This talk traces the roots of sexuality studies in postwar social science, arguing that the flattening, observational approach of researchers in deviance studies and microsociology offers a model for queer critics today. Love considers the case of Erving Goffman, whose account of stigma situates deviance in scenes and interactions, not in people. Goffman exerted a profound influence on works such as Laud Humphreys’ *Tearoom Trade: Impersonal Sex in Public Places* and Esther Newton’s *Mother Camp*. These texts offer an “ecological” view of sex and gender deviance that sets aside affect, motivation, and desire to describe highly specific interactions in concrete settings.

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