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'Security Theatre': some sociological thoughts on a non-sociological concept

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Abstract:

This is intended as an introductory paper in two respects. Firstly, it is to introduce readers to the concept 'security theatre', both as a linguistic device and to the phenomenon it purports to designate. The argument in this paper also expresses the intention of contributing to the burgeoning field, both academic and applied, of Security Studies. This contribution takes the form of showing the potential, though currently hardly-realised, of the discipline of Sociology as a significant participant in this field. The paper does not take a specific approach within sociology to pursue this intention, but rather shows how various approaches within sociology – ranging from general functionalism to deconstructionism – may contribute in different ways to different aspects of security studies, including yet-unremarked or yet-underdeveloped aspects of the field. This contribution is mainly relevant to the academic or analytic aspects of security studies, but it is hoped also to have a 'spin-off' for the applied side of that field, too. In the course of the development of the argument of the paper, it is hoped that various consequential aspects of security theatre are rendered explicit and discussed, and to this end some of the (still relatively few, alas) sociological studies of security arrangements are employed. In particular, the paper sets out the purported opposition between 'security theatre' and 'real ('genuine') security arrangments', suggests some useful tropes and other methodological devices for the sociological analysis of 'security theatre' and, finally, the paper suggests reasons for, and useful ways of achieving, the deconstruction of the 'security theatre'-'real security' opposition. In all, in this paper it is hoped to open up, in a preliminary way, new perspectives on 'security theatre' and to highlight empirical aspects of it that might, in sociology's absence, have been relegated to the background.

Keywords: Security theatre, security studies, deconstructionism, symbolic interactionism, ethnomethodology, conversation analysis, trust, surveillance, ICT-mediated interaction, the linguistic turn, frame analysis, dramaturgical simile, tropes, societal reaction, amplification of deviance, ritual, region behaviour, soundscapes and security, visibility arrangements.

"...Lies work in the same way as the truth" (John R. E. Lee, 1984).

Introductory Considerations to an Introductory Paper.

The term 'security theatre' has only gained widespread professional use relatively recently, especially after the heightened security arrangements consequent upon the 9/11 assault on the World Trade Center in Manhattan. It has only gained currency in ordinary parlance in the last few years, and

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particularly after the recent (June 2016) terrorist attack on Brussels Airport. After that attack, some passengers, ordinary citizen attributed some of the alleged failings of the security system at the airport in terms of 'security theatre'.

The term 'security theatre' has, in fact, been in existence for nearly thirty years. It was invented by Bruce Schneier, who was and is, a justly celebrated security expert and consultant, not a sociologist. However, in this article I shall – build on the few pioneering recent sociological studies – make a first attempt at formulating a 'sociological take' on this apparently non-sociological concept, and in doing so, I hope to cast new light on what 'security theatre' is, as well as extending and, I hope, deepening existing conceptions of this phenomenon. I shall briefly look at the 'logical grammar' (as Ludwig Wittgenstein calls its conventional usage) of the concept since its invention. I shall attempt to demonstrate how a sociological frame of reference can serve to draw out a fuller sociological implicativeness and importance of the term – including, importantly, in conducting a potentially clearer, more penetrating, empirical analysis of a kind that the sociological respecification of this term can afford. I shall use the term 'predicative logic' as part of this exercise.

Finally, I shall attempt to use the term 'security theatre' in its new-found sociological framework to examine in a way what will be familiar to applied sociologists and those interested in evaluation and assessment of the efficacy, consequences, etc., of (in this case) particular security arrangements. Of course, such evaluations and assessments are always 'situated', always 'perspectival' in the sociologist of knowledge Karl Mannheim's sense of the term 'perspective', from the German 'Aspektstruktur' (Mannheim, 1936). 'Perspective', for Mannheim, denotes a particular channelized point of view, and this can involve the following: how (from what 'angle', through what 'prism') one views the object, the 'particularity' of how one views an object. In the 'logical grammar' of the term 'perspective' there is an implication, if not of 'tunnel vision' then certainly a bounded and selective view of a given object, where some of its features are relegated to the background or are left out altogether.

Thus, if, say, a security advisor to an international airport, a journalist on a popular newspaper, a weapons or drug smuggler, a terrorist, a politician with an eye on the 'pork barrel', a grant-seeking university researcher, a police commander or security chief, an authoritarian ruling junta or an espionage agent were to write his/her assessment or evaluation of a given instance of the object that some would call 'security theatre', then each of these parties would have their own 'situated perspective' on (say) the nature of this object, its eufunctions and dysfunctions, its perceptible 'strengths' and 'weaknesses', and on the action-implications of these for each party's commitments, vested interests, etc.; indeed, the ethnomethodological sociologist's term 'interested account' covers the *inter alia* nature of their evaluation. The 'situatedness' and 'perspectivism' (another term by Mannheim, 1936) of any such interested account – including, of course, one's own – is an inescapable thing, and must, then, be explicitly considered and borne in mind.

Having issued these *caveats*, we can move on to considering 'security theatre' from a sociological point of view, to incorporate sociology into the field of Security Studies. I shall not espouse any particular version of sociology in this particular article since I wish to show the diverse potentials of the broad sweep of various forms of the discipline: however, the reader will perceive some emphasis on naturalistic, communicative and praxiological sociologies, partly perhaps because this is my own methodological preference, but probably more because the relatively few extant sociological studies of 'security theatre' tend to be of these orientations: Andrew Carlin's paper in this issue also represents this type of praxiological sociology, a sociology that has taken 'the linguistic turn'.

What is 'Security Theatre'?

Decades ago, but already in our (post?-) modern times, the French sociologist Jean Baudrillard observed that "Reality no longer has time to take on the appearance of reality". Thus, for Baudrillard, simulacra of reality tend to fill in as stand-ins, as substitutes. 'Security theatre' may, in a very general sense, be seen in such a context, as a simulacrum of 'real security'. Of course, unlike Baudrillard we shall explicitly emphasise security theatre as a simulacrum in its prepositional forms, eg. 'a simulacrum of…'. We need to look at the distinguishing features of each simulacrum or the phenomenon that it purports to 'convey' if we wish to apply the notion of 'simulacrum' in a less sweeping, case-by-case way. We shall need then, to look at the defining properties of particular 'security theatres' if we wish to make empirical rather than rhetorical progress. Whilst, of course, such an exploration lies beyond the purview of this particular introductory paper, I shall point to some ways of looking at such constitutive detail, and shall point to some studies that have made a start on this.

The term 'security theatre' was invented around 1988 by Bruce Schneier, a now-celebrated expert and consultant, writer, web author and Fellow at Harvard University's Berkman Center. There is what we might call a 'natural history' to the term. It was, originally, primarily used by security experts, but after the September 11, 2001 assault on the Twin Towers in Manhattan, the term took on a perhaps less technical determination by journalists and eventually found its way into common parlance. This was especially evident after the recent attack on Brussels Airport, when ordinary people present at the airport made invidious reference to 'security theatre', making evaluative sense of the security arrangements that allegedly were, or were not, in place.

As a term, 'security theatre' is typically a component of a two-part contrast set, 'security theatre'-'real security', where the latter terms has the built-in potential to downgrade or even relativize the former. The contrast set may be explicitly used or simply left implicit, where the second term, 'real (genuine) security arrangements', is left to be drawn by inference. This 'linguistic', or 'structuralist-linguistic' contrast set can be employed, both academically and practically, as a template for various

practices of sorting of 'triage-ing'. Thus, for instance, different security arrangements may be sorted into 'illusory' or 'false' (or 'apparent') security as opposed to 'real' or 'genuine' security, 'deceptive' as opposed to 'straight-up' security. This is how Schneier originally used the contrast set. The status of this contrast set with regard to the intersubjective understandings and reasoning of the broader group of security practitioners or of members of the public must initially have been unclear: I shall allude various ways on this crucial issue as the paper proceeds.

Schneier's notion of 'security theatre' trades on a structuralism-style linguistic binary opposition between 'fake' and 'authentic' – 'fake' or 'false' security arrangements and practices as opposed to 'authentic' or 'real' security arrangements. Its organising logic, and predicative logic in particular, yields connotations such as 'deception' and 'illusion', and the imputation of such predicates affords us an insight into one aspect of what Ludwig Wittgenstein, in his later philosophy, termed the 'logical grammar' of the term 'security theatre'. Features such as 'all or nothing' (i.e. total, real security or a complete absence of this despite the illusion) can also be mapped on to the structural oppositions 'real'-'phoney', 'authentic'-'illusory', 'genuine'-'false', 'sincere'-'deceptive', 'actual'-'false' and similar oppositions, but fuzzy-logic gradations may also be made such as "relatively authentic" as opposed to "relatively/mainly/largely fake", as it were, rather than 'all-or-nothing' being the sole designation. In all, 'security theatre' is seen as being *ersatz* security, a substitutional fake.

One problem with the fixed 'structuralist' opposition between 'security theatre' and 'genuine security' is that it does not readily serve to adequately describe some real-world examples of security arrangements. There is a 'grey area' between 'theatrical' and 'genuine' security arrangements, namely where it is unclear whether the arrangements in place are to be understood as 'theatrical' or 'real' security, or, alternatively, where there is an apparently relatively equal mix of 'theatrical' and 'real' arrangements. In the latter case, the question is: what ratio of 'theatrical' to 'authentic' arrangements is allowed before a set of 'authentic' security arrangements is re-describable as 'security theatre' instead? This of course is one of those Hegel-type dilemmas concerning quantity and quality in the description of phenomena, eg. how many sticks does one have to heap up before they make a 'pile'?, or 'how many hairs does a man have to lose before he is describable as 'bald'?' This, of course, is all grist to the analytic deconstructionists' mill.

Whilst Schneier later placed somewhat more emphasis on some 'positive' aspects of the social arrangements he terms 'security theatre' (these positives he conceives of as being, in considerable part, psychological in nature) and even of going beyond the concept, he has tended to impart highly downranking or deprecating meanings to the term. He does so (Schneier, 2009) in a variety of ways, including ostensive ones where he points to real but somewhat extreme examples, eg. after the 9/11 attack on the World Trade Center in Manhattan, National Guard officers provided an armed presence around the site, but their guns had

no bullets. It was literally a show of arms. This, of course, seems to be a paradigm case of an illusory security measure that achieves no increase in real security and thus maps perfectly onto the oppositional pair 'real'-'illusory' (or 'authentic'-'phoney' or any such pair of synonyms or near-synonyms). Another example given by Schneier can be found at airports and other public facilities, that of uniformed personnel inspecting photo ID's. Given, for instance, the ease of forgery of these documents, such measures can, in the words of Smokey Robinson, be "only there just to fool the public". They are held by Schneier to achieve no significant improvement in actual security.

Schneier, and later Ross Anderson, a highly-noted Professor of Security Studies at the University of Cambridge (Anderson 2008) remark that 'security theatre' measures tend to emerge or intensify in response to an outrage that, like '9/11', not surprisingly attracts huge media coverage. Indeed they do, and they emerge remarkably rapidly – almost 'instantly'. In such coverage, of course, the public is greatly exposed to the distressing, largely visual, spectacle. The visual dimensions are central both to the original event and to the subsequent 'societal reaction' to that event. With the '9/11', burning of the iconic 'Twin Towers', people on high stories in the buildings cut off from effective rescue, etc. were shocking visual phenomena. Correlatively, societal reactions to such visually-prominent events, – reactions such as security practices and arrangements – have to have their visual aspects too, in order to be persuasive: and persuasion is the essence of security theatre. Sociology, and particularly the kinds of sociology that specialise in close observation of real situations, can extend and deepen such *aperçus*.

In terms of societal reaction, such spectacles can occasion, in some sociologists' views, what the anthropologically-oriented sociologist Stanley Cohen (1980) earlier termed a 'moral panic' in which 'folk devils' (eg. terrorists, people traffickers) figured centrally – as if the original events, with amplification, were in themselves not sufficiently alarming. Cohen's work followed on from, and traded upon, Orrin Klapp's book, *Heroes, Villains and Fools*, (Klapp, 1962) and – which is particularly relevant to security theatre – Frank Tannenbaum's book *Crime and the Community*, (Tannenbaum, 1938). We are, too, here in the sphere of the social-interactional and communicative process of social typing, what Howard S. Becker has called the 'labelling' of persons as deviant, (Becker, 1963) and it is on the basis of such labelling of persons that the amplification of their deviance can be built. Thus, we have the elements of a sociological model, the 'amplification model', of societal reaction to what is identified as deviance, a model that has largely been pursued by symbolic interactionist sociologists' persuasion and by other Chicago-style naturalistic sociologists. The model is founded upon what came to be called 'societal reaction theory', though it is a moot point as to whether it meets the requisites to be an actual theory. Whilst, as Edwin M. Schur correctly noted at the time (Schur, 1969), 'societal reaction theory' has been around in one form or another since the founders

of sociology were writing (eg. Durkheim, in his book 'The Rules of Sociological Method' writes of the collective reactions of graduated intensity to delicts and crimes), these early sociologists might not have anticipated or even recognised the turn that 'societal reaction' studies in sociology took in the middle part of last century, particularly as some forms of these studies actually set themselves up in criticism of the founders' formulations: 'labelling theory' is a case in point, here.

Such amplified 'societal reactions' can include the installation, or intensified installation, of what has here been termed 'security theatre' but these reactions are far from restricted to that. For instance, in Great Britain there is a Home Office plan by the state surveillance agency GCHQ to licence the covert hacking of all the phones and laptops of a major town overseas were it to be deemed necessary for national security purposes. This is a development of the blanket gathering and storage of personal digital data by Britain's GCHQ and the U.S. National Security Agency, controversially exposed by the 'whistle-blower' Edward Snowden. This was a 'societal' reaction (or, tellingly,) in this case a reaction of central authorities claiming to espouse the 'best interests' of the rest of the society) to terrorist activity online in private households. Many regard this as an indiscriminate "Snooper's Charter", what many – not least the European Court of Human Rights – might see as an over-reaction to an accumulated set of terrorist attacks across several countries. There are questions as to whether adequate information could be garnered by less intrusive methods. Of course, these allegedly over-reactive covert operations are quite the opposite to the all-too-overt organization of security theatre.

Such purported over-reactions are built upon, are part of and rely upon the practical amplification of a given event, where, eg. the media often further sensationalise what is already, in the view of many, quite sufficiently sensational 'in itself'. As analysts, we need to take the 'lingistic turn' in studying such alleged amplifications, since society-members' and the mass media's use of amplificatory linguistic terms is a major issue, in this regard. In a remarkable ethnomethodological study that does not employ the amplification model *per se*, Peter Eglin and Stephen Hester examined the linguistic terms and practices that constitute such intensified or amplified responses – "tragedy", "horror" and the like (Eglin and Hester 2003, Ch.3). These are the linguistic methods used to describe and asses such events and they often employ amplificatory terms and linguistic methods of amplification. Of course, even if the event is diminished or neutralized in some way, linguistic methods are involved in that process, too: 'terrorists' can be re-constituted in a justificatory account as 'freedom fighters' and the like. This is what 'labelling'- or, in the ethnomethodological terms employed by Eglin and Hester, 'membership categorization'- is all about, namely the constitutive organization of the societal reaction as an accountable matter. The account and the 'societal reaction' to a sensational(-ised) event is, by definition, necessarily retrospective: a reaction is, by definition, a response to a previous event.

As a form of societal reaction, security theatre too is necessarily retrospective. As Rachel Hall (2015), a communication analyst, observes in a book that has some sociological relevance, specific security arrangements, including what we have here called 'security theatre', are typically fashioned on the basis of the last terrorist (or other perceptibly heinous) event or near-event, ie. an event that was narrowly averted. Changes in 'security theatre' tend to occur as a retrospective response to a new event. Thus, when a terrorist hid explosives in his shoes, security measures were changed to make sure that travellers' shoes were now subjected to inspection. Thus developments in security theatre tend to have a retrospective referent. Hall (op. cit.) goes so far as to assert that, so far as airport security personnel are concerned, passengers symbolically embody the last terrorist threat.

Many of the sociologists who write about amplification use dramaturgical imagery of the same 'provenance' and 'natural kind' as Schneier's term 'security theatre'. Klapp employed such imagery as, of course, did Erving Goffman (Goffman, 1959). It is to this imagery that we now turn in order to gain an initial sociological foothold on Schneier and Anderson's insightful conceptions of, and concerns about, 'security theatre'.

In discussing the 'amplification model', we have already introduced more than one sociological perspective. We can now move on to take a more explicit, more multifarious, 'sociological turn' that is, perhaps, more focused on security studies *per se*.

A 'Sociological Turn' in Security Studies

Security studies is still a relatively new field, one that is not yet entirely coherently or comprehensively articulated across academic disciplines despite canonical contributions such as those of Ross Anderson. So far this field has drawn from applied sciences, technological studies in engineering, psychology, political and legal analysis, management and organizational studies, etc., as Anderson's 2008 textbook shows very well. However, sociology is not explicitly 'in the mix'.

Anderson has done much to integrate the field, but so far he has not explicitly incorporated sociology into it. He does, however, show a notable sociological sensibility. Understandably, engineering concerns continue to be the master schema in his textbook. However, Anderson, who largely endorses Schneier's concerns, affords us a first 'take' on sociological aspects of security arrangements in general and on 'security theatre' in particular. Not least, Anderson like Schneier, employs a 'commonsense/practical' or 'natural/sociological' version of the professional sociologist's 'deviance-amplification model' in accounting for the rapid development of 'security theatre' in terms of, essentially, what can be seen as an 'over-reaction' owing to 'moral panic' after a spectacle such as 9/11 in Manhattan, the 'Bataclan' attacks in Paris or the driving of a truck into the crowd in Nice who were celebrating Bastille Day. Consequent upon such events, 'security theatre' can be part of the ('over'-) reaction, as in the case of, for instance, fears for security at the 2016 Euro

football championships in France. Broader and more authoritarian, even totalitarian, measures can ensue, – measures that often take militaristic or quasi-militaristic forms – and these too can employ shows of security as well as draconian surveillance measures, the curbing of democratic dissent and of 'whistleblowing' of the Edward Snowden kind, not to mention xenophobia and the like.

Like Schneier, Ross Anderson warns against the complicity (witting or unwitting of security engineers in such 'top down' measures which can involve major incursions into human, citizenship and civil rights. He asserts instead the uses of security measures to underpin democracy and rights, and warns against, say, over-reactions against terrorist attacks, that whilst they are a fact of life and certainly very distressing, are still relatively rare. One is far more at risk during one's drive to the airport than one is of a terrorist attack either in the airport or on board the aircraft. I wholeheartedly endorse Schneier's and Anderson's ethical priorities, not least because, as the Oxford academic and terrorism expert Louise Richardson has emphasized (and to which Schneier and Anderson allude), terrorists count on and seek to foster the over-reactions. Among the over-reactions they seek to elicit is the majority community's scapegoating of an entire ethnic group such as Moslems as opposed to just taking focused, evidence-based action against specific perpetrators. Part of this scapegoating can be the police's 'stop and search' tactics based (implicitly or explicitly) on the lines of racial, ethnic or national origin and the identification of 'potential' suspects via racial, etc. profiling: informal police cultures may facilitate these practices even where they are formally prohibited. Other 'sought over-reactions' include militaristic responses to specific events rather than the taking of increased political and social policy measures. This is one thing that the broad discipline of sociology can contribute – an analytic sensitivity to the broader socio-political contexts and specific events in which 'security theatre' and other such measures emerge, plus a weighing of the possible consequences of 'societal reactions'.

Of course, one aspect of the 'commonsense/practical amplification of deviance model' is that not only that the established state and other authorities espouse it but so do terrorists. Using this model, they hope that the nature and further consequences of their attack will be further enhanced by the authorities and the mass media, that their actions will be further dramatized. As I have observed, they hope too that the authorities will themselves also act in amplified fashion by curbing freedom of speech or other democratic rights, by asserting 'bulk powers' (frequently covert) of mass surveillance, mass (again, covert) retention of this bulk data, and so on – all administered by a central authority. In this sense, then, the opposing parties, authorities and terrorists, have a practical interest in the same 'amplification model', though, of course, their specific practical interests differ greatly. As might be expected, professional sociologists, in a variety of ways, ground their own amplification model in the commonsense one, though largely for theoretical-analytic reasons rather than practical ones.

What I propose is a two-tiered approach to the incorporation of sociology, an approach that should be prepared for by a thoroughgoing reading of what we might term 'non-sociological precursors' such as Schneier and Anderson. The first tier involves the analyst deploying what the founder of the sociological approach called 'ethnomethodology', Harold Garfinkel, called the deliberate 'mis-reading' of (in the present case) the works of Schneier and Anderson. Textbooks such as Anderson's voluminous and authoritative *Security Engineering* (2008) can be intentionally 'mis-read' by the reader's bringing a set of sociological relevances to bear on a text that is meant for other (mainly engineering) purposes. As Garfinkel proposed, such planned mis-readings of conventional sociological texts, as well as other texts, for their unexplicated relevance to ethnomethodology or to praxiological concerns, is also a derivative intention of mine. These concerns lead to the second tier, the devising of a sociology that can analytically respecify or re-cast the conceptions held by engineers and psychologists about security issues (and not least 'security theatre') into terms that are not so explicit or precise when formulated in non-sociological terms. We are helped by the fact that Anderson has a most perspicuous 'case history' approach in his textbook. We might, then, see sociology as, *inter alia*, performing an 'underlabourer' task in explicating, clarifying, rendering more precise and in some cases re-casting some of the issues and phenomena intuitively noticed by distinguished security specialists such as Schneier and Anderson, whilst also taking the lead in rendering visible phenomena that other observers have glossed over or simply missed.

The second tier of intended 'misrea-ding' for me, involves re-reading the conventional sociology in praxiological terms, in order to facilitate the scrutiny of security practices in the greatest social-organizational detail. After all, 'security arrangements' are the outcomes of what security people and others actually do. In the spirit of such a deliberate re-reading, let us take from Anderson what I should term a 'representative scenario' (it may, indeed, be more than a mere scenario). It is a kind of parable for security studies. I hope to show how sociology can render explicit and can clarify or explicate issues concerning security that are, perhaps, not so explicitly or extensively set out in the original text: the fact that such issues might not be set out so extensively, or in these terms, in the original text is not to be understood as attesting to a failure in that text as to its (necessarily?) different relevances.

What I have termed Anderson's 'representative scenario', one of many possible scenarios, (Anderson also introduces 'bank', 'military base' and 'hospital' scenarios), concerns security measures at an airport (Anderson,2008, pp. 4-5). For a start, Anderson notes, importantly, that the aircraft hijackers' getting knives through airport security was not a failure of security technology or practice but a failure of policy: knives with blades of up to three inches were, at that time, legally allowed through airport security and the hi-jackers used no guns or explosives on the aircraft concerned. Such things fall, then, outside the realm of 'security theatre' even though security

personnel are often publicly, and unjustly, blamed for it. We must be careful what we assign to 'security theatre'. We must also realise that the proper legal instruments have to be in place if security values are to be maximised.

What is relevant to 'security theatre' as Schneier and Anderson define it is that whilst huge amounts (both in volume and money value) of passengers' 'innocent' possessions- bottles of deodorant and aftershave, over-the-counter medications (and once, in my case, a bar of *doce de abobora com coco*, which I still miss) – are confiscated by uniformed security officials and then thrown away, well below 50% of all weapons taken through security screening are actually detected by the technology and the security operatives looking at the 'x-ray' screens. This is the essense of what Schneier and Anderson both call 'security theatre': merely apparent security – a kind of display to the public – rather than 'real', effective security. To be sure, one important issue raised by the linguistic opposition 'security theatre'-'real security' is the perceptible mis-allocation of resources of all kinds, in all kinds of ways. I am here not referring just to cosmetics and comestibles, but to the allocation of financial resources to different aspects of, say, airport security. This is not even to mention issues in the allocation of what may be conceived as other scarce and valued resources, eg. attention and focus: time too can be conceived as a scarce and valued resource to be distributed and allocated, as can space. Is security theatre the best employment of scarce time and scarce space for security purposes? Of course, such allocational considerations are not always 'all-or-nothing' matters, but ones of emphasis – the relative allocation and distribution of resources to 'security theatre' as opposed to 'genuine security'.

Security theatre typically occurs in spaces where organizations or their security operatives encounter their publics, their 'audience' - passengers, visitors, customers, etc. Indeed, Anderson says that the TSA has spent $14.7 billion on aggressive passenger screening of various types and that such screening has, he judges, been "fairly ineffective" (see below), from the point of view of 'genuine security'– and we are speaking of points of view, here. For example, Hall (op. cit.) has reported that the technology of what we have here called 'security theatre', experimenters at US airports succeeded in getting through up to 95% of the weapons they tried to get past the detection technologies. The expensive, state-of-the-art face-recognition technology at Manchester International Airport was shown not be able to distinguish between the faces of British politician Gordon Brown and the film actor Mel Gibson: a fact that will doubtless please Mr. Brown more than Mr. Gibson. Not surprisingly, that technology has now been abandoned by the authorities at the airport and even when it was still officially being used was treated by them with circumspection.

A Sociological Device for Analysing 'Security Theatre'

One possible contribution by sociology could be to clarify and specify the nature

and organization of 'security theatre' and its implications. After all, no-one can fail to be struck by the huge increase in airport security in recent years, – not to mention its great increase in other public arenas also – and all this change has had palpable social organizational consequences whose nature most mainstream sociologists have yet to really face up to and explore. One possible starting-point is furnished by the non-mainstream sociologist Erving Goffman, a celebrated analyst of communication conduct and of 'region behaviour' in social organizations of all kinds and formal organizations in particular. A 'region' is, for Goffman, a bounded ecological space in a social/formal organization whose limits are 'barriers to perception'(cf. Michel Foucault) and is characterized by region-related, region-appropriate conduct, including that which produces region-relevant appearances and manner by the person in a given region. Thus, in a mental hospital studied by him (Goffman, 1974), in the wards to which visitors, members of the public, had access – the 'front regions' of the mental hospital – hospital personnel treated patients and visitors with consideration and politeness, the furniture was in good condition, was clean and hygienic and so on. By contrast in the wards where the patients were deemed to be suffering very serious, often threatening cases of mental illness, visitors were not allowed access and could not even see them as walls, locked doors, etc. created a barrier to perception. In these 'back regions', staff acted far less well towards patients – sometimes using violence –, plus the furniture was shabby and conditions were not clean, etc.

Goffman elucidates regions and region behaviour in social organizations through the deployment of a simile, a dramaturgical simile which he also uses to elucidate a wide variety of other situations too (though it is important to note that it is far from the only simile he uses for those other situations). Thus, the 'front regions' of an establishment or other social organization are treated as akin to theatre's 'onstage' and the 'back regions' as 'backstage' or 'offstage' and the most emphatic performance. 'Onstage' is where most of the performances are to be found. Performers often performed onstage in teams, each team member supporting her/his fellow team –members' presentation of their 'onstage character'. 'Onstage' is where the most 'props', i.e. stage properties are to be found, eg. in a mental hospital, one finds the better furniture 'onstage', where the visitors and other 'outsiders' have access. There too is to be found the costumes, the 'wardrobe' that enhance performers' work and reinforces their presentation of (public) 'character' and their performed characters' demeanour and manner. All of this attests to the fact that onstage conduct occurs in front of onlookers, an 'audience': it is in public view, and the 'performers' act as a team to support each other's self-presentational conduct in front of that audience. An image such as the theatrical or dramaturgical one may force into explicit view and may render more noticeable the more heavily institutionalised or embedded, more routinized, more unnoticeable features of the interactional encounters between the security officials and the passengers and others they are processing. To use a turn

of phrase from the ethnomethodological sociologist Harold Garfinkel, a trope such as the dramaturgical one "helps the goldfish to become aware of the water it is swimming in". (Of course, security arrangements have also been commonly conceived using other tropes, eg. militaristic ones –'the war on terror' and the like: terrorists use the militaristic trope also, conceiving of themselves as 'soldiers', etc. Such tropes, and not only because of their hyperbolic nature, may serve to amplify past or future threats).

'Offstage' or' backstage' is where the team of 'performers' can relinquish or at least can relax their 'performances', though it would not be true to say that there is no elements of performance at all: for instance, those background elements of performance that enhance teamwork, morale and motivation may still,t o varying extents, pertain 'backstage'. This is, also where the onstage performers can to a certain extent 'be themselves' rather than being their 'public' selves as presented to the 'audience'. Thus performances backstage may berate or insult the audience with imprecations – without the audience being privy to all this, of course. The team of performers may employ coarse language and conduct that, if it were onstage, would be frowned upon by an audience. The 'props' – pleasant dining furniture, sparkling cutlery, etc. are part of the onstage presentation. However, backstage where the performers are in the dressing room there is often dilapidated furniture which would never be used onstage in front of the audience. (My wife , Anita Alzamora an amateur actress, assures me that this as true for actual theatre life as it is for any establishment in the wider world: it is reassuring when these similes have authentic rather than purely idealised groundings).

Goffman conducted a participant observation-based field study in Baltasound, a Shetland Island community, and observed front region/'onstage' performances and back region/'offstage' communicative conduct in a restaurant there. Onstage, in front of the gaze of the diners, the audience, the waiters and waitresses – the performers –, are polite, respectful and solicitous about hygiene, polishing the plates with napkins, and so on. In the kitchen, behind the wall separating them from the dining audience's gaze, they blurt out fulminations about the diners, they produce unhygienic conduct (spitting, etc.). Of course this communicative conduct is in a sense a performance too, in that it displays team solidarity by enhancing an "us and them" group mentality. However, where the barrier to perception between the restaurant's dining room and kitchen is somehow breached, eg. the kitchen door is left open and where, therefore, the often shabby kitchen furniture and coarse, unhygienic conduct of the staff may be glimpsed by the diners, the performers may be discredited in the eyes of the audience, and their onstage performance retrospectively dismissed as intendedly 'deceptive'. For Goffman, though, this conduct may be deceptive it is not necessarily best deemed to be so: instead, the onstage performance should be analysed as, above all, 'region-appropriate', in context. This point is not irrelevant to issues concerning the 'performances' of the security team working on security theatre. It may well be the case, also, that what we

call ‘security theatre’ may often times not be seen as such except retrospectively, when something perceptibly ‘goes wrong’ so far as the public are concerned, eg. where there is a breach or a failure: indeed, this retrospective element may constitute the difference between the perspectives of the member of the public as opposed to that of the security professional.

One major feature of onstage conduct is that it contains a highly significant element of what Goffman terms ‘ritual conduct’. His concept has often been misunderstood by analysts who are not in possession of a sociological sensibility, or who disattend such a sensibility. For instance, the linguist S.C. Levinson conceives of Goffman’s usage of the term ‘ritual’ in terms of a narrow conception of ‘social’, a view pertaining largely to the social niceties, as opposed to more instrumental or ‘system’ constraints which he apparently sees as non-social. However, Goffman’s notion of ‘ritual’ actually stands in contrast to Levinson’s ‘dinner party’; nor does Goffman’s notion of ‘ritual’ reflect the common usage as ‘empty ritual’, ‘mindless repetition’, etc., although some sociological conceptions of ritual seem to suggest that.

Instead Goffman sees ‘ritual’ conduct as producing a symbolic or ‘ceremonial’ order (viz. Strong, 2006) or, as he, Goffman, often puts it, as ‘expressive order’. What is expressed is *inter alia*, the instrumental (‘system-’) social organization of a given arrangement. Thus, with ‘security theatre’ there will be ‘ritual features’– a routine, *pro forma* conduct by officials such as asking whether one packed one’s suitcase oneself, whether it contains weapons, banned containers of liquids, etc. These apparently protocol-based rituals also serve to express a concern for and commitment to security on the part of the official(s) involved and to express the fact that one is in the security system: in this sense, then, the ritual conduct expresses the very nature of the arrangements: ritual practices are exhibitory practices in that sense, practices that not only communicate but also define the self-same arrangements of which they are part, rendering these arrangements self-displaying. The exhibitory practices may be emblematic or, from a purely instrumental point of view, ‘over-produced’, ‘over-emphatic’, broad ‘gestures in the round’, etc. and because of that these characteristics may be seen as ‘ritual’, but they nonetheless perform this expressive work: they are not mere etiquette or social manners, as Levinson would have us believe. Anyone who has read Machiavelli will understand how much appearances matter, not least on issues of power and authority and therefore how much a ‘ceremonial’ or ‘expressive’ order matters (although it would be wrong to see Goffman’s ‘performing selves’ as Machiavellian per se: their performances can, for instance, be perfectly sincere). In addition to being ‘processed’ by a security system, people – the ‘audience’– must have a *sense* of security too. Security does not just have to be done, it has to be *seen* to be done. All social arrangements have to be self-displaying or witnessable, and security arrangements are no exception. As Edward Rose expressed it, “the look of things” is important, consequential.

We might also suggest that 'the look of things' is accountable – so much so that allegedly anomalous appearances may become accountable *ex post facto*. Thus, after the Nice attack on France's Bastille Day, 2016, Mme. Bertin of the Nice Municipal Police alleged that she was pressured to make a false statement about visual evidence on the day after the attack:

> (Speaking to the Journal du Dimanche, she alleged that): *"The day following the attack, the Interior Ministry sent a commissioner to the CSU (CCTV headquarters for the city of Nice) who put me in touch with someone in Place Beauvau (the Interior Ministry). This person demanded an account of where the municipal officers and barriers were as well as a statement that I had seen the national police in two places assigned by the security measures. I replied that I would not write something I had not seen. Perhaps the national police were there, but they didn't show on the cameras. This person then asked me to send a modifiable version of my account by email in order to avoid having to re-type the entire text. I was pressured for one hour, ordered to record the exact locations of the national police. I hadn't seen them. I eventually sent a non-modifiable PDF and one that could be modified. Several days later, the anti-terror department ordered me to delete the footage from the six cameras I mentioned in my report: those that had the footage of the attack"*.(cited by Carpenter, 2016, pp.12-3).

These alleged convolutions on the part of various security personnel just go to show the known, highly consequential implicativeness not only of visual appearances themselves, but also of their subsequent accountability – hence the alleged post hoc attempts at manipulation of the accountability of visual appearances in this case. The visual is not just an immediate phenomenon. So it is, too, with 'security theatre' as a visual, accountable (including retrospectively-accountable) phenomenon. In any particular case, its purported failures – including of course its visual failures – may be called to account in any given instance and such a call may occasion a response that includes account-manipulation practices, just as much as is the case in so-called 'real' security measures. They may be called to account, with, possibly, similar retrospective manipulations (such purported failures of 'security theatre' may include the occasioning, by omission or even commission, of mass anxiety, even panic, amongst the public). This accountability, not least on a visual basis, and the potential for subsequent account-management, is one of several properties that are shared by 'theatrical' and 'real' security measures, and which should advert us against endorsing a simple opposition between 'real' and 'illusory' security measures. We might also consider the complex and reticulated interweavings between 'onstage' and 'backstage' aspects of security measures that the above example at least implies.

'Security theatre' can be analysed in terms of the dramaturgical simile with its emphasis on expressive conduct. Indeed, the simile can occasion a fresh view of the routine arrangements and activities of security, matters which might otherwise pass by unnoticed or might be taken for granted. Puetz (Puetz/Putz, 2012) has already very

usefully suggested the potential utility of Goffman's simile. This dramaturgical simile can explicate and may clarify (sometimes by contrast) a representative scenario such as Anderson's 'airport' one, outlined above. It can force into visibility features of the setting that are taken-for-granted', or which go unnoticed. Of course, there are, very often, problems with the use of tropes such as similes and, still more, metaphors in the description of social organization as ordinary society-members experience in the course of co-producing it. Metaphors and similes can falsify, i.e. mis-describe that experience and can thus falsify a basis for analysis, destroying its 'phenomenological integrity', as it were (Watson, 1999 and 2004). However, it can be argued that here we are employing a simile that members – not just security engineers but also members of the public – themselves employ to reason about the kinds of security arrangements we are here discussing. The term 'security theatre' is, increasingly, a term used in commonsense or lay reasoning about such arrangements, and thus our analytic resort to the 'theatre' trope is 'grounded' in ordinary members' own reasoning about those circumstances. We might, then, claim that the dramaturgical simile is not one that is just uncritically or arbitrarily appropriated from Goffman but that, instead, it has worldly foundations. Nevertheless, the anayltic use of such tropes remains open and contentious for sociologists.

In terms of Anderson's representative scenario of the 'airport', 'onstage' equals the areas of security theatre, especially the hand luggage and person-screening plus, presumably, the check-in and departures area to which, eg., visitors also have access. This is, of course, where the onstage performances are, with uniformed or badged officials, security guards, official announcements about unattended baggage, etc. Of course, there may be various kinds of electronic surveillance and plain-clothes operatives, other variously unobtrusive airport personnel, and so on, as well as photography, computer-generated imagery, full-body scans, fingerprinting technologies, questioning, and the rest.

'Backstage' in Anderson's representative scenario is past the check-in and screening, past the passenger departure lounge and in the baggage handling and baggage transfer, on the parking areas for the aircraft, in the hangars, etc. The common factors in these areas is that the public, whether checked-in passengers or those meeting or seeing passengers off, do not have access, and where their perception of activities is occluded by 'barriers', both intended and unintended. In these back regions, there are fewer if any 'performances' and, notionally, only airport personnel have access to them. Here is the area of limited or prohibited access, of specially attired, or uniformed, or badged personnel, an area of trusted familiar identities, trusted, recognized activities: in short, all this comprises a range of routine known-in-common activities, situations and settings. Security theatre is part of the gatekeeping or triaging activities that help maintain the distinction between the two, eg. uniformed airport personnel or aircrew who may well be let through 'security theatre' arrangements with minimal inspec-

tion, wearing familiar uniforms, etc. Indeed, some commentators have noted that a person wearing an airport uniform sent in for test purposes has got through security unchallenged, suggesting that a terrorist or other criminal could do so – or has done so – in a similar way. Again, a uniform or even a badge can be a 'wardrobe feature' of a trusted identity, of trusted and predictable behaviour, or even a familiar face, and trust can be manipulated or exploited by those with malign purposes. Such 'trusted appearances' mean that the person may pass by unchecked, may 'jump the queue'. This is interpersonal trust as expressed in conduct, 'trust-in-action'. Of course, as in all types of trust, it can be (and has been) exploited, but it is nevertheless a continuing condition of 'business-as-usual'. For instance, uniforms worn by those presenting as airport personnel may communicate trusted identities, though as Paperman shows in her important study of surveillance in the Paris Metro (the subway) the wearing of a uniform may also occasion wariness and suspicion amongst the public. The uniform is not an 'interaction device'(as Paperman phrases it) that is monosemic: it is polysemic, and this has interactional consequences.

Of course, not all terrorists or other lawbreaking deeds are committed 'backstage' at airports: some are, and many on-plane activities involve backstage activity relating to loading luggage into the hold and staffing shops in the departure lounge. However, many such acts are indeed committed onstage, where the airport personnel come into contact with the public. In terms of our dramaturgical analogy, the public are the 'audience' and the airport security staff the 'performers': it should be noted that the audience 'perform', too – exhibiting or displaying compliance, for instance. 'Performances' are, typically, reciprocal and this reciprocity is a central part of the social organisation of the setting. Audiences, also, may well adjudge the 'performances' of the performing team, just as the team, usually backstage, may adjudge the 'performances' of the 'audience'.

An 'onstage' area at an airport is not necessarily an undifferentiated space any more that an actual theatre stage is, necessarily, an undifferentiated space. In an actual theatre, the stage may be divided up into, say, two rooms of a 'home' with a connecting door: the plays of Alan Ayckbourn often require such staging, as do plays such as 'August: Osage County'. In an airport, the 'onstage' or 'front region' area may contain 'points of transitivity' which are partially or wholly bounded by 'barriers to perception'. These points may be, for instance, points of triage, where, for example, those who are not passengers are winnowed out from those who are: check-in desks are, in terms of our analogy, the 'props' for such sifting activities. The subsequent baggage screening of intending passengers/travellers is also an onstage activity, as is the departure lounge. Inside and outside the terminal doors is another point of transitivity. Each of these points is visible to an 'audience', i.e. the general public.

Examples of 'onstage' attacks are many. The terrorist attack on Ataturk Airport in Turkey (28 June, 2016), involved shooting in the location of an x-ray scanner at a security

checkpoint in the International Terminal and the attack was, apparently, directed from the taxi rank outside that terminal. The Glasgow Airport attack in 2007, an attempted suicide bombing, involved a Jeep loaded with propane canisters driven up to the terminal doors. Had it not been for the security bollards, the Jeep would have been driven straight through the doors, crashing into the terminal. It is, then, frequently the points of transitivity that are the focal point of attack onstage. Hence, the 'onstage' and 'backstage' distinction does not map onto a 'no-attack'/'attack' distinction but rather might designate the nature and form of the attack.

'Security theatre' as a visible, witnessable set of 'onstage' arrangements may itself figure in the very attacks it is designed to prevent. I have, above, already noted its perceptible weaknesses. Indeed, the very queueing, clustering or increased density of persons at some of the transitivity points indicate a vulnerability. They can lead to overload, disruption, confusion or restrictions in visibility which can be exploited by terrorists seeking cover for their activities. Thus the rule that in baggage screening, for instance, 'everyone gets screened with no exceptions'(Puetz, 2012) can itself have consequences that increase the risk. Indeed, this rule risks being a merely presentational or performance rule – "everyone gets checked, everyone waits their turn", where, for instance, the rule may be defeased in a variety of circumstances where some persons are let through, rushed through, etc. It may, in this regard, be part of the legitimation of the queue in this face of passengers' real or potential frustration at it. Despite the start made by Puetz and those few researchers who have followed him, the turn-organisation and membership category-based organisation of security queues still remains to be exhaustively studied by sociologists as a topic in its own right. How, for instance, does the turn-by-turn organisation modify as persons pass through the various checks? This is all relevant to security theatre.

As 'people-processing devices', the security checks involved are relatively superficial and the technology employed is, very often, improving but still all too fallible, as I have suggested above. I have already mentioned weaknesses in face-recognition technologies. Manchester Airport's face-recognition apparatus produced far too many false results and could not distinguish between the faces of Osama bin Laden, Kevin Spacey and Winona Ryder. Iris recognition technology, which is relatively effective, can still be put off track by as little as an eye infection, as Anderson notes. With such technologies, for instance, colour-recognition and colour-copying can be of variable quality, requiring a 'let it pass' attitude on the part of operators, (see Martin et. al., 2010, for this phenomenon in a different context). 'No-fly lists' can founder on the presentation of false identities: fake boarding cards can be printed at home, false passports or fake ID's can be acquired and used, etc. There is an established demand side and supply side for these things in the 'black economy'.

However, direct interpersonal techniques of inspection and observation fare

no better than the technology. Security officials' (the 'performers') direct, on-the-spot interpersonal scrutiny of members of the public has been shown to be ineffective (as are 'pat downs', spot checks, stop- and-interview, and random, personally- conducted bag searches or searches of pockets, etc.), and profiling, as a perceived 'stop and search' is little less so. In addition, profiling on the basis of race, religion, nationality or political commitment raises serious human rights and citizenship issues. Not only is such profiling controversial – and can increase resentment- but terrorist or other offender groups can evade such searches by choosing a confederate who falls outside the purportedly 'high-risk' profile classes, and this has indeed been done on more than one notable occasion. Techniques for evading technological detection can emerge too, just as Lyon (1994) and others have shown that street cameras do not necessarily reduce deviance but simply shift it out of camera-view ('backstage') or develop new('onstage') concealment techniques. So-called deviant subcultures build up and transmit a set of skills concerning such evasions, as Paperman's thought-provoking paper can also be read as suggesting.

The Use of the Dramaturgical Simile in Analysing Accountable Shortcomings of 'Security Theatre'

Whilst we shall here focus largely on the interpersonal encounters around 'security theatre', it should be noted that the effects of these arrangements can be more widely distributed and these distributed effects are hard to calculate. It might be speculated that security theatre has some deterrent effect in stopping attempts at terrorist attacks, but of course it is not possible to demonstrate, prove or measure a negative. It is entirely possible, though, that the influence 'security theatre' has is a placebo effect on the 'audience', the travelling public or airport visitors.

For any such putative deterrence of offenders, there is, it has been argued, an equal and opposite deterrent effect, – the deterrence of legitimate users of establishments such as airports. A study by researchers at Cornell University found that, post- 9/11, strict security measures involving the authoritarian restricting or modifying of the travelling public's behaviour acted as a deterrent to the public use of the airport. For many innocent potential passengers, airport security checks, in themselves, are experienced as at least comprising unpleasant obstacles, and, at worst, as anxiety-provoking, even threatening. This is the case irrespective of whether travellers have fears concerning a terrorist attack. These are what Rachel Hall (2015) terms 'the costs' of security arrangements, not least of security theatre: the costs of such arrangements are by no means solely financial. Those who were deterred by security checks at airports such as La Guardia very often travelled by road instead, and this resulted in a great increase in road fatalities through automobile accidents and the like. One source estimates, quite possibly hyperbolically, that the level of fatalities owing to these alternative travel arrangements equated to a Boeing 737 with a full passenger load every four months.

Another perceptible 'downside' of 'security theatre' concerns the thorny issue of 'ritual conduct', something I have discussed above. As Puetz (2011) quite properly points out, security checkpoints involve a sequential ordering of persons and activities and we might add that this ordering is a visible one and is part of the visibility arrangements of (in this case) airport security – the visibility, including texts such as notices, being a highly important, but still largely unanalysed, feature of security measures. Of course, this sequential ordering, where incumbents of each turn in the sequential ordering get equal treatment, creates a highly routine and repetitive set of activities for the security staff. Body searches require repetitive checking procedures, a repetitive deployment of 'civil inattention', as Puetz, after Goffman, shows, and so on. Such repetition can, however, become 'ritualized'. Hall (op. cit.) refers to an 'aesthetics' of transparency' – sociologists might instead use the term 'ritual' to render what Hall indicates – where the travelling public are passivized, or at least present a passive, receptive, co-operative attitude towards, say, body scans or pat-downs. They 'agree' to being touched, searched, inspected, etc., and conscientiously display, over-display (a kind of overconformity) docile submission to the security regime and this displays as well the passenger's acceptance of the legitimacy of the security official's role. This exhibited docility is also part of the passenger's 'display of innocence', Hall argues, where co-operation stands as a kind of placeholder for 'having nothing to hide'. Passengers are thus actively, artfully "doing being passive" and "doing being innocent", to use Garfinkel's phrase that intends to highlight that even 'docility' has to be actively done and exhibited. Docility is an accomplishment, a conjoint production within a situated interaction system, not just an 'aesthetic', as Hall would have it. Hall notes that just about the only active response that passengers routinely make takes the form of what are often feeble jokes made by the traveller about the search process to which s/he is being submitted (viz. the notorious and now-viral "Don't touch my junk!" episode, as Hall records). Of course, the cultural techniques and performances of co-operation and innocence are equally available to terrorists and other malign persons seeking to pass through security systems.

Hall argues that this is important since the presumption of innocence appears to have been suspended by the security personnel – to the official, everyone is, pro tem, a suspect, or potential suspect. Thus the passenger's display of co-operation and innocence may involve a 'passive' or 'docile' component but it also involves an active self-presentation by the traveller as being innocent. Person have to actively 'do being docile'. The passenger's perceptible docility is, perhaps, less complete than Hall claims. As she herself allows, some travellers are, by any standard, not so 'docile' – members of religious or ethnic minorities who object to having their 'personal space' impinged upon, or to being touched by a stranger. Other membership categories also may have similar objections – persons with disabilities, aged persons, racial minority

members who may suspect that they are being subject to discriminatory 'racial profiling', and many other categories of person. These persons may not display willingness to make themselves available for security checks, especially pat-downs and other forms of physical contact. Such unco-operative persons or groups of persons are often, then, selected out for special attention by the security authorities. In addition, there are 'unruly persons' who resist passivization (see, eg., Bassetti,2014). Indeed, any such resistance stands out in sharp relief against a greater backdrop of collective docility. These activities all involve cultural practices or performances – the official's performance of transparency monitoring, the passengers' performances of self-monitoring (shades of Michel Foucault, here) and of 'rendering oneself transparent', making oneself available for inspection without objection. Of course, such 'agreement' is underpinned by coercion.

Following Goffman, I have argued above that such 'ritual' has an expressive dimension – it expresses or displays to the public being 'processed' the security official's committed, diligent adherence to security protocols and so on. However, when officials are performing the same routine actions day after day, month after month, there is a distinct possibility that this expressive dimension may be lost, or the objective of these activities may cease to be borne in mind by the officials. This may be expressed, as, again, 'overconformity' where the end-state of the process is lost from view. Then, conduct can become 'ritualistic' in the canonical sociologist Robert K. Merton's (Merton 1949) sense rather than Goffman's. The meticulous adherence to certain protocols or rules might mean that the officials begin to lose sight – or only occasionally keep in sight – of the very ends or purposes of their actions. Merton notes that this 'ritualism' is often found in bureaucracies, and it should not be forgotten that, ultimately, security measures are bureaucratic arrangements conducted by officials: indeed, as sociologists we need to examine security measures as exhibiting the intersubjective features of bureaucracies in Egon Bittner's sense, (Bittner, 1974).

On bureaucratic ritualism, Merton notes:

> Sentiments such as methodical performance of routine activity can lead to a transference...from the *aims* of the organization onto the particular details of the behaviour required by the rules. Adherence to the rules, originally conceived as a means, becomes transformed into an end-in- itself; there occurs the familiar process of *displacement of goals* whereby "an instrumental value becomes a terminal value" (Merton,1949, pp.154-5).

Ritualism in this Mertonian sense can combine – as Merton might suggest –, excessively high-levels of conformity to security rules combined with low levels of technical efficacy, eg. detection rates. It may also lead to less ability to adapt to new or unexpected situations, to a rigid attitude to flexibility, adaptation and change in conducting arrangements relating to security. The visible 'performing' of security may thus not lead to attaining the goal of 'actual' security: such performance is

'security theatre', and 'ritualism' in Merton's sense may well figure in it. As Hall (op. cit.) observes, what we term 'security theatre' may be, as she puts it, 'a means without an end' – a classic (though uncited) evocation of Merton's much earlier observations on ritualism. Hall does, though, give us an ideal, observation-based, case study of what Merton intended by 'ritualism', and this is, of course, of very considerable value.

Security as a performative matter may even lead to ritual of the kind that might lead to what Merton would call 'dysfunctional' or counter-productive so far as the stated objectives or goals of security arrangements are concerned. Let us take a perspicuous example from a study by D.W. Ball (1969) of another setting, that of a dubiously legal abortion clinic on the USA/Mexico border. This may well be an instance of what Merton calls 'overconformity', for display purposes (in this respect, there is an end, if only a displaced one). Because of its marginally legal/illegal status, owing to the hardly-qualified medical personnel, the clinic strongly emphasized – perhaps overemphasised – uniforms, medical wear, insignia of medical rank, respectful 'status-conscious' address terms and polite forms for colleagues, etc. – much more than one might find in an unequivocally legal clinic. The conduct of the abortion clinic's personnel also constantly emphasized their concern for asepsis, etc., especially when they were performing 'onstage', in front of their audience of nervous and anxious patients. What I have here called a 'ritualistically-displayed' concern for asepsis actually increased rather than reduced the risk of infection. For instance, the surgical instruments (the 'props') to be used in the operation were displayed for a long time in the open air, in order to reassure the patient that they were shiny, clean and hygienic. In fact, exposing these instruments to the open air, increased the chances of infection rather than reducing them: they should have been kept in a sterilized environment, eg. an autoclave. Indeed there was not even an autoclave in the operating theatre. Here, then, it is not just that the objectives of the clinic – here, asepsis – were lost sight of in the 'ritual' behaviour and presentations of these personnel endangered those objectives, but that such behaviour and presentations actually exacerbate the risk of infection.

It might not be too great a leap to suggest that the routine repetitive displayed behaviour of security personnel at checkpoints may also, in some cases, detract from actual security objectives. A qualification of this notion of 'ritualistic' processing of airport passengers is to be found in the work of Puetz (2011) and Bassetti, both of whom employ "ground floor" ethnographic methods, often derived from Goffman, to examine, first-hand, the routine encounters between security personnel and passengers/travellers undergoing bag checks and/or body checks. Puetz's article introduces another order of 'ritualism' in the Goffmanian sense, i.e. the way in which the co-participants create a framework which co-produces a disconnect between the 'body' and 'person' of the traveller. Many of the conventions of ordinary face-to-face encounters are thus elided, thereby often

avoiding intrusiveness, embarrassment and personal 'entanglements' of various kinds: building on Goffman's notion of 'non-person' – Puetz observes that such an interactional framework frequently generates a sense of 'non-place' and 'non-event' to, say, a body search.

Puetz' study adds to our knowledge of the 'ritual' of such encounters – eg. phenomena such as 'civil inattention' as Goffman puts it – in a security setting, though as I have noted above, Puetz notes that there remains the possibility of both discrimination and resistance (cf. Hall, 2015) in cases concerning certain membership categories of person, eg., again, from members of religious groups, who refuse on religious principle to submit to such body checks. Puetz also introduces a dramaturgical analogy for a small part of his analysis though most of it employs non-dramaturgical imagery – though still 'Goffmanian' in intent –, such as 'non-places', 'civil inattention' etc. These studies perhaps show a more detailed interactional analysis, based on sociological models of interaction, than does that of Hall. However, they share with Hall's study and with David Lyon's writings (Lyon 1994) the observation that persons' bodies body are oriented to by, *inter alia*, security and surveillance personnel as a crucial locus of information. Thus persons are, increasingly, potentially subject to the surveilling gaze – a gaze that is one moment of a process of control. Lyon shares with Schneier and Anderson considerable disquiet about the existence and possible uses of 'the controlling gaze' and about the (necessarily, in many cases), passive role of those subjected to that gaze and who may not even know they are being surveilled. Like Schneier and Anderson, Lyon is an advocate of ethical procedure and human, civil rights concerning this increasingly pervasive and extensive monitoring of ordinary citizens, often *en masse* as a blanket surveillance exercise, and of what can happen to 'whistle-blowers'(Lyon, 2015).

It is to be noted that the controlling gaze, even when supplemented by interrogative technique, may not necessarily be effective as a detection device: instead, its perceived value may be as a control rather than detection device. For instance, many security officers in airports, often attached to 'security theatres', operate on a schedule of purported 'indicators' of when airport users are concealing something or are dissembling or lying. This schedule is often derived from the academic research work of the analyst of non-verbal communication Paul Ekman and his associates on concealment and deception in persons' everyday conduct. The schedule is often a practical manual based on Ekman's notion of information 'leakage' and 'deception cues', eg. a displayed anxiety or tension on the part of the subject. His research subjects showed very different levels of ability to hide these feelings, but many do show them to some degree, according to Ekman. The problem for security officials in, say, airports is that, as ever, contextual issues obtrude – if, say, a passenger is displaying anxiety, who is to say that s/he is concealing some compromising information or ill-intention? Who is to say whether that perceived 'anxiety' is indeed anxiety on the part of the subject, or if

it is, who is to say that any such anxiety is not owing to the tension of going through, or having to go through, the security arrangements (we know that one – unintended? – consequence of airport security theatre is that it often creates anxieties in perfectly innocent people) or owing to a fear, or fearful anticipation, of flying? Nor, of course, do these exhaust the possible sources of apparently-expressed anxiety amongst the travelling public. If anything, the activities of observation and visual monitoring, as observed by the travelling public, may function as a restraint on behaviour.

However, when persons are aware of this surveillance or checking there is always the possibility, at least, of resistance in one form or another, both major and minor. We have already alluded to joking by passengers under inspection as one form of response, one that came to be prohibited in some security jurisdictions, thus further intensifying passenger passivity. Bassetti (Bassetti 2014, Bassetti et. al. 2015) takes up the phenomenon of 'resistance' of some passengers to security checking. As does Puetz, she uses in an ethnographic way a mixture of field observation and video-recording concerning actual interactional events of security checking – events that are part of the quiddities of the airport's work, events which have now come to define "what the airport is about". She considers cases of passengers' 'resistance to power' (though rather, in Weberian terms, 'authority' might more often be the apposite term) and her ethnography in many ways examines the standpoint of the security officer, noting, for instance, that the officer does not reciprocate rudeness from a passenger with rudeness to that passenger: whist performances-in-interaction are typically reciprocal, reciprocity is not necessarily symmetrical in a 'like for like' manner.

These studies suggest that whilst theoretical notions of 'ritualism' in Merton's sense might indeed pertain in many cases, it needs to be modified by reference to these 'ground floor' observational studies of security officers' interpersonal encounters with passengers/travellers, where not all such encounters are equivalent, not all such encounters are similarly routine: indeed, each encounter will have its own defining contingencies, etc. Above all, Bassetti notes that there is no such thing as 'merely technological' processing of passengers/travellers: in every case in which technology it used, it is used in an interactional nexus with its own social-organizational features. Of course, 'interaction' includes this technologically-mediated work. That is one of many reasons why the omission of omission of sociology by 'mainstream' security studies experts risks being counter-productive: a whole domain of real-world activities and considerations may be short-circuited or even entirely overloooked. This domain comprises the 'interactional substrate',to adopt D. W. Maynard's term, of security arrangements, including, of course, those of 'security theatre'.

Sociological, or sociologically-relevant observational studies such as by Puetz/Putz, and, later, Bassetti; and those of not a few others – not least, Hall – help to open up a new horizon for security studies. We may begin to see the ordinary, everyday,

unremarked challenges facing security personnel and the passengers/travellers they routinely 'process'. We may also begin to see what are often conceived as 'security theatre' practices ('performances') close-up and in remarkable interactional, contextual detail – detail that an overall "bird's-eye view" of security arrangements can not discern. Through these careful empirical and naturalistic studies of real-world naturally-situated, naturally-occurring and naturally-organized security practices as *interactional* matters (passengers are active, collaborative agents in security practice) current conceptions of 'security theatre' might be put to the test, or at least modified, qualified or entirely respecified in certain respects. A new, highly significant, domain of study is thereby opened up, one which can be admitted to the field of security studies. This is the domain of the social-interactional, contextual analysis of specific quotidian, ordinary orders of security practice, which would include, but not be restricted to, what security studies analysts term 'security theatre'.

One relatively undeveloped aspect of this interactional analysis of security practice is that of the sociological approach known as 'ethnomethodology' (Watson and Gastaldo 2015, Chapter 1 and 2). In particular, ethnomethodological studies of worksite practice is highly relevant (*idem*, Chapter 3). Security practices are, au fond, work practices, deployed at a worksite and they have their distinctively-identifying characteristics in each case. So far, most field-observational studies have followed Goffman's approach and frame of reference and this frame of reference, arguably, is not so sensitive to the salient, specifically distinguishing characteristics of particular work practices and situations as are ethnomethodological studies of work. So far, ethnomethodological studies of work have been woefully under-represented in these 'ground floor' naturalistic approaches to security studies, though there are one or two highly significant exceptions, such as the study by Bassetti *et. al.*(2015). This relative dearth is a pity, for we need to know about worksite-based, work culture-informed *ad hoc* practices such as glossing practices, 'let it pass' practices, 'factum valet' practices, 'etcetera-assumption'-based practices, retrospective-prospective practices, and so on in security work, whether it be dubbed 'theatre' or otherwise. Bassetti et al's sociological and communication studies-based focus on collaborative work practices at airport security checkpoints employs an ethnographic, ethnomethodological and conversation-analytic approach to security measures. In particular these researchers contribute to the fields of HCI (Human-Computer Interaction), and CSCW (Computer-Supported Collaborative Work) in which the approaches of ethnomethodology and conversation analysis figure so greatly. Ethnomethodology and conversation analysis are applied to observations and analysis of interaction of video-recorded instances of the social interaction between travellers and security personnel with and around security technologies. This is a most important and promising addition to the sociology of security studies. We are in urgent need of further and more developed, deeper studies of how involved parties to

security organise their interaction in relation to what J. Gibson has sometimes (and not unproblematically) called the 'affordances' of these security technologies in 'doing the airport's essential, defining work' and 'doing airport security's essential, defining work'.

Although they are, of course, not entirely unequivocal, all the above studies may, perhaps, lead us to begin to question the utility – both analytic and practical – of the 'structuralist' opposition between 'security theatre'/'real security' and arguments based on that opposition. It is to this issue that I now turn.

'Security Theatre': the Concept and its Connotations Interrogated.

The omission of the explicit use of sociology from security studies textbooks, even the magisterially multidisciplinary textbook *Security Engineering* by Ross Anderson, has, it can be argued, detracted from the thorough analytic scrutiny of the concept 'security theatre' as an appropriate one for the field. In this regard, sociology could have greatly assisted the insightful deliberations more recently introduced by Schneier and others about the possibly eufunctional effects of 'security theatre' and about going beyond the concept 'security theatre' altogether.

Given limited space in this article, I can only point to one or two of the many advantages of incorporating sociology in the 'mix'. One of these relates to the undeniably cognitivistic and psychologistic nature of security studies when it comes to things such as 'human responses' and the like. Such reductions to psychology often derive from the often unholy alliance between security studies and management 'sciences': the latter has long been built upon a cognitivistic/psychologistic basis or a simplistic version of it. Reference is often made by security analysts to airport users' "feelings of security", their "sense of security" as an individual psychological phenomenon. Such references are often vague to the point of insubstantiality, even in terms of the discipline of psychology, and a "feeling of security" is often treated as attaching to an individual as a private, internal mental state.

This is where sociology comes in. To a sociologist – and an interactional analyst, especially an ethnomethodologist – to endorse this view, the 'sense of security' is not reducible to 'private','internal' individual terms but instead involves what sociologists might here justifiably, conceive of as a public, transparent, communicated "shared scheme of interpretation", to use Herbert Blumer's famous term, – where, for instance, more than one interpretation is putatively relevant, eg. 'safety' as opposed to 'risk' or 'danger'. As the early sociologist William I. Thomas' aphorism has it, (in less gender-sensitive times) "If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences". 'Performances' are not just done by individuals but also by teams. As Goffman explains (Goffman,1959, pp.84-5), the basic performing unit may not be the individual but the team – equivalent to the 'ensemble' of players in a theatre – with its internal loyalties, its 'dramaturgical co-

operation', etc. So, security officers can also perform as a team-like 'action group' in effectuating their tasks. Part of this team's task is, in Goffman's terms, to create and sustain for the 'audience', the travelling public, a particular definition of the situation, a conjoint claim to what reality is, eg. that security is a consequential situation, one to be taken seriously, one that requires the traveller's full attention and co-operation.

As another instance, let us take the 'props', the visibility arrangements of 'security theatre' – the uniforms, the badges, the notices, textual warnings and instructions and so on. These visually-available 'scenic features' of security arrangements are often not explicitly accorded the analytic importance they actually merit. Collectivities of people – persons in queues, persons in clusters or swarms – often rely on "the look of things", on appearances: just as this was true of the abortion clinic, it is also true of 'security theatre'. Of course, officials wearing uniforms have to manage their uniformed appearances to others, as Paperman (2003) importantly observes concerning surveillance underground in the subway. Visibility arrangements and their meaning *in situ* have to be interactionally managed through 'visibility practices' that are, for instance, adapted to the nature of the space available and other situational elements: as Paperman shows, even a 'wardrobe prop' such as a uniform must, as a visible object, be constantly managed by the wearer, the officer, in social interaction with the subway users in the Paris Metro. So it is with uniformed security officers in airports, also.

What such visibility arrangements do is not so much to affect 'individual psychology' as to establish a collectively-held, collectively-sustained interpretative frame – a frame that is, indeed, more powerful by being collectively produced, collectively-held and, crucially, collectively acted upon. Goffman gives us one approach to such shared interpretative schemes in his study *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience* (1974). Arguably, Goffman's 'frame analysis' derives from Herbert Blumer's notion, above. Goffman refers to 'frames' as organizing the shared sense of reality for a collectivity of persons, where more than one frame can be potentially relevant at one time. In security situations, for instance, there may be at least two 'framed' senses of reality: eg. "this is a safe situation" or "this is not a safe situation, it is a risky one". Visibility arrangements as well as, eg. officials' conduct, are crucial in precipitating and fostering a shared, mutually endorsed, sense of reality among passengers/travellers. Whilst some of Goffman's claims about the relativity of such frames has justifiably come under criticism from Schuetzian ethnomethodologists and others, his basic conception of how these interpretative schemes frame our experience of the world is useful for our present purposes.

Airports – and, of course, the security arrangements in them – are also soundscapes. Imagine that a sound, a bang is heard in the security area or departure lounge. If the collectively held frame – interpretative frame – is that of "safety, no risk", then that bang may well be interpreted according

to frame, as "no big deal", as no threat. However, if the frame of interpretation is that "this is a risky situation", then the bang may be interpreted as an indication of danger, that something dangerous is happening. Clearly, such an interpretation can possibly lead to collective alarm or even mass panic. Security theatre can then be, both visibly and auditorily, an important feature of crowd management. Never mind whether the visual or auditory indications of security theatre are conceived by security experts as "phoney" or the effects of those indications are seen by psychologists as a "placebo effect": those indications are potentially a positive resource in such crowd management and safety. However, we still do not have a sociological study of security as a soundscape, or of the work of the soundscape in sustaining or detracting from a given shared frame of interpretation of a given set of security measures.

The fact that these schemes of interpretation are essentially social or collective – ie., conjointly shared, communicated, transmitted and enforced – occurred to me when a passenger plane in which I was travelling hit a wind-shear over a high, remote mountain range. The plane rapidly dropped like a stone through several thousand feet. In their demeanour and manner (in Goffman's senses of these terms, i.e. as *presented* features of interaction), the flight attendants displayed calmness and the passengers thus partook of a 'calm' frame of reference. It was only when the flight attendants ceased smiling and began to show fear and then when the pilots began to yell at each other (in the heat of the moment, the p.a. system had accidentally been left on) that the passengers began to scream, pray and panic. We survived.

Such a frame-switch has been evidenced in some instances that have occurred since the attack in Nice on July 14 this year, in which more than 80 people were killed in an apparent terrorist attack. Elsa Carpenter reports that in late July, there was a rumour of an attack circulating in nearby Antibes: the rumour was without specific foundation. The role of rumour in bringing about a switch in interpretive frame after a heinous, highly-publicized, attack is something that sociologists might usefully further investigate. The following week, an accidental explosion caused further painful anxiety for residents and visitors. In the centre of Juan-les-Pins, again quite near Nice, almost 100 people were injured when sharp bangs went off there and people interpreted these bangs as gunshots – again, a 'soundscape effect', as there was no visual corroboration, no smell of cordite, etc. A stampede was sparked off which resulted in the injuries (these events are reported in Carpenter, 2016).

Thus we see that a publicized, heinous event may occasion a switch of a collectively-held interpretive frame from 'business as normal' to an informal 'state of alert'. This switch may be seen as a kind of gestalt alternation (where the notion of gestalt is taken following Aron Gurwitsch, a culturally-based, not psychologically-based, phenomenon) whereby some particulars of a given situation are pieced together by ordinary people to form a 'kaleidoscopic' pattern that points to (say) "a terrorist

attack", "another attack", etc. As it were, the interpretive 'kaleidoscope' has been shaken to produce this new pattern. Indeed, we should here note that the 'societal reaction' theorists have almost always failed to explicitly address the observation that part of the possible societal reaction to any 'standout' instance of deviance is the occasioning of a new interpretive frame within a given population. It is this interpretive frame that results in the other aspects of the societal reaction, not least 'security theatre' itself.

What we are often talking about here is what is often called 'interpersonal trust'. One feature of this form of trust is that, say, the airport security officials' view of the situation demonstrably is the same as that of the passengers. Thus, the officials and passengers could exchange positions and they would still see the situation in the same way, and they would still share the same 'constitutive (definitional) expectancies' concerning the situation. To take a very banal example, the passenger assumes that the security officer is a 'security officer' and not some other category of person, eg. a terrorist. The trust is such that the category 'terrorist' would not even cross the passenger's mind. Similarly, the security officer also considers him/her in the same terms. If the two were to exchange positions, they would still see that interaction, in part, according to that category. This is an essential precondition of interpersonal trust. Again, this notion of interpersonal trust, which is presupposed by actors in social interaction, is to do with culturally-based social organization, not individual psychology: in order for this interpersonal trust to pertain, it has to be socially produced and shared (Garfinkel, 1963 and Watson, 2009). Such trust is an essential constituent of the interpretive schemes and frames to which I have referred immediately above. There are other forms of trust, too. Giddens claims, there is institutional trust, that is trust (or mistrust) in institutions, or establishments such as airports, sports stadia or banks. However, it is instructive to see how often so-called 'institutional trust' comes down to and is expressed in interpersonal trust, eg. trust between airport passengers and, say, security personnel ('representatives of the airport'), who are in situated interaction with each other. Interpersonal trust is part and parcel of the 'interpretative frame' one brings to situations where, as Harvey Molotch says, there is a potential for ambiguity, both in how to make sense of the situation and how to act (Molotch 2012).

Of course, given the potential for 'ambiguity' in Molotch's (2012) sense, an interpretative frame can be perceptibly breached. Where there is some perceptible (for participants) breach in, say, security officers' 'staging', 'performance' or 'teamwork/team performances', a breach that passengers/travellers might construe as incongruous or anomalous with the rest of the staging and performance, then trust may be supplanted by suspicion (cf. Sacks 1972). This suspicion might be 'generated' through the drawing, in particular instances, of culturally-based inferences about the effectiveness of the security procedure, the commitment, sincerity or competence of the security official(s), or about matters

otherwise related to those issues. This initially-generated mistrust may then 'expand' and be extended to other aspects of the security setup or even of the airport per se: the conception of whole setting may be inferentially reinterpreted, re-configured.

The drawing of such inferences might even occasion an entire re-interpretation of the security arrangements as 'mere' 'security theatre', i.e. a re-framing. A funny thing happened to the term 'security theatre' on its way from the Berkman Center of Harvard University. It gained wider currency among security specialists, was then adopted by the mass media and is now part of the common parlance of ordinary society-members: it is no longer solely an 'expert' or 'technical' term, and, indeed, can be used in ordinary talk as a shibboleth. It is a shibboleth that is applied to such breaches of the "normal life"/"business as usual" interpretative frame, that is the frame that expresses an environment of normal, routine appearances. After the recent Belgian and Turkish airport attacks, airport users interviewed by the media used the term in this way, using in those specific situations the 'structural' binary opposition 'security theatre'/'real security' as a relativizing or undermining device in criticism of the security arrangements, that pertained at the time of the attacks. They considered the security arrangements in these locales as 'mere' (the 'mere' is important) security theatre' rather than its having been effective.

However, a Schuetzian *caveat* to all this is that interpretative frames are not casual options, not inconsequential alternatives, even in situations characterized by 'ambiguity'. In fact, *pace* Goffman's *Frame Analysis*, the frame of everyday life, of "business as usual", of an "environment of normal appearances" (Sacks 1972) is remarkably resistant to any undermining alternation and – depending, of course, on the particular instance – a single perceptible incongruity may not suffice to occasion a frame-change: for instance, a situation-specific "let it pass" procedure may be applied, *ad hoc*. For all the actual interpretive switches recently witnessed in Antibes and Juan les Pins, we must also take into account the very many but far less sharply visible cases where, say, sharp bangs (eg. from car exhausts backfiring) have been heard by people and have been interpreted according to the frame of everyday life continuing as normal, where a robust attitude of trust prevails.

Nonetheless, one can see that the term 'security theatre', with its logical grammar as an undermining or relativizing term, might, in occasioned ways, (eg. the performance breaches mentioned above), similarly be employed to erode public trust in security arrangements. As the term gains more and more common currency, it may be that it will usher in a collective loss of trust by the travelling public, and one might conjecture that this may even become a major problem for those responsible for administering security. An interpretive frame may be ushered in – especially in the face of specific events – which bring in mistrust of these arrangements. Such a lessening of trust or even outright mistrust might come to be interactionally expressed as an increasing

reluctance on the part of passengers to comport themselves in a docile manner when undergoing security checks.

Perhaps, though, 'security theatre' has had a bad rap, and we can, in a way, blame the term itself for that. After all,'security theatre' is seen – even by some of those who routinely employ the term – as having 'eufunctional' or positive features. Perhaps then we need to conduct a deconstruction of the 'security theatre'/'real security' opposition – 'deconstruction' in Derrida's sense of deliberately dismantling and imploding the oppositional structure or its 'order', its purported essential organising logic. We might show how this opposition can not unequivocally be seen as an opposition, still less allowing one 'side' of the opposition, 'real security', to have moral priority or other precedence over the other, 'security theatre', with their 'real' and 'ersatz' characteristics accordingly. We may find it useful to use an analytic approach that implodes such a rigid oppositional priority. This operation would be more than just a purely academic exercise – it would also have potential practical implications.

We might, for instance, show that the features of 'security theatre' are (some of) the features of so-called 'real (or' genuine') security' too: or if some of them are not, perhaps they should be. Similarly, we can, in deconstructionist mode, show that 'real security' has essential components that are commonly regarded as exclusive to 'security theatre'. The visibility arrangements and "purely exhibitory" conduct that is, in the opposition, attached to 'security theatre' are to be found, to some extent, however minor in many instances of "real" security arrangements as well. Security is not just about keeping individuals safe, it is also about managing, and thus keeping safe, what are sometimes (variably) large collectivities. This means fostering and managing a shared interpretative frame in terms of which they collectively make sense of the 'real security' – just as in 'security theatre'. ('Real') security can not just 'be done': to be effective it has to be seen (and heard) to be done. In other words, 'real security' with all the exhibitory qualities of 'security theatre', and we could do worse than consult the features of security theatre in order to gain some hints as to how to establish, maintain and reinforce such an interpretive frame. Meanwhile, so-called 'security theatre' does, to some degree, possess some of the properties of 'real security'. After all, even if, eg., 'security theatre' in hand luggage checks is only 40%, or even, perhaps, only 5% efficient in so far as detection is concerned and the rest is 'stage performance', that is still an element of real security; one assumes many passengers might see it as better than nothing. They might well regard the term 'security theatre' as hyperbole, especially from a deconstructionist perspective and one can see their point. Even though loci of 'security theatre' are focalized on some areas of the front regions of airport to the apparent neglect of other areas, airport users might still, one assumes, have security in, at least, those loci. In this way, we can implode the organising logic of the 'security theatre'-'real/genuine security' structural opposition, to both analytic and more practical effect.

Conclusion

I have tried, in a most preliminary way, to make a case for the incorporation of sociology into the field of security studies. I have given models and examples derived from various strands of sociology, though, I confess, mainly those that have been praxiological (focalizing ordinary members' practices-in-interaction, in context) and communicational in nature. I have also attempted to show, again only provisionally in this article that introduces some foundations, how so-called 'security theatre' may be sociologically analysed. Here again I have largely focalized observation (fieldwork)-based praxiological studies of actual, real-world security situations, – research that often employs audio and/or video recordings and highly-detailed transcription and analysis of those situations. This is, mainly, where most of the studies, and most of the sociologically insightful studies, are currently to be found, though in every sociological style there is remains a lamentable paucity of studies of 'security theatre' and even in the field of security studies more generally. This burgeoning academic and practical field has, it would appear, passed most sociologists by.

By taking these two tacks, I have considered the analytical and practical utility of employing the binary opposition 'security theatre'/'real security' in analysing security arrangements and persons' conjoint reactions to them. From that, I have considered possible alternatives. It is important to observe too that no amount of security we have been considering, whether 'real' or 'fake', here will replace good, disciplined police or controlled intelligence work or political/non-political negotiation, reconciliation and compromise, the initiation of a peace process, mediation, and the like-much like (for all its perceived shortcomings over time) between Great Britain and what were hitherto called 'terrorists' in Northern Ireland, the 'peace process'. A trope such as a militaristic one – "no surrender" and so on – does not, of course, serve the best interests of such processes, no matter which 'side' uses it: there are, of course, objections to sociologists using it for their purposes, too.

Finally, I have interspersed in this article various issues concerning the adopting of a measured, balanced approach to security, and have noted that at best some security engineers have gone out of their way both to recommend such an approach and a democratic approach that takes due regard of human, citizenship rights as well as minority right rather than espousing a 'panoptical' or totalitarian approach – a kind of electronic or digital equivalent to Foucault's (Foucault, 1979) interpretation of the philosopher of utilitarianism Jeremy Bentham's notion of the Panopticon (Bentham, 1843). As the European Court of Justice has said, panoptical security policies such as the proposed "Snooper's Charter" in Britain have no legal basis if they are applied *generally* rather than to specific matters such as serious crimes, and of course we should all take care to always avoid torture measures such as waterboarding, let alone the *auto-da-fé*. These measures not only violate human rights but they are, ultimately, counter-productive. Security arrangements

should not be used either, to bolster this "throwing the baby out with the bathwater". Some, at least, of the comments made by the sociologist Harvey Molotch concerning 'what to do with security' (Molotch, 2012, pp. 217-23) comprise good commonsense – "be inclusive", "make nice", "add in some equality", etc. We might elaborate Molotch's advice by adding "do not provoke","don't expect instant, seamless results," and "short termism may occasionally be necessary but, in itself, it is not enough." These are rather mundane and, in themselves, quite insufficient advisories, but, I think, they are not bad starting points.

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