, and Ari was a good worker. Now that Ari spoke fairly decent English he became a foreman. This meant that he would be in charge of the crew (always at least one man). As it turned out, the boss hired undocumented Mexicans who did not speak English to do the heavy work of moving furniture. Ari told us the Mexicans never moved up because the Israeli boss did not trust them in the same way that he trusted someone from his own country.

To continue to drive the moving truck, Ari needed to get a U.S. license. His international driver's license was about to expire. To complicate matters, Massachusetts requires proof of U.S. citizenship or long-term status (green card) to apply for a license. Ari's boss knew how to get his illegal employees licenses and permits in Florida but did not want to pay the full airfare (or expenses) for Ari to get a U.S. driver's license; Ari had to work to pay for half of the trip's costs.

After three months of driving, a brush with the law convinced Ari he needed to obtain a U.S. license or risk being deported. The police stopped him because of a broken headlight and fined him for not having a valid driver's license. Ari's boss had coached him to tell the police that he was doing his "uncle" a favor. Ari was not taken to the police station for working illegally.

Ari flew to Florida to take the test. He listed the hotel he stayed in as his residence on the application form. Once a person has a U.S. driver's license in one state, he can obtain a driver's license in Massachusetts (without a green card or citizenship). Ari told us that the system works like this: after a few weeks pass, he reports his license as lost and tells the Massachusetts authorities that he has just moved to Boston; he uses our address as his new home; the computer system allows the authorities in Massachusetts to check that he has a valid driver's license from another state and then they will issue him a new license from the state of Massachusetts. His lack of U.S. citizenship and his entry into the United States on a tourist visa gets lost in the transfer process. Ari could not believe that the United States has no uniform requirements for a license. Neither could we.

Ari stayed with the moving company even though his boss continued to exploit him because of his illegal status. Ironically, although the boss trusted Ari more than

the Mexican illegals, he did not think twice about exploiting him. Often it took the form of threats: if Ari wanted a day off, he would threaten to fire him. Therefore, Ari once worked three weeks, ten hours or more every day during a heavy moving period. Despite his working conditions, Ari applied to extend his tourist visa because he was earning money more quickly in the United States than he would be able to do in his country. Late one night he came home from work and said, "I have a favor to ask. I want to extend my stay in the U.S. and I would like you to sign this paper and write that I am an employee in your home." I surprised myself by how easily the "No" came out. I was not willing to lie about the place of his employment to a U.S. government agency. I recommended that he ask his boss for such a letter. He said his boss would not do it; he applied, instead, to extend his tourist visa. However, while his request was pending, pressure from his parents to return home, coupled with the cold weather in New England, changed his decision to remain in the United States.

Why was I suddenly not willing to continue to help with his illegal work? Ari's request made it clear to me that I could not cross this particular legal boundary to help him further, because this would escalate my involvement by including a government agency.⁸ My family has agreed to make an inside-outside distinction about hiring practices; that is, we do not hire undocumented people in our house, but we ignore what goes on outside of our house. Zoe Baird withdrew her nomination as attorney general under President Clinton when it surfaced that she had undeclared, not fully documented live-in help for her child. There were laws, and then there were LAWS. Just about everyone—until Zoe Baird—ignored declaring domestic help and paying taxes and benefits for such help. We drew the line at nannies and placed our daughter in a day care center. Not only had I written about the politics of career women hiring poorer, often undocumented women to care for their children (Hertz 1986), but I also felt I should align my scholarship and child-rearing practices. Despite the greater financial cost of a day care center, we decided to go this route, which made me feel more politically correct than my academic friends who had live-in nannies during the day but expected them to become invisible or "disappear"—during the evening (Macdonald 1998). Equally important, my child care work in the kibbutz taught me how important collective practices of child rearing are for children to create a deep web of social ties and community obligations.

Until Ari lived with us, I never gave much thought to the legal status of the people who worked in and around our house. My husband had worked in the fields of California and wrote a book about undocumented agricultural workers (Thomas 1985), so we knew about underground economies. However, we had not attended to the underground economy lately because when I hire businesses or contractors, they hire other people to do the actual work. I am probably not all that unusual when I write that my main concern is that the work gets done and that the person or business I hire is responsible for seeing to it. However, Ari's work experience forced me to dig beneath the surface of contracts and civility and wonder about the labor practices of those businesses. Ari simultaneously found employment and exploitation by

a member of his own ethnic group who also once lived at the margins. His boss had to figure out the system from the margins and how to manipulate it himself. It is not new news that undocumented workers have no recourse—as Ari’s experience confirmed—but we did not realize how widely dispersed the underground economy is. It is not confined to certain categories of workers (e.g., nannies, migrant farmworkers, drug dealers). Further, tourist visas make it relatively easy to find such work through a shared ethnic group and to manipulate various regulations barring those holding tourist visas from U.S. employment. We were not hiring Ari ourselves, so we did not think of ourselves as housing an illegal worker in the United States. After September 11, 2001, ignoring illegal workers is no longer an option.

CONCLUSION

In *Dancing at Armageddon* Mitchell (2002:208–9) asks two questions that bear directly on the central issue of this article, the return of the field: “Do we visit the field one last time to acquire final facts? Or is it to liberate ourselves from unquiet memories?” Before Ari visited, I never thought I would write about him or his family again (Baker and Hertz 1981; Hertz 1982; Hertz and Baker 1983). Since his visit, however, I have given a great deal of thought to what I learned from him—what I learned when I realized that the field never leaves. I conclude with three implications.

First, we cannot lose sight of the personal obligations that bind us to our subjects. These may appear small, temporary, and tactical at the moment they are negotiated, but they and their consequences can affect many generations across many years. I deliberately included “paying” twice in the title of this article to signify that I felt haunted by an obligation—until Ari’s e-mail arrived. North American relationships are built on credit and debt as the basis of interaction. People do not base intimate relationships in the kibbutz on a similar set of exchanges; instead a collective consciousness emerges as an obligation (Baker and Hertz 1981). North American hospitality translated into time and money and coaching in practical matters. My hospitality to this young man discharged a debt that I could not ignore simply because my fieldwork had ended. I could only pay back the knowledge I received with hospitality. Ari’s involvement in our family, on my turf, forced me to juxtapose the hypercommodified life I led against the one I had studied and tried to forget as impossible in the United States. “Paying forward” has a double meaning: I may be tipping the economic scales again to aid my daughter in a cross-cultural experience. I would prefer to believe that our two families established emotional and intimate ties as the transformation of possible selves I experienced.

Second, we never truly bring closure to the field, and that is good. We never truly liberate ourselves from those we study. They transform us as much as we might transform our understanding of them over time. They are not simply the studied but an intrinsic part of ourselves. The return of the field may cause surprise (even consternation), but it should sharpen a researcher’s observational and analytic skills—in much the same way that aging and environmental changes can make it necessary

to adjust an eyeglass prescription. The field-worker, then, needs to reconcile divergent interpretations of the past and present realities that can only come about through a deliberate (albeit occasionally uncomfortable) process of self-reflection. In a sense, when the field returns it does us the service of illustrating just how selectively we perceive the world around us—even when, as qualitative researchers, we try to be open and observant.

And third, with both communication and transportation technologies making the world a “smaller place” and with the spread of democratic principles and market transactions increasing the permeability of national boundaries, we all have increased opportunities to become observers. Likewise, the opportunities for us to be observed increase. In the best of all possible worlds this might lead to greater mutual understanding and respect for differences. However, interaction does not always lead to understanding and respect. To the extent that nations, populations, and classes find their identity and advantages challenged or threatened by interaction, the distinctions between legal and illegal and friendly and unfriendly will become more important. Opportunities for foreigners to visit and study indigenous cultures of all sorts may become severely limited when it is not easy to distinguish between friend and foe. In Ari’s case particularly, post–September 11 it is hard to imagine his being able to manipulate the immigration bureaucracy to extend his stay beyond the limits of a tourist visa. Imagine how much more difficult it would be for an Afghani student to attempt what Ari accomplished. So, despite what the technologies and markets encourage, we may be becoming far more bunkered and selective in our interactions and, therefore, less knowledgeable about the world and about ourselves as a result.

EPILOGUE

On July 17, 2002, we received an e-mail from Ari, who was trekking around parts of Asia with his younger brother. I had written him a week earlier and told him that I was finishing up summer school and had a few weeks off before the fall semester begins. He teasingly wrote back, “p.s.—Rosanna: What are you gonna do with some spare time on your hands?? Maybe fly with Bob to a short visit in Thailand?” I responded that perhaps we could make a plan to meet in Asia in three years’ time. He knows the contours of my life well. Meanwhile, he and my daughter now exchange e-mails. He wrote to her, “Now we can gossip about your parents!” Someday she will probably go to Israel for an extended stay with his family.

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NOTES

1. In an e-mail correspondence Stanley Cohen wrote that the editor who accepted his paper for publication commented: "This was the first time that the journal had *knowingly* published a work of fiction." Cohen's account questions the authority of the researcher as the godlike interpreter and theorist while challenging older ideas about objectivity in social research. Such stories told are now no longer dubbed fictional accounts (or published under pen names for fear of professional reprisal [Bohannon a.k.a. Bowen 1954]); they are part of a broader shift in ethnography and participant observation that transforms social science knowledge (see Atkinson and Hammersley 1994). Almost two decades later, a significant literature has emerged that attempts to connect the self with their storied lives. For instance, Richardson (1997) illustrates the connection between her emotional life and her autobiography and intellectual life; Romero and Stewart's (1999) collection gives voice to those who have been silenced by "master narratives." In this article I further reveal how we confront ourselves through our respondents' cultural vision (see also Glassner and Hertz 2003).
2. I have changed the names of my kibbutz family members.
3. Kibbutzim have undergone numerous changes since the original fieldwork; however, this kibbutz maintained the founding ideology years beyond other kibbutzim. For instance, this kibbutz was one of the last to agree to children sleeping in their parents' homes. The children's houses have since been modified ideologically. In short, they are day care centers and no longer the primary source of socialization for children.
4. Feminists writing about methodology have argued that researchers need to give back "something" to the people we study (see DeVault 1996 for a review that includes new ways feminist scholars are approaching ethical and moral questions of what we owe). In short, while scholars may say they owe and have lifelong obligations to their respondents, I know of no scholars who have written about hosting former individuals from their field studies. Usually, the giving back in a research project has a social action or policy component (see, e.g., Reinharz 1992 for a feminist perspective; see Whyte 1991 for a social action call to social scientists). Wayne Baker and I gave the kibbutz a report, including recommendations for various practical changes. It did not fulfill the feminist obligations or the social action call that followed decades after this study. In the late 1970s I thought this was what I owed.
5. A contemporary tension in ethnographic research is epistemological: can we develop a science out of social life? Knowledge itself has come center stage as social scientists attempt to more fully represent social reality. Reflexivity, one such attempt, implies a shift in our understanding of data and its collection, that is, constant and intensive scrutiny of "what I know" and "how I know it." To be reflexive means to engage in ongoing conversation about experience while simultaneously living in the moment. By extension, the reflexive ethnographer does not simply report "facts" or "truths" but actively constructs interpretations of his or her experiences in the field and then questions how those interpretations came about (see esp. Rabinow 1986). The outcome of reflexive social science is reflexive knowledge—statements that provide insight into the workings of the social world *and* insight into how the knowledge came into existence (Myerhoff and Ruby 1982). The best definition I have found of reflexivity is Helen Callaway's (1992:33): "Often condemned as apolitical, reflexivity, on the contrary can be seen as opening the way to a more radical consciousness of self in facing the political dimensions of fieldwork and constructing knowledge. Other factors intersecting with gender—such as nationality, race, ethnicity, class and age—also affect the anthropologist's field interactions and textual strategies. Reflexivity becomes a continuing mode of self-analysis and political analysis." By bringing subject and object back into the same space, authors give their audiences the opportunity to evaluate them as "situated actors" (i.e., active participants in the process of meaning creation). (Part of this note originally appeared in the introduction to Hertz 1997).
6. Horace Miner's classic essay, "Body Ritual among Nacirema" (1956), is unmatched in his dissection of American bodily rituals. I am reminded of it as I write this article. Ari focused in on a self I prefer not to see. Asked for advice on how to get through daily life, I recently told a friend

- with young children she should think of it as putting her foot down on the gas pedal: fast forward your life by speeding it up.
7. I am indebted to Richard Mitchell for guiding me to Wu Tingfang's remarkable book, *Through the Spectacles of an Oriental Diplomat* (1914), on his travels to America and his commentaries on the way in which American culture brings out the enormous but often only dimly visible differences in culture, tastes, and social mores by emphasizing its Chinese origins.
 8. See Tamar El-Or (1992), who argues that intimate and reciprocal field relationships end when the informant feels that she has become the object of someone else's interest. In an interesting twist, I could no longer be Ari's informant, and I felt this request invaded the intimacy we had developed.

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