

THE CRISIS IN GROUP WORK AND JEWISH CENTER PRACTICE *

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Crisis: The turning point for better or for worse in an acute disease or fever . . . the decisive moment . . . an unstable or crucial time or state of affairs. (Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary)

"I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him." (William Shakespeare, Julius Caesar, Act III, Scene II)

I begin with the definition of crisis because we are going through so many changes that turning points are not identified and things seem to happen without forethought or planning. Then instead of forethought, we use hindsight to rationalize why what happened was good or bad. I hope this paper will help clarify some of the problems we face so we can better shape the outcomes of the crises.

If a crisis is a turning point, then we are at a turning point both in social group work and in the Jewish Center. The social group worker who is a Jewish Center worker is like the cowboy whose limbs are tied to four horses. At any moment the signal will be given and the horses will pull the man in four different directions.

To pursue this analogy, the two arms can be compared to two areas in social work we should be aware of and the two

legs can be compared to two areas in Jewish Center work we must be aware of. Perhaps it might have been sufficient to discuss only the crises facing the Jewish Center worker; however, the group worker in the Jewish Center cannot discuss the Center without being aware of the possible changes within his own profession.

One problem for the group worker is the cleavage within group work itself. Just two and a half years ago, Catherine Papell and Beulah Rothman delivered a paper at the annual program meeting of the Council on Social Work Education which has to be considered a landmark in group work theory.¹ The paper described three models of group work being taught and practiced at the time.

The paper was positive in that it allowed people to identify practice with concepts. There is no doubt that many practitioners were able to become eclectic and choose the best forms of working with people they felt necessary.²

Unfortunately, however, it appears to this writer, the identification of the vari-

¹ Catherine Papell and Beulah Rothman, "Social Group Work Models: Possession and Heritage," *Journal of Education for Social Work*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (Fall, 1966), pp. 66-67.

² This is nothing new and was discussed in one of the earliest and possibly best of the group work texts, Gertrude Wilson and Gladys Ryland, *Social Group Work Practice*, (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1949).

* Presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Conference of Jewish Communal Service, Detroit, Michigan, June 9, 1968.

ous models is leading group work education, and in some instances social work education, into polarized theories of practice just as various schools of theory develop around certain men and their ideas in social sciences. A similar kind of polarization is happening at present in the behavioral sciences.

Models of Group Work

What was termed by Papell and Rothman as the reciprocal model³ appears to be very close to what could be called the existential model.⁴ Things have moved so fast that what was termed by Papell and Rothman as the remedial model is already out of date and has become the socio-behavioral model.⁵ The battle between Skinner and the behaviorist school and May and the existential school, therefore, is not only affecting psychology and education, but is now having an effect on social work. In one respect some people will applaud these similarities since it somehow proves that social work is in intellectual step with our colleagues in the behavioral sciences.

Unfortunately the danger here is that eventually practitioners, the people who are trained by schools of social work, will be graduated with an almost religious belief in their particular brand of social work.

Most schools of social work are attempting to teach a third model of group work, which Papell and Rothman called the social goals model, which was inappropriately named. What might have

been the social goals model could now be called the interactionist model or even better the eclectic model. I am afraid, however, that because of the polarization of the existential and socio-behavioral models, the eclectic model may be swallowed up. In addition as Papell and Rothman pointed out, the social goals or eclectic model

. . . does not exist as a single formulation in our literature. It is not identified with a central theoretician who has systematically set forth all of its elements.⁶

Generally speaking, Jewish Center workers could identify with either the existential model or eclectic model. It is this writer's opinion that most Centers would do best to stick with the eclectic model since the existential model concentrates primarily on the group while the socio-behavioral model concentrates primarily on the individual. As the faculty of the University of Pittsburgh stated in their position paper

The group worker who ignores the interdependence of the individual, the group and the environment in which it functions fragmentizes his effort.⁷

However, whether we choose one or the other model, the arguments could be made that at present Centers aren't equipped to handle any of them, we come to the second problem facing group work. This is the polarization between the clinical approach and the community approach.

Although people are talking about a multi-method approach or a general practitioner in social work, in reality the trend appears to be the congealing of casework and group work in clinical

³ This model has been described most adequately by William Schwartz, "The Social Worker in the Group," *New Perspectives on Services to Groups*, (New York: National Association of Social Workers, 1961), pp. 7-29.

⁴ Rollo May (ed.), *Existential Psychology*, (New York: Random House, 1961).

⁵ Edwin J. Thomas, *The Socio-Behavioral Approach and Applications to Social Work*, (New York: Council on Social Work Education, 1967).

⁶ Catherine Papell and Beulah Rothman, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

⁷ Mildred Sirls, Jack Rubinstein, Eram Meyerson and Alan Klein, "Social Group Practice Elaborated: A Statement of Position," (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 1964), mimeographed.

work and community organization as a separate entity. If such a shift is made then where does the Jewish Center fit? What kind of practitioners can we expect and use?

Social Workers in the Center

Let us set aside the problems within social work for a moment and examine two aspects of a problem within the Jewish Center which are pulling our hypothetical Center worker apart. The two aspects concern the problem of the group worker within the Jewish Center.

After all of these years of being considered a group work agency, although we are now considered a multi-function group service agency, the most misunderstood professionals within our Centers are the social workers. I dare say our boards and members are much clearer as to the function of the nursery school educator, the physical educator, the adult educator and the cultural arts specialist than they are of the social worker.

Part of the problem does lie in the fact that the profession is torn about what constitutes group work so that the profession's problem is our problem. But the other part of the problem has to do with the fact that the goals of our Jewish Centers are so general that it becomes apparent that social workers are not the only ones who claim they help people with personality development or Jewish identification.⁸

The two aspects of this problem I want to focus on are the relationships of Centers with schools of social work and our way of looking at the manpower problem in the Jewish Center field.

⁸ Representatives of all three group work models feel the same way on this issue. See Alan Klein, *Society, Democracy and the Group*, (New York: William Morrow & Co., 1953). See specifically Chap. I, Edwin J. Thomas, *op. cit.*; William Schwartz, *op. cit.*

The NAJCW has had a committee on relations with schools of social work which has been doing a rather difficult job. A recent report by the committee's chairman indicated that a survey of schools of social work showed that only slightly over 50 percent of the schools which could use Centers as field placements do so.⁹ This is quite a comedown for one of the agencies which was in at the birth of what is today called social group work. What is the cause of this lessening of relationships with the schools of social work?

For the past decade since the publication of the now famous article by Robert Vinter which questioned the appropriateness of "traditional" agencies,¹⁰ many Center workers have blamed the schools for a negative attitude. There is no doubt that in some schools such an attitude toward Centers does exist. For example, one school indicated to the NAJCW committee that it expects a field placement to offer first year students a socialization group and a treatment group. Some Centers cannot do this. On the other hand, no school I know of demands that a psychiatric setting offer one socialization group and one treatment group to its first year students. Therefore, Abe Vinik was correct when he questioned the ranking of service by schools of social work and their giving higher status to one setting as above another setting.¹¹

It is interesting to note that a recent survey of Jewish second-year group

⁹ Gerald Bubis, "Report on Questionnaire Filled Out by the Schools of Social Work in the United States Regarding Use of Jewish Community Centers and YMHAs as Field Placements," (mimeographed).

¹⁰ Robert Vinter, "Group Work: Perspectives and Prospects" in *Social Work With Groups—1959*, (New York: National Association of Social Workers, 1959), pp. 128-148.

¹¹ Abe Vinik, "Role of the Group Service Agency," *Social Work*, Vol. 9, No. 3 (July, 1964), pp. 98-105.

work students attending schools of social work in the New York area who were placed in Jewish Centers for field work showed less interest by the students in becoming Jewish Center workers after their field work placement.¹² Of the 31 students, 13 had been interested in the Jewish Center as a possible career at the beginning of their placement and only one showed an interest in the Jewish Center as a career after finishing his placement.¹³

There is no doubt that what the students learned about social group work affected their perception of what Centers do. However, the students represented a diverse range of schools serving in Centers which many people believe to be quality agencies. At least this is the stereotype we non-New Yorkers have of our New York colleagues. Therefore, such student disinterest cannot be blamed entirely on the schools.

There is also no doubt that some students and some schools question the Center as a proper place to practice because most professional group workers do not work directly with groups. But the report on students' feelings and the report on the attitude of the schools does not show that this is the only or major reason. If all group workers in Centers train and supervise group advisors, the key question is what do they train the group advisors for?

Therefore, convincing schools of social work to utilize Jewish Centers as field work placements does not mean that Centers are properly practicing group work. A school may choose a Center because the supervisor available is a good supervisor or because they have

no other placements or because they have the hope that placing students in a Center may serve as a catalyst to better service. Before trying to convince schools to use Centers as placements, we must be clear as to what services we do perform. Getting a school's *heksher* does not always mean we are doing group work.

The other aspect of the problem of the group worker in the Center has to do with the current focus on the manpower problem within Jewish Centers. I believe that many people are looking at the manpower problem in a purely mechanical way. There is a shortage of social workers who are coming into the Center field and therefore, we are trying to figure out how to use untrained workers and people trained in other fields to replace the social workers we don't have.

Instead of this, just as with the approach to the schools of social work, we should be determining where social work belongs within the Jewish Center and what the trained social worker can do within a Center's framework. If we are not clear about this then the kinds of people we attempt to get to fill in for the social workers we are not getting to work for us really won't matter. In fact, if we were to become clearer as to where social workers fit and what their functions are, we might even begin to get more social workers coming back to the Center field.

The only recent attempt at defining the place of the social worker in the Jewish Center has been done by Dobrof in his discussion of the *episode of service concept*.¹⁴ The concept conceives of the social worker as a consultant and as a direct worker when crises arise. This kind of thinking is what is needed

¹² 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.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 172.

¹⁴ 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.

to delineate sharply what the social worker's function is within the Center. "Practices, long taken for granted, seldom or never questioned, now must be subject to careful study and assessment."¹⁵

Although Dobrof's proposals are well thought-out there is one important hitch we must take into consideration and that is whether the community and our boards see Jewish Centers doing social work. I would daresay that most board members see social workers in Centers as administrators and "youth workers". Levy pointed out some of these problems in his Irving Cantor Memorial Presentation last year.¹⁶ I think the strong negative reaction to the paper by many Center executives significantly showed that he was on target.

Jewish Center Goals

Now how do we relate what is happening in social work education to what group workers in Jewish Centers find as their problem? In this crisis or turning point for the profession and for the field, which way can we turn, which directions can we set for ourselves? At present, there is no one correct answer, but at least we must begin to ask the questions so that we can arrive at answers instead of being pressured by circumstances and find that others have given us answers we might not want to accept.

First, let us be clear about several items. At present, most schools of social work are not antagonistic toward the Center as a "traditional" agency. The schools do not question Jewish Centers as sectarian agencies, although some people feel this may be part of the

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 268.

¹⁶ Charles 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), pp. 7-25.

problem.¹⁷ Schools do question the commitment Jewish Centers have toward quality social work practice, and this is true no matter what model of group work the schools teach.

Emanuel Tropp has stated that "for optimum social functioning, group experiences must be provided that are challenging rather than protected, demanding rather than permissive . . ." ¹⁸ I would wonder whether Jewish Centers offer such experiences.

William Schwartz has pointed out that the

clarification of group function represents an active demand by the helping agent that the agency, the group, and its members begin their working relationship with a clear "contract" and a common understanding of the issue: what are we doing here together? All of this is based on the worker's conviction that the search for common ground begins most auspiciously on a field where the members and their tasks have been, so far as possible, brought face to face.¹⁹

In relation to Schwartz's comments, the study of the Jewish group work students in New York reported that "The opinions of the students indicate that the goals and purposes of the agency are not made sufficiently clear to either the staff or the membership."²⁰

The opinions of the New York students underscore one of the basic problems the students in our agency's field work unit have. Many of our students have resisted certain field work assignments because what they are asked to do is perceived as much different from what other workers in the agency are asked to do. Many of the students have worked

¹⁷ Gerald Bubis, *op. cit.* and Allan Greene et al., *op. cit.*

¹⁸ Emanuel Tropp, "Group Intent and Group Structure, Essential Criteria for Group Work Practice," *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, Vol. XLI, No. 3, (Spring, 1965), p. 244.

¹⁹ William Schwartz, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

²⁰ Allan Greene et al., *op. cit.*, p. 174.

as club advisors and know what the expectations are in the advisor role as compared to the student role. They realize that becoming professional workers does demand a more qualitative kind of practice but this difference in perception has to do not only with the difference between a trained and untrained worker but with the direction all workers see the agency going. Certainly the goals, if not the total practice, should be seen clearly by all. This is not the case in New York evidently and not the case in most Centers. We cannot blame schools of social work or the manpower shortage for that.

One direction in which social work education is heading, no matter whether the schools are in favor of one method or many methods and no matter what group work model they teach is the trend toward more specificity of practice. This is true of the existential model which discusses scaling down the ". . . grandiose, cure-all aspirations of any single profession, and to avoid couching its objectives in the language of absolutes—'achieving individual maturity', 'fulfilling human needs', and the like."²¹ It is true of the socio-behavioral model whose characteristic ". . . is its potential for affording concrete, determinate action."²² And it is true of the interactionist model which utilizes study and diagnosis to help individual members and the total group.

A Unifying Concept

There are many specific areas where Jewish Centers can use social work skills. However, Jewish Center workers must be ready to interpret what these areas are. If boards are unwilling to utilize trained social workers in any of these capacities, then schools of social work would have the right to question

²¹ William Schwartz, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

²² Edwin J. Thomas, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

whether Jewish Centers are practicing social work. There is also a unifying concept of social work function which can be utilized by Center practitioners no matter what specific problems they define as their concern.

The unifying concept has to do with the role the social worker plays as a professional person. Schwartz has proposed 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 . . . the social worker's field of intervention lies at the point where the 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.²³

Alan Klein in discussing group work and community organization has discussed the same concept.

One of the keys here is a growing concept of social work function,

namely linkage . . . Linkage will be recognized, I suspect, as an important social work function . . . For at least a decade, social work has agreed that its context of service is in the area where the individual, the social situation, and the cultural milieu interact . . . Social work concerns itself with adaptation; not of man adapting to his situation, nor of the situation adapting to man but of the spiralling and circular adaptation of each to the other through complex regulating devices that do not seek equilibrium but seek cogwheeling and change.²⁴

I do not feel I have to spend much time in discussing the de-humanizing aspects of modern life, the concept of anomie, mass man, or bureaucratization. Linkage has to do with not only man and society reaching out to each other, but with man's desire to reach out to other

²³ William Schwartz, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

²⁴ Alan Klein, "Group Work and Community Organization: Parallel or Converging Fields of Practice?", (Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh, 1967), pp. 10 & 15, mimeographed.

men. At present most aspects of life are so overorganized that people find it difficult to reach each other. In most instances, people either conform on one hand or drop out on the other. The extreme outcome of bureaucracy is that the needs of the organization become more important than the needs of the people the organization is supposed to serve.

Optimal social functioning becomes more difficult for most people to achieve in our society. This is why labeling services the so-called traditional agencies can render as less important than services other agencies can render is rather foolish. The real question is whether the traditional agencies are willing to accept the tasks they should be performing.

There are at least three areas where Jewish Center workers using the concept of linkage can do an appropriate job.

Jewish Identification: There is no agency or organization in the community at present which could allow all segments of the Jewish community, adolescents, young adults and adults to discuss their questions and feelings about Judaism in a more understanding and comfortable way than the Jewish Center. Synagogues are seen as having their own axes to grind. But at present most Centers stop at the water's edge by sponsoring Jewish programs without going further.

Although most Centers state that Jewish identification is a goal, it is a goal which accepts Jewish survival as do congregations rather than seeing it as a goal to allow for feelings to be expressed about the meaning of Judaism and Jewish survival. At present there is no forum *within* the community to discuss feelings and ideas for changes. The Jewish Center can provide such linkage. At present it does not do so.

For example, Rabbis and Jewish

educators as well as leading laymen of synagogues and temples do not hesitate to express themselves concerning Jewish Center practices which they regard as questionable in relation to certain religious practices. There are congregational practices which many people in the Jewish community feel are dubious. However, these questions are discussed quietly without any recourse to change because people have no vehicle through which they can express themselves.

The most obvious practice is the Bar Mitzvah ceremony. Some people stop at the questioning of the over-ostentatiousness of many Bar Mitzvahs. Others go further, and more importantly, question the relevance of the ceremony at the age of thirteen. Some people feel that if it has any meaning in modern life that perhaps it should be done at sixteen or seventeen. Perhaps the people to be Bar Mitzvahed and Bas Mitzvahed should have the privilege of determining the meaning of the ceremony. These are just a few questions which could be discussed and acted upon by Jewish Center members.

Lethargy and inaction impede changes within the Jewish community. Which Jewish Center leaders would be willing to allow Centers to become forums for what is really bothering members of the Jewish community? Where will we find the Jewish McCarthy?

Unfortunately too many Center workers feel that such a goal is manipulative or an imposition. Some feel this way because of the particular model of group work they follow, others because they themselves are "hung-up" about the same problem. If the defining of a contract is part of social work practice, then contracting about feelings around Jewishness is not unprofessional.

The Center as Mediator and Facilitator: Just as with Jewish identity, the Center could be seen as the place where people could "connect" with each other

and with society. Supposedly, this is what groups in Jewish Centers should be doing, but evidently are not. Emanuel Tropp put it quite well when he stated

The potential for group work as a contributing force in society is great and largely untapped. It will find suitable outlets available in the traditional agencies and in certain types of treatment settings. The established group service agencies need to separate out their group work objectives from their recreational and educational objectives, and will boldly need to create more meaningful and convincing common goal groups adequately to challenge the "unused individual" in the present setting of our society. Such objectives are not likely to be found in the standard roster of recreational skills . . .²⁵

This means that Center workers will have to be seen as people who are willing to discuss people's concerns on a feeling level. This means that the Center will have to be seen as a comfortable place and not a bureaucratized structure where encounter is attempted through stereotyped roles. This also means that feelings will have to be translated into action. As Tropp has so aptly put it in his vision of a new Jewish Center

This vision eliminates the recreational image of the Center . . . Its appeal will not primarily be that of having a good time, although it will certainly have qualities that should turn out to be more satisfying than what now passes for a good time. In place of the easy enticements of the recreational world, the new Center will have to map out a roster of groupings that have new and different attractions, relevant to its purposes. These groupings will offer a strong emphasis on service, public affairs and other forms of productive undertakings. There will be another strong emphasis on group exploration of ideas aimed at the search for answers to problems confronting people in our time.²⁶

Our ideas as to the kinds of groupings in our Centers may have to change. Murray Ortof has wondered whether the insistence of some Centers on homogeneity of age was really essential.²⁷ The idea of the "coffee house" is an idea that could be utilized extremely well because of the atmosphere such an idea engenders. Therefore, the coffee house concept should be more than a psychedelic lounge program.

But such ideas bring us back to the important question of whether our Centers are willing to risk these kinds of contracts with agency members. Certainly the lessening of club programs in many Centers has some meaning. However, many Centers have gone from club programs to recreational mass activities while others have substituted working with groups of physically or mentally handicapped to show they are still group work agencies. And then we come to an even more basic question. What kind of stand will Center social workers take regarding whether groups are willing to accept the contracts offered? What if groups refuse to accept the specific goals of the Jewish Center? *Some stand has to be taken which will make the social work service of the Center more visible.*

On one hand people will say that people cannot be refused Center membership. If so, then the service which the social workers offer must be seen as important and necessary. There has to be an excitement about what is going on in the "group work" or "social work" department. There has to be the understanding that the social work service is different from the recreational service, just as people have an idea that there is

²⁵ Emanuel Tropp, *op. cit.*, pp. 249-250.

²⁶ Emanuel Tropp, "Future Directions for the Center In Social Work Practice," Paper presented at the Western Regional Conference, National Association of Jewish Center Workers, January 31, 1966, pp. 9-10.

²⁷ Murray Ortof, "The Small Group and Agency Goal Attainment" in Irving Canter (ed.): *Research Readings in Jewish Communal Service*, (New York: National Association of Jewish Center Workers, 1967), pp. 48-57.

a difference between the nursery school service and other services.

If non-social work staff is hired to fill supposedly social work jobs, then people must know what kind of service they are getting. I daresay that at present most Centers do not make these differentiations clear enough and that no real distinction is made between what trained workers do, what field work students do, what people who do not have bachelor's degrees do, etc. I would suggest that most Center board members see one important difference between hiring trained staff and untrained staff: when you hire untrained staff you save a lot of money.

The Center must define the social work factor and then use group work therein, appropriately for what social group workers were educated to do . . . It would be of service to social work, to group work and to the Center movement to have this clarified. What you need is a group work department in the Center with group workers doing group work . . . The Center has become a community arena for games people play instead of a community center. Why? Some of the reasons lie in the guilt of marginal men or men with unresolved conflicts of their childhood, or some with a need to push the same medicine down the throats of today's youngsters which their adults pushed down theirs. Perhaps we could do a whole paper around the subject "Neuroticism of Boards".²⁸

Klein's conception of a group work or social work department corresponds to my intention in indicating that the social work service of the Center must have visibility. Such a concept might take in much of what we call teen and tween or youth departments, but there would be a clarity to the service of the department.

²⁸ Alan Klein, "The Future of the Jewish Center," Paper delivered at the Fall, 1967 Conference of the East-Central Chapter of the National Association of Jewish Center Workers, mimeographed, pp. 6-7.

I would wonder what the reaction by board members would be to making the social work function more visible? Would it be like one supposedly good board member who said, "If my son has any problems, I certainly don't want any Center staff members trying to help him?"

Family problems: It has become a truism to state that the Jewish family in America is no longer as cohesive as people stereotyped it and would still like to believe. Jewish families in America are having the same kinds of problems other American families are having.

Most large communities have Jewish Family and Childrens' agencies to handle such problems. Most families go to the family agency when a crisis occurs or after it has occurred. Could not Jewish Centers become the place where preventative work could be done as well as providing a great deal of important diagnostic material?

I cannot believe that our Center workers are not aware of the brittle family structures within our Jewish Community. If Centers do not see themselves as family treatment centers, they could at least serve as linkage points between children and parents. A few Centers have attempted such programs but usually they are one shot or short term experiments. But this would lead me to inquire as to why some Centers have gone into treating physically and mentally handicapped to prove they are good social work agencies, when they could have been working with Jewish families which certainly need help.

Of course a question that could be raised is how would Center workers convince the community this is a function of the Center worker. And that is precisely the problem. It has to do with the weak visibility of social work at our Centers and the fact that the image of the

Center is that of a recreational agency. This was shown in Carl Urbont's study²⁹ and was recently shown in a study of teen values of Center members in Pittsburgh.

The Role of the Traditional Agency

The traditional agency as represented by the Jewish Center does have an important role to play. However, we are at a point of crisis now because what Vinter wrote a decade ago has almost become a prophecy fulfilled.

The manpower problem is not the cause of the downgrading of social work practice in Jewish Centers; some people feel it is an effect. The use of untrained group advisors does not make Centers less professional, *but the clarity of what they are trying to do is the key variable.*

Social workers do not necessarily make the best administrators or executives. If the only rationale for hiring social workers in Centers is that they understand complexities of the community better, it is a poor rationale. Social workers should be hired because one of the major functions of the Jewish Center is a social work function. However, this function seems to have become eroded since the famous edifice complex of the Jewish community became predominant after World War II.

The small group can serve as an antidote to the dehumanizing effects of mass society. The small group as well as large groups can serve as bases from which people can confront society. The trend toward a multi-method in one respect is a recognition of this. Our case-work colleagues may not recognize the

full potential some group workers see,³⁰ and certainly some of our community organization colleagues may have forgotten the potential of the group for the individual in their focus on the community as the client.

This is why the present trends in social work education are significant for Center workers. We should be aware of them not because we are defensive, but because we believe in the potential of the group experience for the individual and the community. And on the other hand, if we are sure of what we want to do, we need not be defensive about discussions over multi-method. If people we now call caseworkers use groups for their treatment purposes, and community organization people use groups as means toward their goals, it is conceivable that multi-method could eventually become multi-methods in helping people in groups as part of an overall social work profession. The group work method is then a bridge between the current methods social workers are trained in.

Yes, the schools of social work can be faulted to a degree. They do have a responsibility to help agencies rather than just exhorting them to do better work. But on the other hand how many Centers have budget items which would allow staff members to take a refresher course? How many Centers have large enough budgets for in-service training? How many Centers send staff members

²⁹ Carl Urbont, "The Purposes of the American Jewish Community Center Movement: An Appraisal of Their Operation," *American Jewish Yearbook—1967*, (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1967), pp. 29-59.

³⁰ Two excellent articles discussing the strengths and contributions of the group method were recently published, one from a group work point of view and the other looking toward a multi-method approach. Emanuel Tropp, "The Further Development of Group Work as a Separate Method" and Catherine Papell and Beulah Rothman, "Group Work's Contribution to a Common Method," *Social Work Practice—1966*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1966), pp. 44-53 & pp. 32-43.

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to JWB training sessions? How many Center workers are members of NASW? How many Center workers are aware of the many changes in social work theory?

Some social work educators and some Jewish Center workers have readied so-

cial work practice in Jewish Centers for burial. Let us hope that the present ferment both in social work and in the Jewish Center field will lead to a revitalization of the social work function in the Jewish Center rather than its final burial.