

also, there will be less risk of neglecting what Jews individually and collectively need to have done, and greater likelihood that what the Jewish community requires for its preservation, enrich-

ment, and development may indeed come to pass—to the extent at least that the Jews will be permitted to exercise control over their own destiny as a people.

The Social Work Function of the Jewish Community Center*

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INTRODUCTION

Let your practice keep step with your knowledge.
From a Chinese fortune cookie.

It is my intent in this paper to look at the social work function of the Jewish community center, what has caused the serious blurring of that function, and the nature of the psycho-social environment in which we provide our services to the Jewish community. Further, I shall attempt to define the social work function in a way that it can be used now in our agencies, and I shall specify the kind of agency environment which needs to exist in order for professional practice to take place. Finally, a series of social work tasks specific to the Jewish community center will be elaborated upon.

In a sense this paper is a logical extension of some earlier attempts by the author^{1,2} to get to the issue of social work function in our field. Perhaps, it is necessary though to state why this is or should be a concern in the first place. For myself the answer is not too complicated. Our professional function as Jewish communal practitioners, as Charles Levy stated so well, includes: "1) Attention to the rights and prerogatives of Jews. 2) Sensitivity to the particular needs of Jews, individually and collectively. 3) Pervasive concern about

Jews and their general welfare. 4) Responsibility of practitioners as well as their clienteles for the collective aspirations of Jews in general."³

Despite some dramatic instances to the contrary among the young and younger adults, the bankruptcy of Jewish life is evident. A recent study of Reform congregations showed that people felt their synagogues lacked any sense of community.⁴ Even if synagogues were the answer, the National Jewish Population Study showed that over 53 percent of the households were unaffiliated and that as age dropped the rate of non-affiliation rose to almost 70 percent for those under 30 years of age.⁵ Another report on the study showed that 9.2 percent of all Jewish individuals who are married are intermarried and it is also noted that during the period of 1966-72 nearly one-third of those Jews who married chose a non-Jewish mate. Finally, the same report notes that this rate is higher than for earlier periods.⁶ Perhaps it is also significant for the first time since Marshall Sklare's book was published in 1968,⁷ a major social sci-

³ Charles S. Levy, "Toward a Theory of Jewish Communal Service," *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, Vol. L, No. 1 (Fall, 1973), p. 46.

⁴ See Leonard J. Fein, *Reform Is A Verb* (New York: Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1972).

⁵ Alvin Chenkin, *Demographic Highlights: Facts for Planning* (New York: Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds, 1973), p. 23.

⁶ Fred Massarik, *Intermarriage: Facts for Planning* (New York: Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds, 1973), p. 1.

⁷ Marshall Sklare, ed., *The Jews: Social Patterns of An American Group* (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1958).

* Presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Conference of Jewish communal Service, San Francisco, Cal., June 5, 1974.

¹ Joel M. Carp, "Dead Center," *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, Vol. XLVII, No. 2 (Winter, 1970), pp. 109-115.

² ———, "Thoughts and Reflections on Jewish Community Center Purpose and the Quality of Jewish Life: A Response," *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, Vol. L, No. 1 (Fall, 1973), pp. 22-27.

THE SOCIAL WORK FUNCTION

ence publisher issued a book late in 1973 dealing with the physical and psychological disorders of the Jews.⁸ Even more interesting is that this is the first book in a series on various ethnic groups in the United States. Some of the material deals with the continuing lower fertility rates of the Jews as compared to other groups while other chapters summarize studies showing that the more and better assimilated we become the more neurotic we get. The intriguing thing is that this pattern of inner maladjustment is linked to what sociologists have characterized as the so-called heightened self consciousness of the alienated or marginal person.⁹ Other reports and studies, too numerous to mention here, continue to show that as a group we Jews are taking on more and more of the dysfunctional behaviors of the general American population.

People are working harder to raise their income levels so they can buy less and do less with their dollars. If that was not enough, many people are working harder to gain these relatively useless dollars at jobs they hate. These jobs are causing workers to pay additional prices in physical and mental health terms, and these findings are about people at *all* occupational levels.¹⁰ Recent political events have brought to a head that which many of us felt for years: that during an age of increasing governmental responsibility for my life

⁸ Alton Shiloh and Ida Cohen Selavan, eds., *Ethnic Groups of America: Their Morbidity, Mortality and Behavior Disorder, Vol I - The Jews* (Springfield, Illinois: Charles C Thomas, 1973).

⁹ *Ibid.*, see Chapter 2 by C. Goldscheider on "Fertility of the Jews" and Chapter 32 by I.D. Rinder on "Mental Health of American Jewish Urbanites."

¹⁰ Report of a Special Task Force to the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, *Work in America* (Cambridge, Mass.: The M.I.T. Press, 1973), see p. xvi of the Summary as an example. See also Chapter 3, "Work and Health."

and yours, our government could not be trusted. The crisis of trust is a central issue in the life of our society today with rather frightening indications for family life, education, the workplace, etc. I suggest that we have only begun to see the results.¹¹ Mental Health statistics show a continuing increase in the numbers of people becoming mentally ill; crimes against property have gone up over three times what they were in 1960, in 1972 42 percent of the white people and 48 percent of the black people in an urban study were afraid to walk alone at night. Finally, if one is interested in examining the quality of life in any one of a number of large metropolitan areas a series of indicators have been designed to facilitate such analyses.¹² The data show similar disturbing downtrends in the quality of life in those areas of the United States where most of the Jewish population resides.

The Loss of Function and Focus

The implications of these data are obvious. The stresses upon the people we serve are increasing geometrically, and yet the trends in our services seem to be away from the social work function which *might* be most useful to them at this time. Psychosocial stress is not new, but the rate of social change which these stresses reflect *is* new. Finally, the capacity of individuals, families, groups, and our society to respond adequately has been severely diminished.¹³ Thus, at a time which calls for

¹¹ Meyer M. Cahn, "Sensitivity Training or Credibility Training — After Watergate," *Social Change*, Vol. 3, No. 4 (1973), p.1.

¹² Michael J. Flax, *A Study in Comparative Urban Indicators: Conditions in 18 Large Metropolitan Areas*. (Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute, 1972).

¹³ Alvin Toffler, *Future Shock* (New York: Random House, 1970), and Charles A. Reich, *The Greening of America* (New York: Random House, 1970).

people to utilize their social and emotional resources to the fullest, energies are blunted and thwarted. Both the winds of social change and the fear of changes yet to come (many of which are necessary) work to dissipate needed energies.

Curiously, in our field the social work function has atrophied precisely during the period when the human needs of our communities have become most attenuated. It is difficult to determine the precise reason for the development of this trend since social work was perceived from the early days of our field as a critical foundation stone.

Writing in 1946, Graenum Berger said that: "Group work offers an instrumentality for providing individuals with an opportunity to make increasingly more complicated adjustments to the mobile society of which they are inextricably a part."¹⁴ In another part of the same article he comments:

If one were to aptly sum up the significance of group work, it would be as follows: it recognizes that individual personality is more important than program; that program is an instrument in the development and socialization of the individual; that we need to know a great deal about individual and group behavior to effect this growth process; that the group through the rich stimulation which it gives its members assists in this growth process; that native leadership can be developed through group experiences; that the group leader is not an adult who imposes his own world image upon a new generation, but one who seeks to give each age rich nourishment from the contemporary scene; that in the ever evolving process of the individual and the group, both look forward to a future which will insure fulfillment and not frustration. Group work was conceived in the democratic eras. It needs a free and secure world in which to operate. Certainly, the Jew cannot live otherwise.¹⁵

¹⁴ Graenum Berger, *Adventures in Group Work* (New York: Bronx House, 1948, p. 9.

¹⁵ Louis Kraft, "Jewish Community Center

Review of Social Work Trends in the JCC via Some of the Literature

In 1954, in describing the functions of the Center, Louis Kraft wrote of the community organization function and then went on to say that the Center: "renders social services, especially to transients and newcomers. . . . The Center becomes involved in these activities because it is regarded as a community institution, has community-wide support . . . and often has the only Jewish professional social work staff in the community."¹⁶ (Emphasis added)

Yet, despite such authoritative statements, the late 50's and early 60's saw the harvest of some rather bitter fruit. At the National Conference on Social Welfare in 1959 Robert D. Vinter called for the withdrawal of M.S.W.s from the socialization agencies where he maintained that their professional skills had fallen into disuse. He also noted that professional advancement in these agencies required that M.S.W.s move even further away from professional functions requiring social work skill. He also called for schools of social work to stop using agencies such as JCC's for graduate social work student training. While he allowed for the existence of some trained social workers in agencies such as ours, his message was clear.¹⁷ At the same conference, although with considerable less force, Raymond Fisher also presented a paper which emphasized the growing gap between group service agencies and social

Purpose and Scope," in Louis Kraft and Charles S. Bernheimer, eds., *Aspects of the Jewish Community Center* (New York: National Association of Jewish Center Workers, 1954), pp 22-23.

¹⁶ Robert D. Vinter, "Group Work: Perspectives and Prospects," in *Social Work with Groups 1959* (New York: National Association of Social Workers, 1959), pp. 128-148.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp 18-29.

work.¹⁸ Then, at still the same conference, we find Sanford Solender speaking of the complexities social workers face in *administering* group service agencies in the face of social change.¹⁹ Such data support Vinter's position or so it would seem, since it is hard to draw any other conclusion if one assumes that administration was the most burning issue to the then head of the Jewish Center Division of JWB. Some will recall that the reaction in our field was loud and rather immediate. Naturally, as with anyone who questions what Jews are doing, Vinter was even charged with being slightly anti-Semitic. Those who screamed from within our field did little beyond defending what was and is indefensible.

From another vantage point 1959 was a critical year for social work with groups. That was when the debate between William Schwartz and Robert D. Vinter became public in print via the publication of Alfred Kahn's book.²⁰ The chapters by Schwartz and Vinter began to draw the lines, and retrospectively one can perceive in them early signs of what our field's choice was going to be. We might have been more influential than we were in the resulting developments in both theory

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp 96-108.

¹⁹ Alfred J. Kahn, *Issues in American Social Work* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960). See William Schwartz, "Group Work and the Social Scene," pp. 110-137, and Robert D. Vinter, "The Social Structure of Service," pp 242-269.

²⁰ Robert D. Vinter, "New Evidence for Restructuring Group Services," *New Perspectives on Services to Groups: Theory, Organization, Practice* (New York: National Association of Social Workers, 1961), pp. 48-69. Although Mitchell I. Ginsberg and Irving Miller had written an excellent paper explicating the social work component of JCC practice Vinter dismissed them in one sentence. See their paper, "The Professional Aspects of Center Work. An Examination of Setting and Goals as they Relate to Social Work," *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, Vol XXXVIII, No. 2 (Winter 1961), p.142.

and educational programs had we been more committed to professional practice as a field.

The next ten to twelve years were interesting ones, and they can be characterized by two themes in the debate and literature. The first theme had to do with defending our field against the continuing attacks from schools of social work and their faculties. The second and related theme was the push for definition of the specialized training needs of Jewish Center workers. A corollary of the second theme was the internal push to unseat social work as *the core* discipline, and the assertion that Jewish identity and survival are the *only* valid business of the JCC. Not even *primary* was good enough for some during those days as we shall see.

1961 was a crucial year because that was when Robert D. Vinter seemed to put the finishing touches on what he started in 1959 when he called for the government to take over what socialization agencies had been doing until then, and doing wrongly and wastefully in terms of community dollars and manpower from his point of view.²¹ Again from within our field came the cries of outrage against putting us out of business. At the same National Conference on Social Welfare, William Schwartz presented his now famous paper on social work with groups,²² which received little notice from our field for several years. Maybe we were too nervous because of what Vinter was doing to our "movement." From that point of view we had a right to be since if we were or are a "movement", then

²¹ William Schwartz, "The Social Worker in the Group," *Ibid.*, pp 7-29.

²² Allan Greene, Barry Kasdan, and Brian Segal, "Jewish Social Group Work Students View the Jewish Community Center Field as a Placement and Career," *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, Vol. XLIV, No. 2 (Winter, 1967), pp. 168-176.

we are in big trouble. Most social movements have well articulated ideological foundations—we do not. Further, movements have some sense of ideological unity from within their constituency. Our *field of practice* (as distinct from "movement") is as diverse as the Jewish community itself. Finally, the movement strain which does exist within our field is what causes us social workers a great deal of trouble. Theoretically, ideologically based movements have rather sharply defined outcomes or goals which they are interested in achieving. While social work is obviously value-based and value-laden, it has what might be termed "hoped for outcomes" rather than specific goals which are universal irrespective of who the individual under the influence of one of its proponents is. For social workers, the dilemma rears its ugly head when we are asked to become advocates for goals serving Jewish survival that are framed in terms like "Jewish content". The words always evoke for me the image of a Center worker holding a member's arm in one hand and a syringe in the other marked "Jewish Content" which the worker is about to inject with a vengeance. The numbers of trained social workers who have left our field because of that impossible task *and* the poor standards of practice have been documented by JWB quite thoroughly. The impact of this thrust on the experience of graduate social work students placed in Jewish community centers was ably demonstrated in a paper which before and after publication caused a stir.²³

It is hard for me to comprehend why our field cannot seem to understand that Jewish content and value inculca-

²³ Alan F. Klein, *The Future of the Jewish Center*, paper presented at the Fall Conference of the East Central Chapter of the National Association of Jewish Center Workers, Pittsburgh, Pa., November 16, 1967, p. 6, multilithed.

tion are the realm of the Jewish educator whose presence in our Center staff should be welcomed. The Jewish educator should be welcomed by the social worker since that would immediately free us to get on with the business of Jewish *experience* which is our "bag". Here the tasks of clarifying, working through, etc., become a function of our training. I have no trouble with social workers who wish primarily to educate, but that is not social work as I understand it. I do wish for our collective sake, however, that they would stop calling themselves social workers.

I want no misunderstanding about what I am saying here. I am not arguing that Jewish survival or the inculcation of Jewish values have no place in the JCC as a primary focus. I am saying that it has no place as a primary concern in the *practice of social work* which is designed to deal with the psychosocial needs of people. Obviously, the religious and ethnic identification needs of people are part of this range of concerns. What then is the rationale for the practice of social work in the JCC? The answer is that some Jews who use Centers need social work services just as they have need for other services within a Jewish context. Alan Klein put it well when, in a paper not very widely circulated, he said:

To assume that the Jewish community center was or is a social welfare agency or that its functions were or are primarily social work was and is a mistake. There is a social work service role in the Center to be sure. This is the point at which Center function and social work function articulate, but the Center function also articulates with physical education, adult education and so forth. The Center must define the social work factor and then use group work therein, appropriately for what social group workers were educated to do.²⁴

²⁴ The papers were subsequently published in Irving Canter, ed., *Research Findings in Jewish Communal Service* (New York: National Associa-

He goes on to question why social workers should administer programs which are not totally social welfare programs, and also looks at the dysfunctional result of pushing only one approach to what is valid Jewishness, or good for Jewish survival.

Our field neglected for a while the group work theory that had developed during the period of 1959-1961 which we could have used to bolster our work. In 1961 Irving Canter called together some people for a "Problem Finding Conference of the Research Institute for Group Work in Jewish Agencies," to examine papers presented by Murray Ortof, William Schwartz, Richard Cloward, Irving Canter, David French, and Edgar F. Borgotta.²⁵ The implications of William Schwartz's paper would also lie fallow for a couple of years before our field picked them up. Perhaps the stirrings of confusion were already in the works, but between the 1962 AJCW Conference when Bertram Gold and Arnulf Pins²⁶ presented their thinking on the training needs of all Center workers and the 1963 AJCW Conference when Graenum Berger presented his thinking about the Jewish educational function of the Center²⁷ it is

tion of Jewish Center Workers, 1967), see pp. 1-57.

²⁵ Bertram H. Gold and Arnulf M. Pins, "Effective Preparation for Jewish Community Center Work," *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, Vol. XXXIX, No. 2. (Winter, 1962) pp. 121-141.

²⁶ Graenum Berger, "The Center as a Jewish Educational Institution," in *The Jewish Community Center - A Fourth Force in American Jewish Life* (New York: Jewish Education Committee Press, 1966), pp. 12-55.

²⁷ See, for example, Morris Levin, *Perspectives on Field Work Placements in Jewish Community Center*, presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Conference of Jewish Communal Services, Phila., Pa., June 1, 1965), mimeo; Emanuel Berlatsky, "Retaining The Recruited — Husbanding Our Resources," *Social Work Education Reporter*, Vol. XII, No. 3 (September 1965); Abe Vinik, "Role of the Group Service Agency," *Social Work*, Vol. 9,

my judgement that we begin to see the debate between social work and Jewish education in the Center take on vibrancy. It is also my judgement that the forces were just too great for the social workers to stave off.

Between the need to defend social work in Centers against the pressure of the schools of social work²⁸ and internal lack of clarity it is no surprise that preoccupation with Jewish survival won out in the precise way it did. By that I mean that we are clearly open to attack in relation to this preoccupation for the same reason we were open to attack in the social work area (i.e. — lack of clarity of function, inappropriate use of manpower resources).²⁹ If one feels that we have made great strides in this respect since the study done by Carl Urbont, then I urge a review of the analysis of several reports on this issue done by Morris Levin³⁰ and a comparison of its findings with the current participation statistics of one's own Center. To me the most important

No. 3 (July 1964), pp. 98-105; Morris Levin, *The Group Service Agency As A Field Work Placement Trends, Prospects, Problems*, presented at Annual Program Meeting of the Council on Social Work Education, January 25-27, 1966, New York City; Ralph Garber, *The Field Instructor's Responsibility to His Field of Practice*, presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Conference of Jewish Communal Service, Washington, D.C., May 17, 1966; Oscar H. Rosenfeld, *The Student The School and The Agency... (A Faculty Member's Viewpoint)*, and Morris Levin, *Learning and Teaching in Field Work*, both papers presented at the Conference on Field Work in Social Group Work in the Jewish Community Center, New York City, May 6, 1966.

²⁸ Carl Urbont, "The Purposes of the Jewish Community Center Movement: An Appraisal of Their Operation," in *American Jewish Yearbook*, Vol. 68 (1967), pp. 19-59.

²⁹ Morris Levin, "An Analysis of Study Material on the Image of the Jewish Community Center Held By Membership and The Community," in Irving Canter, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 190-207.

³⁰ Arnulf M. Pins, "Professional Personnel in the Social Services of the Jewish Community," *American Jewish Yearbook*, Vol. 62 (1963), pp. 203-235.

point made is that against our claims of lively program in support of Jewish identification we need to look at the majority use of *only* our physical education facilities.

In 1963, although there were some severe personnel shortages, Arnulf Pins was able to report that the future looked bright with regards to the availability of trained social workers for our field.³¹ Then in 1967 Alfred Dobrof urged that what our field required was some re-definition of social work function, and he proposed some approaches using the episode of service concept. Finally, he suggested some beginning differences between core social group work and other skills.³² Less than a year later Sanford Solender stated that the JCC is an instrument of Jewish group life and insisted that although it is a multi-function Jewish communal institution *its core is social welfare*. He held that social work should still be the core or host discipline because of the centrality of the social welfare purpose.³³

Between 1964, when Abe Vinik loudly and clearly restated the function of social work with groups in our setting³⁴ and 1968 when Robert Glass presented a paper which was a comparative analysis of the work of Vinter (the remedial approach), Schwartz (the reciprocal or mediating approach), and the Pittsburgh Model (social goals),³⁵

³¹ Alfred Dobrof, "Jewish Community Center Manpower—Now and for the Decade Ahead," *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, Vol. XLIV, No. 3 (Spring, 1968), pp. 260-270.

³² Sanford Solender, "New Perspectives on Staff Organization in the Jewish Community Center," *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, Vol. XLIV, No. 4 (Summer, 1968), pp. 299-309.

³³ Vinik, *Op. Cit.*, see fn. 34.

³⁴ Robert Glass, "The Current Dilemma in Social Group Work Methodology," *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, Vol. XLIV, No. 4 (Summer, 1965), pp. 310-315.

³⁵ Abe Vinik, "Promise and Performance: Towards Bridging the Gap in the JCC," *Conference*

our literature was rather thin on discussions of social work practice or theory. It would be false to say that there was a complete absence of any internal struggle within our field or an absence of any attempts to examine the challenges from the profession of social work. But, one is left with the feeling that despite some excellent attempts³⁶ which were designed to provoke our field into action these efforts fell on deaf ears. One needs to go beyond the applause given to the authors at our annual conferences, and look to our practical behavior for signs of change. The absence of such change was dramatically hidden by the thrust of Center involvement in the civil rights movement.

Then, Armand Lauffer was invited to present a paper on the implications of some recent research on the career goals of current social work students at our conference in 1969. The data was drawn from a national survey which had just been completed by the Council on Social Work Education. The data showed that a new breed of social actionists had entered the profession (recall that this was the period of the War on Poverty), and Lauffer concluded that "There is nothing in their (activist

Papers (New York: National Association of Jewish Center Workers, 1963), p. 98; Donald Feldstein, "The Emperor's Clothes—A Critique of Current Jewish Programming," *Conference Papers* (New York: National Association of Jewish Center Workers, 1964), pp. 92-104; Herman Eigen, "Faculty and Agency Expectations for Student Training," *Supra*, pp. 106-118; Emanuel Berlatsky, "Direction and Dimension in Jewish Life: Their Significance in the Practice of Social Group Work in Jewish Community Centers," *Conference Papers* (New York: National Association of Jewish Center Workers, 1966), pp. 140-165; and Donald Feldstein, "The Jewish Center and The Thrust of Social Work," *Supra*, pp. 185-194.

³⁶ Armand Lauffer, "The Future of Social Work in the Jewish Community Center: The Case of the Disinclined Student," *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, Vol. XLVI, No. 1 (Fall 1969), pp. 45-58.

social workers') backgrounds or interests, nor anything in their aspirations that would suggest the Jewish community as a locus for either self-fulfillment or realization of their social goals." He suggested we look to other professions for the future staff of our agencies.³⁷ I must admit that I thought he was right considering the experience of two years earlier, when people at our annual conference became enraged at Charles Levy while he was presenting a paper detailing the differences between the ideal and the real in Center social work practice. In commenting on four disparities between the idealization of professional practice and the experience of JCC staff he noted that:

- 1) His place within the Jewish community center has no meaning unless the focus of his activity is on Jewish survival, but his professional role idealizes service to people as individuals, in families and in groups, not in their manipulation for some ultimate community end;
- 2) Group workers employed precisely because they are social group workers find themselves deprived of opportunity to do what group workers do—rather they increasingly perform work which does not utilize their core professional skills.
- 3) While social work puts priorities on people who need a great deal of help, Center members do not come to their agencies because they look for help, and frequently have access to all the resources needed.
- 4) The fourth discrepancy, the ideal of ethical practice and the reality of unethical experience is of course, not peculiar to the Jewish community centers alone.³⁸

I suspect that Levy evoked a great deal of defensiveness and anger because less than ten years later he was, if you will,

³⁷ Charles S. Levy, "Professional Practice in the Jewish Community Center: Disparities Between the Idealizations and Experience of Center Personnel," *Conference Papers* (New York: National Association of Jewish Center Workers, 1967).

³⁸ Allan Greene, et al., *Op. Cit.*, see fn. 29.

"a Vinter from within the family." Possibly the final blow was that he also used data from the social work student study by Greene, et al. which showed that students placed in a Center were more likely to not choose our field as a setting for their career as a social worker.³⁹ Of course this should not have been a surprise since everyone knew what Bernard Scotch discovered a year later. He found that workers with deep social work commitments left our field, but those with strong Jewish identification stayed.⁴⁰ Thus, it is safe to assume that of those social workers who remain in our field *most* do so because of a primacy of loyalty to Jewish Center or community, but not to the profession of social work. The resulting impact on the quality of social work practice is self evident.

In one sense a number of the professional practice issues raised over the last ten years were not anywhere near the top of the priority list of our field during the early 1970's. This is probably because of developments within society and social work education related to the growth of emphasis upon ethnic minorities. Thus, despite contrary influences, more Jewish students are placed in Jewish agencies. More Jewish social work graduates are looking for jobs in Jewish Centers, and we can be extremely selective and seek the highly

³⁹ C. Bernard Scotch, "The Impact of Alternative Job Opportunities for MSW's Upon the Manpower Resources of the Center Field," *Conference Papers* (New York: National Association of Jewish Center Workers, 1968).

⁴⁰ Arnulf M. Pins and Leon H. Ginsberg, "New Developments in Social Work Education and their Impact on Jewish Communal Service and Community Center Work," *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, Vol. XLVIII, No. 1 (Fall, 1971), pp. 60-71. The above assertion about the raising of professional questions is my own, is derivative of the preceding material by Levy and Scotch, and ought not to be attributed to Pins and Ginsberg.

Jewishly identified. We ought to be quite concerned, however, because these same workers are not likely to raise too many professional practice concerns.⁴¹

Despite Lauffer's data⁴² I am not ready to accept his conclusions. I do not think he counted on the substantial increase in concern and resource allocation to non-Jewish ethnic minorities, the great disillusionment with the "Great Society" programs, or the economic shifts causing the present shrinkage of the social work job market. Both Bernard Reisman⁴³ and Gerald Bubis⁴⁴ believe the change which he suggested is already here and that Jewish educational approaches are the answer. I have great difficulty with their answer because while I believe Jewish education is one of the functions of the JCC, I am not prepared to see it develop if the cost is the demise of the social work function. I cannot agree with Graenum Berger that we must depend solely upon Jewish sponsored training programs for our staffs. I agree that these programs should be supported and expanded, and that more workers should be exposed to those programs. But, we part company, if as I believe he does, he feels that they should be a substitute for graduate social work training. He also makes note of social works' recent large-scale failure in the War on Poverty and the fact

⁴¹ Lauffer, *Op. Cit.*, see fn. 42.

⁴² Bernard Reisman, "Social Work Education and Jewish Communal Service and Jewish Community Centers: Time For a Change," *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, Vol. XLVIII, No. 4 (Summer, 1972), pp. 384-395.

⁴³ Gerald B. Bubis, "Today's Role of The Jewish Community Center in Jewish Education," *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, Vol. XLIX, No. 1 (Fall, 1972), pp. 48-57.

⁴⁴ Graenum Berger, "Strengths and Limitations in Present Attempts at Preparing Workers for Jewish Communal Service," *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, Vol. L, No. 3 (Spring, 1974), pp. 215-222.

that this is causing it to maintain a low profile.⁴⁵ This is, of course, why the graduate schools in particular are in no position to take agencies such as ours to task on professional practice grounds.

However, the silence is only temporary since eventually there shall be time and energy to focus once again on our shortcomings. Perhaps five years from now *we* shall even do it ourselves as a result of a new manpower shortage! As an alternative I would like to suggest that we turn our energies now to the task of clarifying the social work function of our agencies and to defining the tasks which are particular to those whom we serve. The remainder of this paper, therefore, will be concerned with these issues.

The Social Work Function Defined

If one accepts the fact that new developments in social work education are responsive to new developments in the need for services, then that is where we must begin our examination of function. A major change is the move towards generic social work practice and the teaching of practice via setting or type of service rather than method (i.e. — group work, casework, c.o.)⁴⁶ Harold Lewis, however, in taking note of another trend, commented that:

Social groupwork in the United States has moved toward a treatment orientation in close alliance with a psychologically oriented social casework practice. While many of our social groupwork leaders have continued to insist on a dual focus in practice (i.e.—the concern for the social responsibility of the group and its programmatic expression as well as concern

⁴⁵ Arnulf M. Pins, "Changes in Social Work Education and Their Implications for Practice," *Social Work*, Vol. 16, No. 2 (April, 1971), p. 9.

⁴⁶ Harold Lewis, "Apology, Animation, Conscientization: Implications for Social Work Education in the USA," *Journal of Education for Social Work*, Vol. 9, No. 3 (Fall, 1973), p. 36.

for the individual member in the group and his or her own personal development), the trend during the last two decades has emphasized a treatment focus.⁴⁷

Still others maintain that the near future will see two major thrusts in social work (which are in with our system): 1) consultation and advice-giving in connection with social planning, and 2) services to individuals and groups made more urgent by the complexities of technology, which will absorb most of professional energy. Carol Meyer recently suggested that "the contexts of social work practice are a melange of values, knowledge, skills, commitments, and patterns of service. To the extent that these contexts remain out of touch with the world as it is, the world will have little need of social workers."⁴⁸ With these broader comments on function in mind we now will turn to Alfred Kahn who lists the functions of social work as the provision of:

1. Individual and group corrective, adjustive, and therapeutic services.
2. Services whose major contribution is to normal socialization and social control.
3. Planning and coordination services, related specifically to social welfare.
4. Services which contribute to the formulation and implementation of social policy.
5. Research activities essential to evaluation of services and their ultimate improvement.⁴⁹

Obviously, our Field has been responsive to the first three, but *most* responsive to the first two of the five activities above.

The rationale for the emphasis upon

⁴⁷ Russel E. Smith and John N. Hester, "Social Services in a Technological Society", *Journal of Education for Social Work*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (Winter, 1974), pp. 84-85.

⁴⁸ Carol H. Meyer, "Direct Services in New and Old Contexts", in Alfred J. Kahn, ed., *Shaping The New Social Work*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1973), p. 30.

⁴⁹ Alfred J. Kahn, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 28-33.

services through groups and its relationship to social work function in our field is spelled out by William Schwartz as he examines group work in a social and historical context:

... there were two common emphases which, taken together, constituted perhaps the community agencies' outstanding contribution to the American scene. One was their shared belief in the salutary social and personal effects of group association; the other was a tested conviction that the development of sound leadership was a central problem and a special task in the mobilization of group life in a democracy. In their preoccupation with human association, they created a great laboratory of group experience, in which attention was called to some of the major hypotheses later to be elaborated and tested by the social scientists: people in groups were more teachable, more reachable, and more susceptible to change; small groups in particular were crucibles of attitude and value formation; people together tended to solve problems more efficiently, since "group work" is more lasting and more accurate than individual work. Further, in acting together people could exert greater impact on their environment, and the group thus became the symbol and the instrument of the democratic ideal. A democratic society is one that acts through a multiplicity of active groups, trained in their own broadly conceived self-interest. As a further development of this idea, the group itself must be democratically evolved, structured, and oriented—a prototype or special instance, of the democratic system in action.⁵⁰

However, in order to move to a specification of tasks which we can assume operational responsibility for, we require a statement of function which is both broader than our historical statements of function might seem to allow and yet more specifically suited to the nature of our service system. It is clear to me that the statement of function developed by William Schwartz is perfect for our field of practice:

⁵⁰ William Schwartz, "Group Work and the Social Scene", in Alfred J. Kahn, *Ibid.*, pp. 114-115.

We would suggest that the general assignment for the social work profession is to mediate the process through which the individual and his society reach out for each other through a mutual need for self-fulfillment. This presupposes a relationship between the individual and his nurturing group which we would describe as "symbiotic"—each needing the other for its own life and growth, and each reaching out to the other with all the strength it can command at a given moment. The social worker's field of intervention lies at the point where two forces meet: the individual's impetus toward health, growth, and belonging; and the organized efforts of society to integrate its parts into a productive and dynamic whole.⁵¹

If one examines this statement of function or "professional assignment" of Schwartz and sets it alongside the service priorities of supporting Jewish family life and enhancing the mental and physical health of our constituents as defined by Bernard Warach⁵² and Louis Berkowitz⁵³ one discovers that the function statement holds.

I would also like to clarify something about the statement of function which relates to the special place of *therapy* in the JCC. Jessie Taft put it better than I suspect anyone else ever will:

The word "therapy" is used instead of "treatment" because in its derivation and in my own feeling about the word, there is not so much implication of manipulation of one person by another. To treat, according to the dictionary, is to apply a process to someone or something. The word "therapy" has no verb in English, for which I am grateful; it cannot do anything to anybody, hence can better represent a process going on, observed perhaps, understood perhaps, assisted perhaps, but

⁵¹ William Schwartz, "The Social Worker in the Group," *Op. Cit.*, p. 15.

⁵² Bernard Warach, "Supporting and Enhancing Family Life Through the Jewish Community Center", in Robert Glass, ed., *Jewish Center Work: Trends and Perspectives*, (New York: Association of Jewish Center Workers, 1972), pp. 154-181.

⁵³ Louis Berkowitz, "Preserving, Developing and Enhancing Mental and Physical Health", *Ibid.*, pp. 182-221.

not applied. The Greek noun from which "therapy" is derived means "a servant," the verb means "to wait". I wish to use the work "therapy" with the full force of its derivation, to cover a process which we recognize as somehow and somewhat curative, but which, if we are honest enough and brave enough, we must admit to be beyond our control.⁵⁴

It is in this sense that therapy has a role in the social work function of the Center. My sense is that we can no longer simply be "group workers", but that in order to meet the new demands upon our professional skills we must be social workers who work with individuals, families, groups and communities. For many this will be nothing more than a change in stance or label, but for some the change will cause great emotional trauma. Further, it is also clear to me that we must stop trying to hide behind the stance of the normalcy of our clientele. To begin with it is often a deception. That is, our agencies have *always* served people with severe problems. Perhaps, in our zeal to make them feel at home or to deal with our own anxiety and feelings of helplessness, we have found it expedient to deny their very real differences. In any event, the price of this position has been dear. On the one hand, we have not been free enough as a field to incorporate all the service methods that we might have called upon in service to those individuals and groups. On the other, we fed right into the absurd non-social work agency definition Vinter and his colleagues⁵⁵ placed upon our field of practice. I believe that the days of the group service agency are

⁵⁴ Jessie Taft, *The Dynamics of Therapy In a Controlled Relationship* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1962), p.3.

⁵⁵ Henry J. Meyer, Eugene Litwak, Edwin J. Thomas, and Robert D. Vinter, "Social Work and Social Welfare," in Paul F. Lazarsfeld, William H. Sewell, and Harold L. Wilensky, *The Uses of Sociology* (New York: Basic Books, Inc. 1967), p. 171.

near the end as we know it (wherein social group work was the host discipline). However, I also feel that Abe Vinik's admonition about the movement "from the specific to the generic without regard to . . . (the differences) between casework and group work,"⁵⁶ was unfounded and served only to put restraints on the development of a balanced program of service to all people. Additionally, it only put off to another time the need to confront the "treaters" in our midst.

I would venture that underneath the statement of function by Schwartz for our agencies lies a premise that therapeutic services flow as a part of all program services, and indeed most frequently will emerge out of so-called regular or usual program contacts and services.

If social work with groups is to be the only professional service approach, then we ought to realize that we are as boxed in as we were before. The needs of our people require a broader base of knowledge and skill. There are ample suitable employment opportunities in our agencies for generically trained social workers, as will be discussed below. For now suffice it to say that we seem to be growing clearer with time about the need for artists to work at their art, for teachers on our staff to teach, and for physical educators to provide physical education services. Why then, do we still seem to have difficulty with social workers doing social work?

I submit that this state of affairs exists because we are unclear about the tasks of social workers (as distinct from, but related to, the function of the profession of social work). To turn our attention to the tasks of the social worker, and the agency environmental conditions necessary for those tasks to be performed, we begin with defining

needed criteria that determine a professional task exists. Vinter suggested that three criteria must be met in any statement:

- 1) The professional must have regular opportunity to work with people who require his or her skills.
- 2) The professional, in working with such people, must be able to exercise professional skill.
- 3) To function as a professional the practitioner requires an administrative climate congenial to the exercise of social work skill.⁵⁷

To these I would add two more criteria suggested by many practitioners over the years:

- 4) The purposes of the agency under whose auspices the professional exercises his or her skill (including such service boundaries as time or length of service) should be specified.
- 5) The specific purpose of the service provided by the professional as agreed upon by the agency (through the worker) and those using the service should be explicit.

Once again Schwartz provides us with information of use in our search for clarity. He identified five categories of tasks common to all social workers:

- 1) The task of searching out the common ground between the client's perception of his own need and the aspects of social demand with which he is faced.
- 2) The task of detecting and challenging the obstacles which obscure the common ground and frustrate the efforts of people to identify their own self-interest with that of their "significant others."
- 3) The task of contributing data—ideas, facts, value-concepts—which are not available to the client and which may prove useful to him in the attempt to cope with that part of social reality which is involved in the problems on which he is working.

⁵⁷ Robert D. Vinter, *Supra*, pp. 140-141, see fn. 23. While he was specifically referring to work with groups, I have modified his criteria slightly for which he is not responsible.

- 4) The task of "lending a vision" to the client in which the worker both reveals himself as one whose own hopes and aspirations are strongly invested in the interaction between people and society and who projects a deep feeling for that which represents individual well-being and the social good.
- 5) The task of defining the requirements and the limits of the situation in which the client-worker system is set. These rules and boundaries establish the context for the "working contract" which binds the client and the agency to each other and which creates the conditions under which both client and worker assume their respective functions.⁵⁸

I would add some reference to the specific acts or instrumental performance required to undertake the tasks, these being the specific skills of the worker. Skill then, is function in action.⁵⁹

Next, in his concept of practice, he clarified a number of essential areas:

—*Client Group* - "a collection of people who need each other in order to work on certain common tasks, in an agency that is hospitable to those tasks" ("tasks" equals a set of needs converted into work).

—*Agency* - the agency determines which human problems it will apply its resources to and has a stake in the proceedings; it is not simply a meeting place, or a place of refuge; its own social tasks are involved and become an integral part of the group experience."

—*Contract* - the convergence of the tasks of the client and agency "creates the terms of the contract... This contract is made openly, reflecting both stakes, provides the frame of reference for the work that follows, and

⁵⁸ William Schwartz, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 17-18.

⁵⁹ William Schwartz, "Toward A Strategy of Group Work Practice," in Irving Canter, ed., *Research Readings in Jewish Communal Service* (New York: National Association of Jewish Center Workers, 1967), pp. 44-46.

for understanding when the work is in progress, when it is being evaded, and when it is finished."

—*Work* - "The moving dynamic in the group experience is *work*." It is characterized by people trying to get others to understand their needs, the interaction reflects both common and unique tasks, and there is a flow of feelings both negative and positive resulting from participants' stake in each other's experience.

—*Self-Consciousness* - Attention to the internal processes of the group is required, but it is always in the service of removing obstacles which may impede movement toward the purpose of the service.

—*Authority & Intimacy* - The group works on its relationship to the worker (authority) and to each other (intimacy). "It is the interplay of these factors—external authority and mutual interdependence—that provides much of the driving force of the group experience."

In order to see how the previously described tasks of the worker fit into this picture we need add only a few facts.

—The worker is concerned with parallel processes - the worker's work and the group's work.

—The worker's most important task is to mediate the "engagement of client need and agency service."

—The worker demands work in accord with the terms of the contract thus performing the mediating function.

—The worker shares his or her authority with the group and via behavior on his or her part models for group members the mutual aid process.

—The worker holds the group to its purpose. This makes it possible for the worker to be clear about the purpose of his or her interventions.

—Finally, after the initial phase of tuning-in, the worker applies these functions via skill during the beginning, middle (or *work* phase), and transitional or ending phases.⁶⁰

I have quoted extensively from the work of Schwartz because it is the practice theory I believe fits our setting best. In addition, I suggest that it is the practice theory most extensively developed (aside from the treatment approach of Vinter and his colleagues at the University of Michigan).

There are, however, other useful practice approaches which ought not to be overlooked. I am referring, for example, to the work of Ruth Smalley,⁶¹ the Boston Model,⁶² Margaret E. Hartford,⁶³ Helen Northern,⁶⁴ Alan Klein,⁶⁵ Ruth Middleman,⁶⁶ and Howard Goldstein.⁶⁶

Obviously, there is also much more to be learned from clinical sociology, ges-

⁶⁰ William Schwartz, "On the Use of Groups in Social Work Practice," in William Schwartz and Serapio Zalba, eds., *The Practice of Group Work* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), pp. 3-24. For some examples of the reciprocal model in practice, the reader is referred to the other chapters in this book and to Lawrence Shulman, *A Casebook of Social Work With Groups: The Mediating Model* (New York: Council on Social Work Education, 1968).

⁶¹ Ruth Smalley, *Theory For Social Work Practice* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967).

⁶² Saul Bernstein, et al., *Explorations in Group Work* (Boston: Boston University School of Social Work, 1965), and *Further Explorations in Group Work*, edited and published by the same people in 1970.

⁶³ Margaret E. Hartford, *Groups in Social Work* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972).

⁶⁴ Helen Northern, *Social Work With Groups* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969).

⁶⁵ Alan F. Klein, *Effective Groupwork: An Introduction to Principle and Method* (New York: Association Press, 1972).

⁶⁶ Ruth R. Middleman, *The Non-Verbal Method In Working With Groups* (New York: Association Press, 1968).

⁶⁷ Howard Goldstein, *Social Work Practice: A Unitary Approach* (South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1973).

talt theory, transactional analysis, human relations training, and encounter, just to mention a few other approaches to work with people. Indeed while much of what Schwartz has written applies to work with individuals, some does not. We shall, therefore, need to look to other sources for the additional help we require.

The Agency Environment

The professional tasks outlined above require an agency that is conducive: 1) JCC's should require that *all* social workers, including the agency executive director and assistant executive director, carry ongoing direct practice responsibilities with members (Boards, committees and supervision *are not* direct practice!).

2) Regular recording should be required of all social workers. These recordings should be the basis for ongoing consultation or supervision of all workers doing direct practice.

3) Adequate time should be built into worker's job loads for these and other related *practice* responsibilities.

4) The Center has the responsibility to provide adequate consultation for advanced practitioners where the Center cannot internally provide such assistance.

5) The Center should provide an ongoing in-service training program for social workers designed to sharpen the knowledge and skill of staff (including provision for attendance at institutes and conferences).

6) The JCC should clearly define its social work function, identify its social work staff clearly, and project this information to the center's constituency.

7) The Center's statement of purpose should include reference to the use of social work methods in clear terms (not to be confused with "character building").

8) Social work principles are reflected

in the administrative relationships and procedures which govern the delivery of social work services.

9) Job titles should reflect social work emphasis.

10) Membership and participation in appropriate professional associations should be encouraged.

11) Affiliation with schools of social work is sought as a way of participating in the development of the profession.

12) The Center should provide funds for the development and maintenance of a social work library.

13) The Center should encourage social work staff to develop and maintain communication with other social workers in the community.⁶⁸

The Utilization and Training of Social Work Personnel

This part of the overall issue can only be given brief treatment here, but it is crucial to note that we need to re-examine the tasks which we require trained social workers to perform. In the last five years a good deal of material has emerged which can be of great use to us. I am referring to specifications of those tasks which require social workers⁶⁹ and new approaches to staff organization.⁷⁰ Despite the continuing

⁶⁸ I am indebted to Solomon H. Green for sharing with me his notes on a presentation made in 1969 before the Metropolitan Association of Jewish Center Workers entitled: *Professional Social Work Practice in the JCC: Visible and Invisible?* from which some of the ideas expressed in the above listing were drawn. Another useful source is Morris Levin, *Effective Standards of Practice for the Jewish Community Center*, paper presented to the National Association of Jewish Center Workers, January 8, 1963, mimeo.

⁶⁹ Robert L. Barker and Thomas L. Briggs, *Differential Use of Social Work Manpower* (New York: National Association of Social Workers, 1968); and Samuel Finestone, *Report of the Conference on Personnel Utilization* (New York: National Association of Social Workers, May, 1964), mimeo.

⁷⁰ Irwin Golden, "The Utilization of Social

strains between Centers and the social work education enterprise⁷¹ I am convinced that if we make it our business to provide high quality professional social work services, we shall have more students to be trained than we will be able to accommodate. Despite all the changes, schools are still primarily interested in placing their students in good social work practice environments where they can have a solid experience.

The Service Targets of Social Work in the JCC

Finally, we must turn to the issue of how the Center, as an institution, operationalizes its social work function. That is, through what *range* of social work services. In examining the proposed approach to services it is important to keep in mind my earlier comments about applicability of the Center as a setting for the practice of generically trained social workers.

The range of social work services should run from counselling for individuals to work with community-wide groups around social action issues. Providing for those with a variety of physical and emotional handicaps is also a part of the range of services, but we ought to keep in mind that the service required may just as frequently be for socialization of or for some form of therapy. The major concern at this point is not to identify specific services, but rather to comment on the process

Work Manpower in Jewish Community Centers: Alternative Models," *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, Vol. XLVI, No. 1 (Fall, 1969), pp. 59-69. Also see Alfred Dobrof, "Jewish Community Center Manpower — Now and For the Decade Ahead," *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, Vol. XLIV, No. 3 (Spring, 1968), pp. 260-270.

⁷¹ Arthur L. Leader, "An Agency's View Toward Education for Practice," *Journal of Education for Social Work*, Vol. 7, No. 3 (Fall, 1971), pp. 27-34. Also, Ruth R. Middleman, "Social Work Education: The Myth of the Agency as Partner," *Social Welfare Forum*, 1973 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1973), pp. 196-212.

of engagement of service populations for a variety of purposes.

Frequently, we offer pre-packaged services to participants because that seems easier than to struggle through the process of engagement. Clearly, working that process through with people produces contractual agreements for service that are more specific and workable. The engagement process is especially important in the context of our setting because it helps to avoid "clientizing" the people with whom we work; and avoids the development of an aura of mysticism about the functioning of professionals. Further, if the engagement process is properly carried out, then it is more likely that the resulting service will be closer to the needs of participants.

Once again, I wish to emphasize that the factor which determines the professionalism of a piece of work is the extent to which (given the attention to some of the other tasks of the social worker listed above) the worker pays skillful attention to both the content *and* the process of the work. These two themes are ever-present, and any attempt to opt for one or the other in order to remove the dynamic tension they present together is a gross oversimplification of the complexities of social work process.

Similarly, an attempt on the part of a

Center to provide only those services to groups which seem to fit historical statements of JCC function is a distorted and narrow view of the needs of our participants, the potentialities of a Jewish community center, and the capacity of social workers in our setting to be of real service to Jews.

Conclusion

The paper has dealt only with the arena of social work function and tasks. I have not dealt with the complexities of the issue of how we engage committees and boards in order to solicit support for what are the most expensive services which a Center can provide. We must confront the issue of cost of social work services, and the fact that they will always produce the least amount of income of any service area. However, if we take pride in ourselves, if we are convinced of the need for our services, and if we are convinced that this is a critical function of our institution; then we shall find ourselves courageous enough to engage in the struggle required to convince those to whom we are ultimately accountable.

If we do not take on this responsibility for the conservation and strengthening of the soul, for after all is said and done that is the primary assignment of our profession, then no one else shall do it for us.

Achieving Jewish Substance: Developing Bridges Between Jewish Objectives and Practice*

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THE dominant issue within the Jewish communal field in recent years has been the concern for enriching the quality of Jewish life. It has been the focus of national conferences, the subject of professional articles, and the target of a specifically designed task group within the Association of Jewish Center workers. In reviewing the content of material under this new heading, it appears that our profession is once again struggling for clarity as to its Jewish purposes and potential. This time, however, we have broadened the designation of the issue but concomitantly have conveyed a new kind of specificity in defining problems related to Jewish quality. For example, under the broad heading of "enriching the quality of Jewish life," the literature, conference discussions, Committee Statement of Principles, all seem to focus on "activities," including services to Jewish elderly, serving Jews in new towns, reaching the neglected constituencies and economically deprived Jews, curbing the unsavory practices of Jewish functionaries, etc. Once again, however, there is the conspicuous omission of considerations related to the fundamental issues of commitment and ideology. These are concerns with which we must come to grips, unavoidably, and persistently, as a requisite to releasing recommendations for activities. While the issue of ideology is a complex one, it is nevertheless imperative to attempt to develop new insights into this problem which often tends to neutralize our search for Jewish substance.

This article will identify four specific problem areas in the tenacious effort of our profession to achieve Jewish substance.

Jewish Objectives and Professional Ideology

Social work is one of the most democratic of all professions. Philosophically, it is rooted in the respect for differences and technologically it is founded on the principle of self-determination. Jewish social work, or more specifically, group work in a Jewish community center subscribes to the ideology and technology of professional social work practice which remains the principle modality for the delivery of services. It is alleged that it would then follow that our commitment to specific Jewish purposes and beliefs might collide with the conformity of practice to professional principles. Our profession dictates that: a. we must help people make their own decisions. b. we do not moralize or pontificate. c. we remain impartial. In view of our commitment to these basic principles, the legitimacy of our specific Jewish objectives might appear contradictory. How does one reconcile the promulgation of specific Jewish beliefs (Israel, Jewish identity, enriching Jewish life, etc.) with the professional commitment to self-determination? For example, it would still appear, "wrong" to some Jewish community center professionals to take a specific stand on the question of inter-marriage.

Other sensitive issues related to Jewish life are often dealt with in study groups and conferences but are not confronted head on through practice and action. As a result, our impact is

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