

BOOK REVIEWS

Edited by MORTON I. TEICHER, PH.D.

JEWISH IDENTITY IN A GENTILE WORLD

by SAUL HOFSTEIN, D.S.W.

Wurzweiler School of Social Work, Yeshiva University, New York

Review of the **The Lakeville Studies**. Volume I: **Jewish Identity on the Suburban Frontier; a Study of Group Survival in the Open Society**, by Marshall Sklare and Joseph Greenblum.*

Volume II: **The Edge of Friendliness: A Study of Jewish-Gentile Relations**, by Benjamin B. Ringer.**

THE *Lakeville Studies* constitute the most recent report of the continuing research by the American Jewish Committee of Jewish identity and attitudes toward Jews in the United States. Noteworthy among the earlier reports were *The Riverton Study (1957)*, *Education and Attitude Change (1961)* and *Jews in the Mind of America (1966)*. Collectively, this work of the Committee provides one of the few sources of objective information about the developing Jewish community of America, its attitudes, conflicts, needs and relation with the Gentile world. The American Jewish Committee's findings are of major importance to all Jewish communal workers.

* Basic Books, New York, 1967. 362 pp. \$11.50.

** Basic Books, New York, 1967. 272 pp. \$8.25.

The current volumes report on a major investigation carried on by two independent research teams (one for the Jewish respondents and a second working with the Gentile respondents) of Lakeville, a suburb of a large midwestern city with a substantial Jewish population. The first study involved an analysis of the Jewish community and the attitudes of its members towards their own Judaism. The second study, adding to the Jewish respondents a sampling of Gentiles, focussed on the attitudes of the two groups towards each other.

Lakeville is an unusual suburb, all too rare in American society, where there is a strong liberal orientation, relative affluence, fine educational, social, cultural and recreational facilities, progressive and efficient city administration and an overall atmosphere of cultural

and religious tolerance. Jews, who at the time of the study, comprised about one-third of the population, have been among the earliest residents as well as constituting a large part of those more recently arrived.

Compared to most other communities, the Jews of Lakeville are affluent (median income of \$18,000) and include relatively large numbers of German descent and of third and fourth generation families. In general, the Jews of Lakeville are younger, better educated and more affluent than the majority of their non-Jewish neighbors. Lakeville as a community and the Jewish community within it, rather than being typical represents almost an ideal towards which much of America aspires. This atypical nature of Lakeville imposes very real limitations on the interpretation of the findings of the study and their application to other communities or to the general American Jewish population. Yet, when we consider that its Jewish residents include so many third and fourth generation Jewish families, its findings become particularly significant as a possible indication of the direction towards which Jews may be heading. Similarly, in a community where Jewish-Gentile relations are comparatively good, the findings about intergroup attitudes and continuing tensions have important significance to the whole question of Jewish identity and continuity in American life. The authors ask: "How does Jewishness fare in a community that typifies so much of the Jewish aspiration?"

No brief review can do justice to the findings of the studies. Their richness derives not only from the thoroughness of the sampling and the detail of the interviews on which the data was based (approximately three and a half hours per respondent), but on the analysis as well. In the first volume particularly, all analyses are broken down both ac-

ording to generation and descent. All too often, such studies tend to ignore variations among Jews. This study brings out significant differences in attitude and practices between East European Jews and those of German descent. It also indicates both the differences and the continuities between generations.

It is interesting to note, for instance, that, despite all of the talk of the generation gap, familial factors remain among the strongest of influences affecting one's attitudes towards oneself as a Jew. While there are changes in practice and belief, the direction and nature of those changes tend to differ according to both descent and generation.

While there is a marked shift particularly in the younger generations, from sacramentalism towards ritualism in Jewish observance, there is a continuing strong affiliation with the synagogue. While the younger generations have virtually abandoned observation of dietary laws, practice of some Sabbath ritual has been maintained or increased and there has been an increased observance of the Passover seder and Hanukkah as a festival. Although the preponderance of the children in all generations are provided with some Jewish education, the investigators note that the majority of Jewish homes in Lakeville lack a distinctly religious character.

The ethnic solidarity of the Jewish community of Lakeville is based primarily on informal group ties. Although there are many opportunities for relationships with Gentiles at work, in community and organizational activities, Jews tend to associate in friendship groups made up primarily of members of their own faith. Jewish organizational involvement, under contemporary conditions has become a form of belonging to the Jewish community and, as the authors state: "As such it is a way

of affirming and validating one's Jewish identity."

It is of interest to note that there is a substantial difference between the associational life of the Jew and Gentile of Lakeville. Jews tend to be more involved, to spend more time at and to be affiliated with many more organizations than are the Gentiles. By and large there are significant differences in recreational and community participation between Jew and Gentile. Among the Jews in the Study, association with friends and organizational activities have tended to reduce time spent with the extended family. Only some five percent spend more time with family than with friends. While women tend to associate themselves more with organizations having some communal or welfare purpose, men's affiliation tend to focus more on social, personal and organizations "intended for amusement."

In Lakeville, the authors note, the ideal of being a good Jew is no longer loyalty to sacramentalism and absorption with Jewish learning, but the extent to which the individual acknowledges moral ideals and works to change the world as well as himself. Components of Jewish identity are seen to include self-acceptance as a Jew, moral excellence, good citizenship, help to the poor and knowledge of Judaism. "Mitsvot between man and man are seen as more important than mitsvot between man and God." "The Lakeville Jew remains more Jewish in action than in thought." Stress is placed on contributing to Jewish charities, belonging to a Jewish synagogue or temple, marrying within the Jewish faith, attending services on the High holidays and support of Israel. While intermarriage is almost universally frowned upon, there are very few Jews who would follow the injunction to cast off children who intermarry. Objection to intermarriage is

based not on the violation of Jewish law but rather on the social and emotional consequences of such an act.

The authors appear to be deeply concerned about the shift from the religious or sacramental emphasis in Judaism to a more secular, activist orientation. Despite the evidence they present of a continuing deep involvement in Jewish friendships, Jewish organizations and Jewish activities, they ask about the younger generation: "Will their socialization to traditional models and their attachment to Jewish identity . . . be strong enough to assist them in building a viable life pattern which will combine both their Jewish and general identity and thus help to overcome the threat of assimilation?" The authors feel that few Lakeville parents have been able to give their children the basis for such a pattern. "The long-range viability of the pattern of Jewish adjustment characteristic of Lakeville is in question."

This reviewer feels that the authors, in coming to this conclusion, overlook the implications of some of their data. Although there was no specific analysis of the role played in Jewish survival of emotional and affective influences, data on friendship ties and on parent-child relationships suggest that these factors do exert considerable influence in sustaining and continuing Jewish identity. Further, the authors at times tend to show a preference for the sacramental over the secular model of Jewish identity. While religious factors are explored in detail, there is little analysis, for instance, of the non-religious Jewish background of the respondents of the place of Yiddish language, of affiliation with such organizations as Workmen Circle and Farband, of relatedness to Jewish cultural activities and the use of Jewish services. Of interest in this regard is the fact that, while very few of their respondents use Yiddish in the

home, four out of five are reported to use some Yiddish expressions in conversation.

Although the sacramental role of the synagogue as a place of worship and learning has been changing, the data suggests that it remains a dominant influence in the community reflecting both vitality and growth in the degree that it involves the families of Lakeville. As the community has grown, the single Reform Temple, begun as a branch of its parent temple in Lake City, has expanded to four different Reform temples and one Conservative synagogue. Although some effort was made to organize an Orthodox synagogue, it failed because of lack of support. The account of the growth and nature of each of these temples makes vivid reading. The writers brilliantly describe interplay between the personality of the rabbi, the inner politics of the congregation and the nature of the community in the development of each institution. Any of these accounts would make a good illustration of community organization process. It is too bad we don't have more studies like these tracing the growth of Jewish social agencies.

As this reviewer looks at the data, perhaps from his own bias, he finds more to be sanguine about than the authors appear to find. There seems to be considerable evidence to indicate a continuing richness of Jewish life with indication as well of the flexibility which has permitted Judaism to sustain itself throughout the generations in the many settings and cultures to which it has had to adapt. The development of the Reform temples of Lakeville would make an interesting study in itself. What is most pertinent in this discussion is the manner in which Reform, rather than moving more in the direction of assimilation as some had predicted, in Lakeville, appears to have

moved towards a higher degree of sacramentalism and a deeper concern with Jewish identity.

The Second Volume dealing directly with Jewish-Gentile relationships, in many ways tends to reinforce the existence of a degree of uniqueness in the identity of Lakeville Jews. On the surface, intergroup relations in Lakeville seem unusually benign. The preponderance of both Gentiles and Jews feel that relations between faiths are not impaired by religio-ethnic differences. Half of these groups feel that these differences have no detrimental effect at all on intergroup relations. As, however, the inner feelings and attitudes of Jew and Gentile are compared, it becomes apparent that under this apparent calm, lies considerable tension, apprehension, ignorance and uncertainty. Most of the Jews, unaware of the prevailing attitude of Gentiles, tend to be overly optimistic about how Gentiles feel toward them. Similarly, Gentiles, the relatively few who appear concerned, tend also to be much more optimistic regarding the Jewish feeling toward them.

The investigator finds that, whatever the Jew may think of himself as a Jew, the Gentile tends to identify him clearly as different. Similarly, the Jew, keenly aware of his difference, tends to be anxious about the Gentile's reaction to that difference. While he may desire closer association with Gentiles, to achieve that he would need "to make his consciousness of the differences less forbidding." Some 50 percent of the Jewish respondents tend to be "apprehensive, defensive and otherwise ill at ease in the company of Gentiles. What the Gentile tends to see as Jewish traits has little relationship to the Jew's image of himself. These Jewish traits tend to be identified as "money-mindedness, aggressiveness and clannishness."

There is a fairly widespread attitude among Gentiles that "Jewish child-rearing practices are too permissive." While many of the Gentiles report relationships with Jews, they tend to find most acceptable those Jews who are most ready to give up their distinctiveness and assume the characteristics attributed to Gentiles. It is no wonder then that, while there are many opportunities for interaction between the faiths in community organizations and activities, few of these relationships go beyond the level of casualness. The closest relationships between Gentile and Jew rarely go beyond or even equal the closest relationships with members of one's own faith. Most respondents find greater "warmth, intimacy and trust" with friends of their own faith.

An interesting classification of the attitudes of Gentile toward Jew is presented. The *exclusionist* dislikes Jews and wishes to have nothing to do with him. Although feeling similarly, the *exemptionist* will accept those Jews who are willing to adapt the values, standards and patterns of behavior of the Gentile. The *egalitarian*, who constitutes the largest group in Lakeville, refuses to see any meaningful difference and thus denies to the Jew any identity or uniqueness. The *pluralist*, who is all too rare, sees the Jew as different but values that difference within a society enriched by the contributions each group makes out of its uniqueness. As can be gathered, the investigators found evidence that these same attitudes are reflected as well among Jews in their feelings about their own identity. One senses from both these volumes that the writers prefer a society of cultural pluralism in which Jews can discover, enrich and affirm their identity and out of that make their contribution to the greater society of which they are a part. In this regard, this reviewer is in full accord with them.

These studies, as can be seen, have profound implications for Jewish social work and its relation to the issues of our time. While we must be cautious in generalizing from a study of a community so different from the majority of Jewish communities in general, the very uniqueness in being so close to the ideal towards which so many Jews strive, make the findings of particular significance for Jewish social work. They are suggestive of the directions towards which American Judaism is moving, of the changes in Jewish identity and the nature of his relationships with Gentiles.

It is clear that there is conflict for the Jew between aspirations and issues involved in defining his identity. Participation in the activities necessary to sustain and finance Jewish social work comprise an important aspect of that identity. Social work can have a vital role in furthering Jewish continuity. If Jewish communities develop as in Lakeville, what implications does its affluence have for the services of the Jewish agency? Have casework, counseling and other social services taken sufficiently into account the central conflicts in relation to Jewish identity so clearly described in these studies? Do we have a role to play in dealing with the kinds of tensions described here so vividly? Can we utilize, in our various programs, the greater sense of intimacy and warmth Jews generally are reported to feel towards other Jews? What implications do these data have for the role of the Jewish agency in furthering Jewish continuity? These questions are too far-reaching to be dealt with in a review. Yet they must be faced.

While there was no Jewish casework agency or Jewish communal center in Lakeville, one can't help but wish that similar studies could be done of Jewish clients utilizing these agencies in other communities. Considering the large

amounts of funds being invested in such services by the Jewish community, it is distressing to note how little research has been done on Jewish factors which affect them. Systematically accumulated and evaluated information about the people who utilize Jewish social services, their attitudes about the services and the effectiveness of the services in relation to the Jewish purposes they purport to serve is still all too meager. This study shows what might be accomplished should such research be undertaken.

Jewish social work is indeed indebted to the American Jewish Committee and to the authors for this skillfully and effectively reported study. The volumes should be on the shelf of every Jewish agency and their contents carefully read and utilized by every social worker concerned with serving the Jewish community and furthering Jewish identity and continuity.

Employment for the Handicapped, by Julietta K. Arthur. Abingdon Press, Nashville, 1967. 272 pp. \$5.95.

THIS is a compendium of information about resources available to disabled persons seeking employment. According to the publisher, it is designed for the disabled person and his family. The resource material will not be new to experienced rehabilitation counselors. Presenting it in one volume, however, may be a convenience for rehabilitation counselor trainees, less experienced rehabilitation counselors and other health and welfare personnel who work with the disabled and handicapped. In addition to lists of information about resources, several sections of the text are devoted to the rehabilitation process and to the attitudinal factors with which the disabled person and his family must cope in achieving vocational ad-

justment. This reviewer is inclined to be somewhat skeptical of the significance of information and exhortation in resolving attitudinal problems. The text is too heavily accented with inspirational "messages" and success stories.

This volume may be usefully placed in libraries of rehabilitation centers serving physically handicapped persons who do not have serious emotional or intellectual disabilities. Unfortunately, it is unrelated to the population which currently presents vocational rehabilitation centres with their greatest challenges. These people have deficits which for the most part are not visible. They are poor, difficult to motivate, socially inadequate, culturally alienated, emotionally unstable and below average in learning potential. In short, they are persons who do not, cannot or will not read books and who need intensive counseling and other special measures to assist them in integrating the philosophical concepts and using the information about community resources which this volume contains. For this state of affairs, the author cannot be held at fault. Nevertheless, it limits the volume's significance. The book has merit and the author deserves credit for assembling resource data which will be useful to some handicapped persons and those who are trying to assist them.

MILTON FRIEDMAN
Toronto, Ontario

The Art of Helping People Effectively, by Stanley C. Mahoney. Association Press, New York, 1967. 156 pp. \$3.95.

THIS extraordinary, informal little book describes the art of helping people effectively in most lucid language. The book should be of interest to all people in a helping relationship. The ten chapters describe helping from the points of view of: orientation and goals;

characteristics of human behavior; readiness to help by eliminating the negative and accentuating the positive; the art of helping through acceptance, presence, listening and information-giving; and beyond the helping relationship—to society and some of its helping agencies. This book is marked by its “unabashed humanism” which is “both the symptom of and the aid to a basic reorientation that is occurring in our American value system during the latter half of the 20th century”—in which “we are witnessing a reawakening and rebirth of the American conscience and of our uniquely American vision of society.”

The Art of Helping People Effectively is geared not to blueprints or techniques of the helping process but to the humanness of the person—both the helper and the person-being-helped.

The author's stated purpose is not only to inform but to stir the reader—to stimulate him to think about himself in the helping role, to have some new questions and to experience some degree of new confusion about what it means to help another help himself and then to verbalize his reactions with others. With this particular reader, the author achieved his stated purpose.

One note of caution: for those people who respect and admire technical language which is often incomprehensible, this book may appear deceptively simple and elementary.

ANNE C. SCHWARTZ
Cleveland, Ohio

Catastrophic Illness: Impact on Families; Challenge to the Professions, Proceedings of Symposium. Cancer Care, National Foundation, New York, 1967. 72 pp. \$2.00.

BASED on a two day symposium held in 1966, this booklet describes the effect of catastrophic illness on families and

challenges the helping professions to re-examine and reorganize the provision of medical care services. Included is a synthesis of several panel discussions plus the full text of six major papers.

The scope of the volume is remarkable. Despite its slimness, it manages to touch most of our current major concerns. What makes a given illness catastrophic; how does one understand and manage concomitant emotional problems—are treated by C. Knight Aldrich. The *truth* as “a resource for more creative living” is a factor mentioned by Edgar Jackson to help patients deal with problems when catastrophically ill. In an effort to integrate medical with community services, Bess Dana challenges us to re-examine the major assumptions underlying present medical practice (e.g. the assumption that the doctor is the leader of the team.)

These three lucid sometimes controversial papers, in particular, make this required reading for the health professional.

HARRY CITRON
Baltimore, Md.

Alternatives to Violence: Alienated Youth and Riots, Race and Poverty, by Saul Bernstein. Association Press, New York, 1967. 192 pp. \$4.95.

THIS book, reflecting the author's continuing interest in youth who are unable “to share in the affluence, opportunities and hopes of the larger community” because of social, economic and psychological handicaps, is based on a study in which Bernstein revisited nine major U.S. cities originally visited for an earlier study, *Youth on the Streets*. The author's current concern is with the meaning to alienated youth of the development of the Civil Rights movement, the Anti-Poverty program, and

the riots, and their impact on the resolution or diminution of these people's inner and outer conflicts.

Data obtained through the so-called "opinion of experts" method are presented with relevant detail, in a tidy, compressed style. This presentation is an exposition of Bernstein's prospectus for a many-sided approach to the resolution of poverty, which for him is the basic problem. Strategies for change include a look, for example, at birth control as well as at guaranteed annual income. The writing is balanced and temperate, so that Bernstein's style itself becomes an "alternative to violence."

Because of his emphasis, Bernstein's definition of, and data on, alienated youth do not in the main apply to Jewish youth, of whom we have a fair share to deal with in our Jewish communal services. For this reason, while it merits general interest, this book cannot be recommended to Jewish communal workers who are seeking hard data about Jewish alienated youth.

ALAN BOOKMAN
Newark, New Jersey

An Exploration of Caseworkers' Perceptions of Adoptive Applicants, by Trudy Bradley, D.S.W. Child Welfare League of America, Inc., New York, 1967. 225 pp. \$3.60.

THE central purpose of this study made in 1963 was to identify the criteria used by adoption workers in evaluating adoptive applicants. Additional aims were: (1) to ascertain if assessments of couples differed based on the child needing placement; (2) to explore whether agencies varied in their assessment tendencies in respect to the perceptual dimensions of applicant evaluations; (3) to portray some of the characteristics of applicants, adoption workers,

and the children placed with accepted couples.

Eight public and private, sectarian and non-sectarian agencies in a metropolitan area participated in this research. The study population was composed of 400 applicant couples.

Data are presented on a wide variety of personal characteristics concerning adoptive couples (age, religion, education, length of marriage) as well as important economic and cultural attributes. Attention is drawn to the role of the adoption caseworker and the judgments he makes. Dr. Bradley notes that the adoption field has difficulty in communicating its needs and in attracting the families most needed for different types of children.

The study is intended for the practitioner in adoption. This reviewer found the data about adoptive applicants richer and of greater depth than the data about adoption caseworkers. Replication of Dr. Bradley's study in other parts of the country could determine the general applicability of her findings. Systematic data of this type could contribute substantially to improved understanding and service in the adoption field.

HARRIET GOLDSTEIN
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Passing on: The Social Organization of Dying, by David Sudnow. Prentice-Hall, Inc., Publishers, New York, 1967. 176 pp. \$4.95.

THIS book is a study of the procedures followed by members of two hospital staffs with respect to patients who have either died or are considered to be in the process of dying. One of the hospitals is a large, urban west coast institution, and one a midwestern general hospital.

The limited value of the individual in our modern technological society is high-

lighted. The behavior of hospital staff members seems to indicate that the value placed on a person is determined not by the very fact of his being human, but rather by the social status he enjoys.

Concerning the attitudes of hospital staff members toward dead persons during autopsy procedures, the author has the following to say. "Physicians do not handle dead bodies except when they are pronouncing patients dead and conducting autopsies . . . Gross body handling, e.g.; movement of an entire body from one stretcher to another, from the morgue refrigerator to the autopsy table, etc., is considered *so much dirty work* by the doctors, and is exclusively the province of the aides and orderlies . . ."

One's behavior towards a dead person, whose role in life is ended and whose social status is therefore lost, constitutes an excellent measure of the extent to which one genuinely respects people. In Judaism, the respect shown a dead person is called *chesed shel emet*, i.e. "kindness which is genuine." Paying proper respect to the dead person is considered an important mitzvah. As for saving a single human life, whether it be the life of an aged person or an alcoholic, the Torah emphasizes that this is equivalent to saving all of mankind.

Measuring the value of people by the social status gives rise in our society to unfortunate phenomena. Substandard nursing homes for the aged, hospital admission policies which militate against the best interests of the aged; the scarcity of good facilities for the mentally retarded illustrate a genuine concern for the dignity and welfare of the individual. The documentation of this lack by Mr. Shudnow is valuable. One wishes that his book were written in less abstruse language.

LOUIS J. NOVICK
Montreal, Quebec

Community Organization: Theory, Principles, and Practice, by Murray G. Ross with B. W. Lappin, Second Edition. Harper & Row, New York, 1967. 290 pp. \$7.45.

THIS volume is the second edition of a work published originally ten years ago. It enlarges on the earlier edition adding new material, and includes a new section on practice with case material to illustrate the principles of community organization. It is a concise work, highly readable and serves as an excellent introduction to the field. Events during the intervening ten years have produced many new practitioners of community organization especially in the underdeveloped countries of the world. (This book has been used in training programs for peace corps and overseas personnel.) The authors emphasize that we are not yet at the stage where definitive concepts can be established with universal agreement. The most that can be expected at the current stage of development in the field are "sensitizing concepts" which point the direction and provide useful clues, but give no final answers.

Definitions of community organization are many and varied, but this is the author's view: "Community organization . . . is . . . a process by which a community identifies its needs or objectives, orders (or ranks) these needs or objectives, develops the confidence and will to work at these needs and objectives, finds the resources (internal and/or external) to deal with these needs or objectives, takes action in respect to them, and in so doing extends and develops cooperative and collaborative attitudes and practices in the community."

The stress is on a concept of community organization which transcends the process of planning and emphasizes expanding a community's capacity to deal with its problem (community morale).

Dr. Ross, the major author of the

work, has spent some time in Israel studying kibbutz life and the frequent references to the kibbutz help illuminate some of the concepts. It is noteworthy that he sees kibbutz life as an ideal community organization process.

The brevity of the work precludes extensive discussion about some key problems in community organization, but one would have hoped for an examination of the relationship between some of the principles of community organization and the operation of the power structure in our cities. Further, there is almost no reference to the problems of financing and fund-raising which occupy the attention of so many community organizers today. One also would have hoped for a more extensive discussion of the problem of surrogates—that perennial complex of issues to which the community organizer must be sensitive when he deals with “representatives” of sub-groups or sub-communities.

These are minor flaws in a compact, stimulating volume which can serve as an excellent primer in the field.

CHARLES ZIBBELL
New York

Sociology and Modern Systems Theory, by Walter Buckley. Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, 1967. 227 pp. \$5.95.

THE purpose of this book is commendable, and for the most part it is carried off. Modern systems theory is elucidated and traced to its sources. Much is done to avert the danger of “superficial acceptance” and application, particularly by practitioners in human service professions, of principles and ideas which either lose or gain too much in translation. The book may serve to dis-

courage what the author describes as “mere analogizing or translating into new terms with no gain of comprehension.”

The author provides a useful and illuminating account of antecedent social system models—mechanical, organic, process, “Parsons and Homans,” etc.—always with a deft critical touch which should guide the reader to realistic judgments concerning the possibilities as well as the limitations of applying a systems perspective to work with groups, organizations and communities. Information theory and game theory receive attention along with other processes which help one to understand intra-group and inter-group relationships and behavior and means for influencing them.

“The final justification for any conceptual scheme, of course,” the author reminds the reader, “is its ability to organize meaningfully the complex data of empirical reality, and thus throw a bit more light on otherwise confused phenomena.” That a fog of confusion hangs over attempted applications of systems theory in social work and other professions can hardly be doubted.

The author does not entirely escape the hazards of sociological interpretation, however, for some of his clarification is subject to the same kind of obscurity which impedes understanding of much sociological analysis.

He occasionally uses insufficiently revealing sociological labels as stepping stones in his own attempt at clarification, which hardly settles matters. This happens only occasionally and does not reduce the value and utility of this well-organized and industrious book.

CHARLES S. LEVY, D.S.W.
New York, N.N.