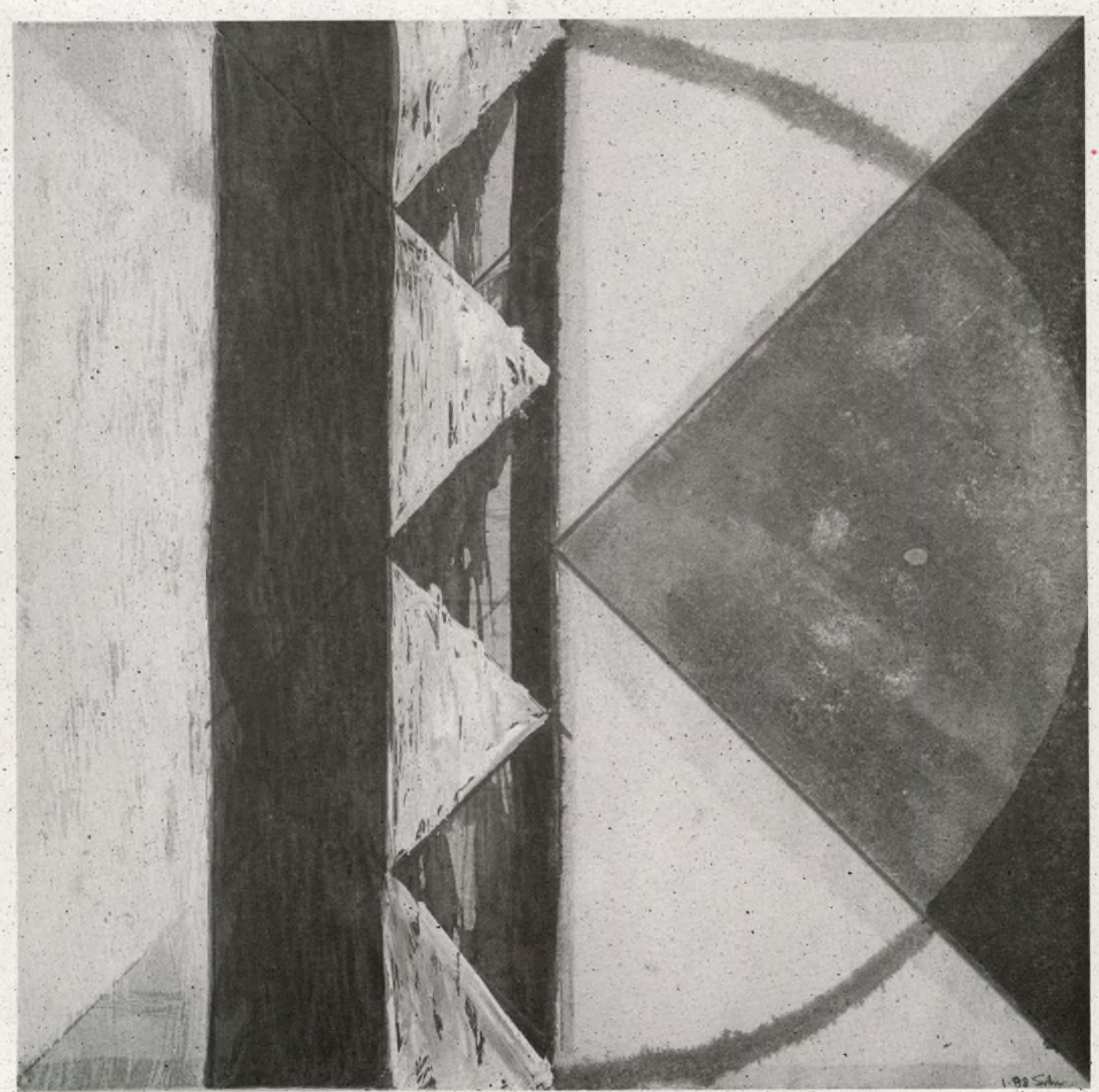
REFLECTIONS:

NARRATIVES OF PROFESSIONAL HELPING



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A Journal for the Helping Professions

REFLECTIONS:

NARRATIVES OF PROFESSIONAL HELPING

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REFLECTIONS' **purpose is to publish narratives, personal accounts that describe and explain the process of helping others and shaping social change over time. The journal seeks to build a literary tradition and a record of wisdom for critical study and fruitful discovery. It encourages stories that convey a sense of immediacy, portray practice across diverse populations and capture the range and variety of strategies and systems within the helping professions. Priority given to articles that provide new understanding of practice. The journal publishes stories of professional helpers such as ethicists, psychotherapists, community organizers, case and group workers, policy makers, family and child practitioners, health and mental health care providers; and educators, researchers, and administrators in the helping and academic professions.**

REFLECTIONS' **central theme is narrative inquiry of professional practice. It publishes personal accounts of professional action designed to aid and support human and social development. The stories have a literary presence, offer new perspectives on practice, and demonstrate the conceit of failure as well as success. The narrator explains the reasons for the action and freely identifies the mistakes made in the practice. The purpose of the narrative is not to demonstrate achievement; rather, it is to capture the experience.**

The Narrative Structure. **A narrative is a story worth telling. Narratives are personal stories that give readers a fresh perspective about the practice of change. Written in a temporal sequence, narratives recount the helping process . Narratives are explored within a contextual frame and supply a rich textual description of the experience: They take into account time, place, action, persons, behavior and interaction. Narratives explain and describe events; results; conflicts; complicating actions; and how, why, and what was done. In narratives the writer evaluates the experience, whether or not there is a resolution. Some narratives end with a coda, that is, a perspective on what occurred.**

WRITING INSTRUCTIONS AND SUBMISSION: **Manuscripts are peer reviewed. Articles** appropriate to the journal's purpose are reviewed anonymously by members of the Executive and Editorial Board. Articles are accepted based on their contribution to practice knowledge. Publication decisions require about four months.

1. Authors are expected to use the most recent APA publication format.
2. The manuscript length depends upon the temporal sequence of the event.
3. Include on separate page a brief abstract written in the same style as the narrative.
4. Place identifying information such as name, affiliation, address, phone and fax only on cover page.
5. Send (3) printed double spaced hard copies of the manuscript to the editor.

Upon acceptance of the article for publication one (1) copy on disk in ASCII, WP or Microsoft format (for IBM compatible or MAC and one(1) hard copy will be requested. Submission of narrative poetry and photography is encouraged.

Names of persons and organizations mentioned in the articles published in REFLECTIONS **have been changed to protect their privacy.** REFLECTIONS **disclaims responsibility for statements, either fact or opinion, made by contributors.**

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CALL FOR NARRATIVES: SPECIAL ISSUE

THE DANGERS TO POOR CHILDREN: THE CONSEQUENCES OF WELFARE REFORM

Studies by the department of Health and Human Services and the Urban Institute predict that the new welfare laws will push a million children into poverty. This will drastically alter the nature of welfare by eliminating any entitlement to assistance. An article in the N.Y. Times noted "...recipients are required to work, and the law requires a five year life time limit on aid. Some states will use their power to develop innovative ways of providing work for adults and services for children. But all the incentives are there for them to cut assistance, impose shorter time limits and use Federal Block Grants to free-up state funds for more politically palatable programs.... Public monitoring of state programs to determine their effects of children is essential. The law needs to be strengthened to require more detail in state welfare funds, more public information on how states are using money and more tracking of and reporting on the well being of children...those who receive assistance and those denied it or cut off from it."

(M. J. Bane. Nov. 10, 1996. Section 4. p.13)

DUE SEPTEMBER 15, 1997

WE SEEK STORIES (NARRATIVES):

- On your success and failure in influencing state legislative welfare plans;
- On how you tried to influence the way your state allocates welfare funds;
- On tracking and reporting on the welfare of children;
- The work you did to protect children;
- You may have succeeded or failed, our interest is to influence the discourse on the affects of "Temporary Assistance to Needy Families" through personal accounts of helping professionals working with adults and children affected by Welfare Reform.

Send manuscripts to:

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CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY PRESS, LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA

THE GIFT OF STORIES

By Paul Abels

An anthropologist wrote about a group she had worked with that wanted to give her something when she had to leave suddenly. They were poor and had no time to prepare a present for her departure, so they told her a story. The story was a gift. I had not realized that stories could be gifts, but I should have! Shahrazad gave the gift of life to numerous maidens by telling stories for one thousand and one nights to the king that was to have them beheaded. Those wonderful stories are still gifts to all of us. As are the fables and the many stories we give as gifts to children by reading to them each night.

How many times have you told people stories of how you became a social worker, or nurse, psychologist, teacher. Sometimes the story is just a sharing with others, just something you do, sometimes it is in response to the question why did you ever become a....? In this rather extraordinary addition of the journal, we are the beneficiary of some interesting life histories, gifts of social workers, for our use. In it we see the power of the narrative as an indicator of how stories have shaped, and still shape our lives. We see also, how the telling of these stories is an important part of our reaffirmation of who we are. Glezakos tells of a childhood experience that recruited her into social work, she still wonders on the ethics of it. Johnson wonders if her observations of a drunken man when she was seven, was what recruited her into the profession. Goldstein narrates his contacts with psychiatrists over the years, and how they shaped his attitudes to that field and shaped the direction of his work. There are common threads here, and in the other narratives in this issue, not only reveries, but how these stories admittedly shaped persons' choices and enhanced the contributions that were to come. There are also morals here. For them and many of us, it was chance that shaped our lives. A meeting in a taxi, a snow storm in Mississippi, a move to a foreign land. We can't always "reauthor" our stories in ways we would prefer, at least not until later in our careers.

It was chance too, that brought Katherine A. Kendall into social work, and later into leadership positions on the international scene. In this interview we learn about the Council on Social Work Education, social work in the UN, and about some of leading educators who were part of her life. A creative life that spans the blossoming of the social work profession, Social Security, the war on poverty, the explosive expansion of social work education, social

work on the international scene, and which also introduces us to the camaraderie of a smaller visionary profession. The interview of her by James Billups is a special gift to us, in that it brings to life an important part of our professional narrative.

What was there about our young profession that permitted Deans to put on skits at National Conferences, to write one liners, to don costumes and perform skits before hundreds of social workers.? When was the last time that happened at our professional conferences. When was the last time we were able to laugh at our own foibles in a public way?

Are these stories of the old days, just nostalgia, twice told tales of honored founders, or do these narratives carry important lessons for the social work profession? Narratives not only shape individual lives, but organizational life as well. What are the stories that students and young social workers are hearing. Yes, we have our living legends, and perhaps everyone can think of one or two...at most. But from the past only the name of Bertha Capen Reynolds still seems to be alive in practice. All have heard of Jane Addams and Mary Richmond, but do we know their stories? If we lose their narratives, we have less to base our new ones on.

At the conclusion of her interview, Dr. Kendall tells of the social development work of Sattereh Farman Farmaian , once the Dean of the School of Social Work in Iran, forced to flee, and now in the United States. She is a person Kendall sees as having embodied the professions commitment to the poor. In the "its a small world department," our stories miraculously entwine.. As a Fulbright lecturer in Iran, I recall Dean Farmaian calling me into her office on the first day I was to teach, to welcome and brief me. I was free to teach anything, with one exception, no criticism of the Royal Family. A warning appreciated, but not necessary (I wasn't about to be an ugly American in the land of Shahrazad). Then she added, that there might be operatives (not her word) in the class who could report my words to the authorities. The warning was doubly appreciated, no difficulties ever arose. The teaching experience was extremely positive, the students' eagerness to learn, memorable. One indelible memory was that every day at lunch, students and faculty would sit and eat together; a meal of Persian rice topped with a raw egg (all provided free). These contacts created excellent learning/ teaching experiences, and stories of each other's visions were shared. May all schools be blessed by similar opportunities for student and faculty interaction..

Dr. Kendall's story of how she entered social work school also provides an important "moral" she was interviewed one day, accepted the next; no references, no written statements, etc. Her value was recognized and "rules" individualized. In contrast, I once heard about an applicant whose material was all in except for one reference which arrived postmarked a week late, and who was denied consideration that year because of that fact. Both stories are part of our history, and offer fruit for thought; and both may reflect their times. Dr. Kendall's experience reflecting a humanistic metaphor, the other, a treatment metaphor. Have we become too obligated to follow rules, regulations, and written prescriptions rather then liberating persons from internalized rituals, to more reflective thinking, and adhering of their own lives? Does the new NASW Code of Ethics reflect our times?

The reluctance to offer prescriptions, led teachers in some traditions such as Zen and Sufiism to present the student with puzzles or stories to be pondered. These were often individualized according to time, context and student need, they were rarely written down, which permitted easy modifications. A favorite, narrated by Indres Shah who has written a number of fine books on the Sufis and their stories, goes....

A cat teacher was talking to other cat teachers in the hall one day. "I don't know what is wrong with those three rabbits in my class," she exclaimed. "Today I gave a wonderful lecture on catching mice, and none of them paid any attention."

There ought to be a moral here, somewhere! □

INTERNATIONAL PRACTICE: The First in the Series Editors: Roland Meinert and James Billups

In this issue we begin the first of a series of narratives on international practice. The Special Editors, Roland Meinert and James Billups, have put together a wide range of international perspectives on practice through the narrative voices of educators, researchers and practitioners. Agathi Glezakos and Katherine Kendall begin the "International Series " in this issue.

FROM ONE HAND TO ANOTHER: THE STORY OF A SEXUALLY ABUSED CHILD'S STRENGTH AND COURAGE

The story of Martha is one that taught me strength and courage and to value my social work education. Martha was an 11 year old child who was sexually abused by her stepfather from age 6 to 11. Martha's strength and courage to tell her story has been rewarding for both Martha and myself. Her courage allowed her to unlock years of pain and secrets. This was my first sexual abuse case as a Child Protective Services Investigator. I hope that her story will empower other practitioners to gain the strength and courage to fight for the rights of children and encourage parents to put their children first.

BY Venessa A. Brown

Venessa A. Brown, Ph.D. is Assistant Professor, Department of Social Work Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville

CORRECTION

In Vol.3,#1(1997) Diane Beuerle, author of "My Storyteller," credentials were listed incorrectly. Ms Beuerle, MS, NP is a Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner in private practice, Corona del Mar CA.

THE INITIAL INTERVIEW WITH MARTHA

Martha was eleven and the oldest of two children. She lived with her mother and stepfather. Everyone described her as a loner, who was very shy, somewhat friendly, and performing poorly in school. When I first met Martha, the room she was sitting in felt cold. She sat there with tears streaming down her face and intense pain in her eyes. I remember introducing myself, and telling her that I was there to help her and for her to not be afraid. She was silent and appeared distant emotionally and physically. As I moved near her, I tried to assure her that it was okay. I asked her to put her hands in my hands. I have no idea where that came from but it seemed to be the best thing to do at the time. I hoped that she would feel strength from me and feel that I genuinely wanted to help her. I felt that whatever had happened to this child must have been devastating, because her tears never stopped. She put her hands in mine and laid her head on my shoulder and continued to cry. Her hands were so cold. As her hands warmed up, she moved a little closer to me and it appeared as if she was beginning to trust me. I knew that something was hurting her, and I felt helpless because she wouldn't or couldn't talk about it.

Martha squeezed my hands very tightly as if to say, "Please help me, and I hope I can trust you." I think one of the most important messages to get across to children who have been sexually abused is that it is not their fault. It is also very important to explain to them that you cannot keep a secret that could put them in harm. I tried to convey this message to Martha. I know that it was very painful for her to tell her story.

Martha was filled with all kinds of fears. She was afraid that I wouldn't see her as a little girl. She was afraid that I would think badly of her, and she was ashamed. Most of all she was afraid of losing her family and

getting the only father she knew in trouble. Although she had a lot of fears, she wanted the abuse to stop. What Martha did not know was that I had a lot of fears too. I was afraid that this case was too much for me to handle. I was afraid that I was not qualified. I was afraid that I wouldn't be able to help her, and I was afraid of my own emotions. Most of all, I was afraid that I would somehow mess this case up and that could cause even more harm to Martha.

MARTHA'S STORY

With tears rolling down her face, Martha told a story of abuse that, to a young practitioner like me, was almost unbelievable. To the best of my memory, her initial story went something like this:

"I was sitting at my desk and was thinking about what was going to happen when I got home from school. Daddy is going to 'get me' and he said he's going to 'get me' worse than before. When mama and my little brother left home this morning, Daddy made me give him some 'bootie' and told me that he was going to finish when I got home from school. Daddy started to mess with me when I was a little girl. Daddy puts his thing in me and touches me and it hurts. He promised me and Mama that he was not going to mess with me anymore."

While telling her story, my stomach was in knots, and with everything in my power I fought back the tears. I was so angry, afraid, upset, and devastated. Although the issue of sexual abuse was not a new phenomenon to me, it was merely something I had read in a book, heard in the news, and studied in social work classes. Until now I had no face to put with this phenomenon.

The initial interview continued. When I learned that Martha's mother was aware of the alleged abuse and had failed to protect her, I was almost overwhelmed by my own feelings. I started to think about what if my mother had not protected me. I thought Moms were the protectors of their children. Surely this mother does not know of the abuse, I thought. However, Martha was very detailed in her story, and it was obvious that this was painful for her to talk about. I could tell that Martha was feeling that she was betraying her family. She would tell what had happened and then say something very caring about her parents. Sexual abuse cases are difficult. Children will still love and want to be with abusive parents. I reminded myself that in these cases you must never assume or lead the victim. The social worker should only seek clarification from the child. Listening to Martha repeat the details of her story for clarification was very hard for me, because I really didn't want to hear it all over again. It only made me more angry.

After my initial interview with Martha, I notified my supervisor and contacted the police department. When I spoke with my supervisor, I told her all my fears. She listened, but assured me that I could handle the situation. I remember saying to her, "This case is for an experienced social worker," and she replied, "Venessa, Martha wouldn't be comfortable telling her story to anyone else now, she needs you." After our conversation I remember putting my feelings aside and thinking of Martha's welfare. At that point I felt confident in my ability to handle the situation.

MARTHA'S MEDICAL EXAMINATION

Given the nature of the case and the fact that Martha stated that the abuse had just occurred that morning, the detective and I took Martha directly to the hospital where she was examined for sexual abuse. There Martha stood in the examining room, with tears coming down her small frail face and a firm grip on her clothing. She was afraid to remove them for fear of what the doctor would think. However, Dr. James was a very gentle man. He looked at Martha with tears in his eyes and assured her that she would be okay. He carefully explained every step of the examination process. I went over to the bed, grabbed her hands, looked in her eyes, and reminded her of how much strength and courage she had to have to come this far.

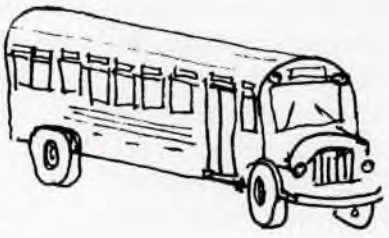
This was a very hard moment and in a lot of ways I needed Martha to be strong for me. I needed her to be strong because my own emotions were too close to the surface that I was afraid I would not be strong enough for her. It was if I was watching her being violated. The examination was so painful for Martha that I became angry at what happened to her. However, it was that anger that changed my feelings of powerlessness and gave me the strength to give to Martha.

With her hands in mine, we made it through the medical examination. I must admit that it was at this point that I could no longer fight the tears. I cried but quickly regained control of my emotions. Martha's examination revealed that she had been penetrated. The doctor found semen in her vagina. This evidence validated our case for sexual abuse.

THE VIDEOTAPING

Later, the police detective and I had Martha's story videotaped. We interviewed her for the second time at a place called the "Georgia Center." The center looked like a home with lots of bright colors, toys, and anatomically correct dolls. When Martha walked into the house, her face lit up. It was obvious that she felt safe, but was still scared. While the detective set up the equipment, Martha and I went into the taping room and talked more about her family. She talked about how much she favored her little brother who was almost a year old. "I love him, but Mamma won't let me play with him that much," she said. "Mama says that I'm too big and that I should be playing with kids my own age. But I don't like to play with the kids at school because they think that I am different." Martha's constant reminder of the fact that her brother looked just like her raised a red flag for me. But I wasn't sure what she was trying to tell me. It just seemed strange. I didn't pressure her to tell me more, because I thought maybe what she was trying to say would come out in the videotaped interview.

Before we started the videotape, Martha came over and grabbed my hands, placed her hands inside mine, and started to talk. To be honest, holding Martha's hands were just as comforting for me as it may have been for her. I felt that what little strength we both had could be shared with each other. I held on to her hands and she cried as she repeated her story, this time in much more detail. It appeared as if she felt relieved to finally release her secret.



Her story continued: "Everyday when I get off the bus, Daddy is waiting to meet me, and he waves at the bus driver. Everybody thinks my daddy is nice and Mama said that we should be happy to have him in our lives because she doesn't make enough money to support us and he gives us the things that we need. Daddy is nice to me except when he puts his 'thing' in me. I told mama the first time he touched me, and mama told me that he was trying to get to know me. But it didn't feel like it was supposed to happen, and I always feel ashamed and I don't know why Daddy wants to touch me this way."

After the first time, Martha said she never told her mother again because her mother told her not to run away from the only father she had. When I asked her if there were other times he had, "put his thing in her," she said, "a lot of times." Martha said that her daddy touched her at age nine when they lived in Oklahoma. She said "He hurt me real bad, and something bad happened." Martha remembers something happening to her stomach, and she and daddy having to go to the hospital. She said, "I think I had a baby, but I never saw it, but I heard something cry." Martha also remembers her mother being in the hospital having her brother the same day she had surgery.

At this point I was angry because I began to suspect what was going on. After Martha's "surgery" they moved, and her Mama told her never to discuss what had happened.

After finishing the interview, I remember as if it were yesterday, how Martha's teacher initially described her as being in a catatonic state, nonverbal and rocking rapidly. That the only time Martha spoke was when they offered to call her mother, but she seemed terrified by the offer.

Finally telling this awful secret really changed Martha because after the interview she was not the same. Although the world

she once knew was in shambles, she had a smile.

Neither of us knew what the future would hold. Releasing her secret changed both of our lives. For Martha, the life and family she once knew would never be the same. Martha was placed in a foster home. When children disclose sexual abuse and the alleged perpetrator remains in the home, sexual abuse protocol requires children to be removed from the home, especially if the other parent knows of the abuse and has failed to protect the child. For me, my life changed because the way I saw the world and the direction of my career would be very different. We continued our investigation.

MARTHA'S MOTHER'S STORY

One of the most difficult parts of this case was my initial interview with Martha's mother at the police station after Martha had been taken into protective custody. Her mother appeared intellectually limited, shy, and very dependent. When I first confronted the mother about her daughter, she dropped her head and screamed, "Where is my daughter?" I assured her that Martha was safe. She said, "We have a wonderful family; what is the problem, we just moved here and we don't know anyone." The mother was very nervous and refused to talk anymore without her husband. After her husband arrived at the police station, both denied all allegations and demanded to see Martha. I thought, "How could you demand to see this child after what has happened to her?" When I first saw the father, I looked at him with disgust. However, he was in such denial that he didn't even notice me. On the other hand, when I saw the mother and father together, I felt sorry for the mother. When I looked into her eyes it was clear to me she was in a lot of pain. Her affect was of sadness, fear and dependency. She appeared ashamed, hurt and helpless. It was obvious that she felt powerless because after her husband arrived she allowed him to do all the talking. After our initial interview with the parents, the stepfather was arrested and charged with aggravated child molestation.

About 18 days after my initial interview, the mother contacted me. She was worried about Martha. She described Martha as a good girl who had been through a lot and would not lie, but she was not sure why Martha would say such things. Martha's mother married her husband when Martha was six years old, and she acknowledged that he began fondling her shortly after he moved in. He wanted children and Martha's mother could not have anymore. After a few years she learned that Martha, shortly before she turned 9, was pregnant. The baby was aborted. According to the mother the family survived, but the abuse continued and Martha was pregnant again at age 10. They decided to raise the child as their own. They told Martha that Mom was pregnant and that she was sick. The stepfather had promised that he would not bother Martha again, because he had a son. Martha was okay, and their secret was safe. So they moved to start over again.

Martha's mother had a very difficult childhood. She was raised by her mother and stepfather. She was sexually abused by her stepfather and never protected by her mother. Martha's mother described herself as a helpless little child who "turned out okay." Although she appeared sorry about what had happened to Martha, she defended her husband by stating, "He just wanted a child of his own and felt this was the best way." She acknowledged that she loved her husband very much and would see him through this, and that one day their family would be back together.

According to James and Nasjleti (1983), Martha's mother could be classified as The Passive Child-Woman Mother. This

woman assumes an attitude of helplessness and apathy when confronted by any form of conflict. In relationships, she usually chooses authoritarian and abusive men. She embodies the victim role. Mothers of incest victims often report inadequate parenting in their own childhood. Passive child-woman mothers are likely to have been physically abused or emotionally deprived. A significant number of these women report incest or molestation in childhood. They describe the relationships with their mothers as poor, and memories elicit feelings of anger and pain. The children grow up assuming that abuse was part of what women had to live with. These women embody the term "learned helplessness." I think that Martha's mother never really felt for Martha because in her eyes she had survived and so could Martha.

GRATEFUL

Martha's mother was arrested for her knowledge of and contribution to the abuse, and she never stopped supporting her husband even after his conviction. Martha and her brother [her son] remained in foster care. Although Martha was not ready to become a mother, she had a strong bond with her brother. It was difficult for Martha to learn that he was her son, but it was a relief knowing that she had not imagined having a baby.

About four years ago, I received a letter from Martha. She had finished her first year in college and was studying to become a social worker. Memories of Martha have been with me since the first moments I met her, and it's been her strength and courage that strengthen me.

This case challenged me both personally and professionally. When I reflect on my 10 years as a direct services practitioner, I would have to say this was the case that laid the foundation for my success as a Protective Services Investigator. It was this case that confirmed the value of an advance degree in social work. I also realized how important it was to be committed to the welfare of children. I think of the many children who, due to my ability to adequately assess sexual abuse cases, were given an opportunity to unlock the horrible secrets in their lives. More than anything, they touched my life and they taught me courage and strength. Today, I am grateful for having had an opportunity to work on behalf of children.

The social work profession is sometimes a thankless profession in a lot of ways. However, it was the look in Martha's eyes and the touch of her hands that said "thank you." □

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THE ICE, THE DARK, AND THE STORIES: THE HEALING POWER OF SHARED NARRATIVES

We want to tell you a story. Like any good story, it has a beginning, a middle, and an end. We began with the point of view of the scholar, objective. Our aim was to do a descriptive research design to measure the impact of the Ice Storm of 1994. The setting was North Mississippi in March of 1994. We began by looking for what went wrong, how things had messed up, assuming much in drawing our conclusions before we had even talked to the population, the "client." However, we were confused by our findings, faced by something we had not anticipated, and forced to look at another set of possibilities - as the myriad colors and sounds, and other voices began to emerge, voices not crying in defeat but singing in relief, in survival, in reflection, in learning.

By Hanna Boatright and Jim Stafford

Hannah G. Boatright, ACSW, LCS is Rehabilitation Social Worker, North Mississippi Medical Center Rehabilitation Services, Tuepelo MS.

Jim Stafford, DSW, ACSW, LCSW is Assistant Professor and Coordinator of Field Instruction, Social Work Department, University of Mississippi, University MS.

Crackling of Bark-life
Trees screamed all night, all day
Like mortar fire, gun shots echoing,
Echoing all night, all day
Majestic trees on their knees
A prayer? A lament? Repent! Repent!

White ice encases, makes brittle the
Pines, Oaks, Cedars, and
Pecan that once stood a silhouette at the
Edge of the wood.
Breaking, uprooting, in pieces, in whole

The cruel, cold creature with mighty grasp
Pulled and snipped, leaving miles,
And miles unfamiliar to the gaze

Ice-laden power lines, telephone lines...
Fall hard, Snap! Pow! Bang!
Explosions without fire,
all night, all day

The pervasive grey Fog cloaked
The Day after The Day after
Nature's Anarchy
Technology stood stilled...
Scanners that read labels, told prices...
Gas pumps, water pumps, Television,
Still and Silent.

Interstate, a winding trail of
Fallen trees that hid asphalt and median
Cars and trucks, immobile,
Too big and modern for such meandering.
No road map marks this course or shows the way.

Still and Silent
Modernity torn and uprooted
Brought to its knees
A prayer? A lament?
Repent! Repent!
All day, all night

(journal excerpt)

A PERSONAL ACCOUNT (H.B.)

I knew we were in trouble when I saw the pines beginning to bend under the ice that night as my dog and I were taking our evening walk. It was raining steadily, and the temperature was holding at 28 degrees. We live in the middle of large pines, and my sleep that night was punctuated by occasional loud cracks very similar to gunshots, to be followed seconds later by a crash as the branch or tree hit the ground. In an ice storm, the soft wood goes quickly. The lights flickered around 2:00 A.M., then there was only the darkness and the crashes. The dawn brought to light a devastated landscape of shattered trees and sagging power lines. The house was quite cold, and my family and I stared numbly out over the icy landscape, unsure of what to do. The rain continued to fall, and the ice continued to grow. Fearing the prospect of getting separated, and getting colder by the minute, we struck out together in our four-wheel drive to try to get to my father-in-law's supply of wood for our fireplace. We had gone but a short distance when two massive trees blocked the highway. Turning back, we

realized that we were now also blocked from getting back to our house. Pulling off the road, we chanced that we could get through a muddy field and get back on the road on the other side of the blockage. We made it only to find that a power line had fallen across the drive up to the house. The only way left to get back to the house was to hike through the woods on the side of the house, trying to avoid the limbs and tops of trees which were falling all around us. It was one of the scariest times I've every experienced.

Several hours later, with my family safe inside the house, I managed to get to a neighbor's house several miles up the road. We managed to load enough wood into the back of the jeep to give us firewood for the rest of the day and night. It took over two hours to make the round trip, which under ordinary conditions might have taken 20 minutes.

Over the next several days the temperature warmed and the ice gradually melted. We had been very lucky. The large pines that had fallen in our front yard had fallen the right way. Only the top out of one tree had hit the roof. We would, however, be without power for 18 days. Responding to the emergency, power crews from several surrounding states worked daylight to dark for days on end. My kids took up the "truck watch" looking for the utility trucks on the highway below which might mean electricity. We ate every type of canned food imaginable, heating it on the wood insert. During the day, my son and I cleared debris from around the house. At night we used pack after pack of batteries to run the radio, tape player, and a small battery operated TV, which became the great event of the evening — 30 minutes per night of the one channel we could pick up. We all became great fans of Garrison Keeler's tapes, and any other taped entertainment we could find. Sitting around the tape player in the dim lamplight, I was reminded of those old stories my parents had told about gathering around the radio at night.

We slept huddled in the den, which could be closed off from the rest of the house. We all smelled of wood smoke, even thought we sponge-bathed every day or so. On the 18th day just

before dark, my son and I were engaged in the seemingly endless process of hauling limbs when we spotted a power truck from Alabama on the hill behind our land. We waved and yelled, running toward them to shake their hands. When the lights came on we all cheered and hugged. It was one of those "I remember exactly where I was and what I was doing" experiences.

Ironically, this story was not brought forth as meaningful. The details were hidden beneath the intellect and the scholar's gaze. But first, let us begin at the beginning of our "research".

The following is an account of the authors' experiences as we worked our way though our project. The use of "we" throughout the rest of this narrative refers to both authors.

We want to tell you a story. Like any good story, it has a beginning, a middle, and an end. We began with the point of view of the scholar, objective. Our aim was to do a descriptive research design to measure the impact of the Ice Storm of 1994. The setting was North Mississippi in March of 1994. We began by looking for what went wrong, how things had messed up, assuming much in drawing our conclusions before we had even talked to the population, the "client." However, we were confused by our findings, faced by something we had not anticipated, and forced to look at another set of possibilities. We had looked at only the negative aspects of the experience. In reading the journals we began to realize that more was being expressed besides the negative experiences. The negative was coupled with the positive. We had failed to consider both. The journals inspired us to revisit our own experiences.

THE BEGINNING

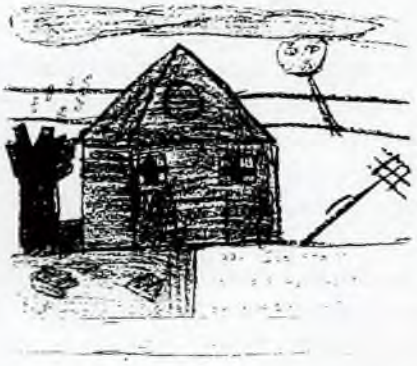
The Ice Storm of 1994 was an event not easily forgotten. The destruction, the inconvenience, the experience itself. Just exactly how it occurred to us that this might be an interesting topic for investigation we are not sure; maybe the fact that both our families were without power for 15 and 18 days, respectively, had something to do with it. We had our own experiences of no utilities, dirty clothes, seeing the "haves" and being one of the "have nots." We experienced the frustration of seeing lights coming on in neighbors' houses while we remained in the dark. We witnessed the electric power trucks drive up, our hearts delighted thinking we would soon be a have, then feel a twinge of despair as they left and we still remained without.

After hearing several horror stories about family violence and mental crises that occurred as an outgrowth of the storm, we decided that it might be worthwhile to document the numbers. We had read in the newspapers about the fights that had occurred while people waited in long lines at gas stations, grocery stores, and fast food restaurants. We had read about the price gouging by some business owners and the prosecution of these owners following the ice storm. We read articles on the after effects of natural disasters. We read about Post Traumatic Stress Disorder that can emerge following disasters, about the break down of the infrastructure, about the need for organized helpers, i.e., Red Cross, Salvation Army, etc. We read about the exacerbation of preexisting medical and mental health problems . We looked for the pathology and for the recommendations that the research could support regarding how we as professionals could help in subsequent disasters. We also had our own job-related stories about a particular client or referral.

So we started out with a straightforward quantitative study to determine the impact of the ice storm on the number of contacts received by social service agencies and law enforcement agencies in the area. We sent out over 60 questionnaires to agencies over a 15 county area. We began to plan how we might write up what we thought would be obvious results showing that the storm had undoubtedly resulted in increased family violence, increased reports of child abuse and neglect, and aggravation of mental illness. We had a good response rate. Over 60% of our questionnaires were returned. To our surprise, however, the numbers were not there. The overall impact appeared negligible and puzzling picture began to emerge. While some agencies, particularly law

enforcement, did report some mild increases in calls, other agencies reported either no difference, or an actual decrease, in activity during and after the storm. Even those reporting increases were not reporting them in anywhere close to the numbers we had expected. The handful of tragic stories we had heard did not seem to have any hard numbers behind them.

At this point we did what good researchers are supposed to do, we discarded our original hypothesis and went in search of another explanation.



THE MIDDLE

The idea of the story was not in our agenda yet. Our survey was not what we had expected. We found ourselves needing reports from the inside of the experience, not the periphery. We began to look for where we could tap into the pulse of the experience — to seek qualitative data.

As a former teacher and member of the Ole Miss Writing Project, Hannah had experience working with high school and junior high school students. We discussed the honesty of students when they are asked to write about personal experiences. We concluded that we could do some content analysis on student journal entries related to the ice storm experience in order to acquire the data to support what we really anticipated as high incidence of family stress and depression. Hannah contacted the directors of the Ole Miss Writing Project and the Delta Area Writing Project to get mailing lists of area teachers who may have been affected by the ice storm. Writing project teachers regularly use journals in their classrooms, and these teachers are taught to value authenticity in student writing. The initial request made in September of 1994 had asked teachers to share any journal entries written shortly after the storm. We received about 85 journal entries written in class in March of 1994 from one teacher who had asked her students to write about the most memorable events of the 1993-1994 school year. Of these 85 journals, 80 were about the ice storm. Most teachers responded to this first request by saying that they no longer had the journals students had written for the 93-94 school year.

In October of 1994, another request was sent to these teachers asking them to give a 10 minute in-class journal writing assignment on the Ice Storm of 1994. Teachers were directed to inform their students that the journals would be sent to researchers who were writing about the storm, and that they were not to put their names on their entries. Writing project teachers were specifically chosen to give the instructions due to their training. We could insure that the instructions would remain open-ended and that the teachers would not give leading statements or try to influence students' writings.

We received 500 journal entries, along with a few drawings, as a result of this second request. All but 50 discussed both negative and positive aspects of the ice storm experience. The other 50 entries were from students who had not been here during the storm. The rest were from students who wrote about what an ice storm was but did not include any other content. We should note that as these entries were being written, some six months after the storm, the effects of the storm were still clearly visible. Scarred and broken trees, huge piles of brush and limbs, and broken utility poles were everywhere.

As we began to read through what we had gathered, common themes began to surface. For many families, the pain and suffering brought about by the storm had been offset by how they had managed to cope. Many families, who had been living the fast-paced "leave me a note on the 'fridge" life style, had actually spent long dark evenings together, playing games, listening to a battery powered radio, and maybe most importantly, just talking.

At our house, we turned it into a place to camp out. Everyone gathered together in the living room reading by candlelight, as the stock

of batteries slowly disappeared while we listened to The Grateful Dead on my sister's tape player. We played monopoly with flashlights and worked jigsaw puzzles by the light of an old lantern. Dad tried to show us how to pop popcorn without a microwave, since that's how he always had to do it, but something didn't work right, and we decided on s'mores. We made quite a mess as we tried to melt the chocolate with a lighter, but they did turn out better than the popcorn, and at least we didn't catch anything important on fire.

Those were some of the longest days of my life. But I have to admit that some good things did come out of it. My family grew a lot closer because we all had to stay in one room TOGETHER AND COMMUNICATE!

These were not accounts of suffering only — of what had gone wrong, but accounts of discovery — stories of sharing, being together, listening to each other. As our search continued, we realized that these stories were not hard to get at all. People wanted to tell them. Telling the stories appeared to make people feel better. When we first presented our findings at the Mississippi Chapter Annual Conference of National Association of Social Workers in Jackson in March 1995, a group of initially rather silent people, who thought they had come to hear us talk, ended up talking not just to us but to each other. Some of the participants had experienced the Ice; others were in another part of the state and shared hypotheses similar to our original ones as to the effects of the disaster. The stories shared by those who experienced the disaster had the same themes as those found in the student journals. Some the participants who shared their stories also commented that..."We wish you would tell more about how people actually manage; it provides more hope in what sometimes seems such depressing business."

The gist was that as professionals, we often think that we have the answers, the medication, or the panacea that will cure or ameliorate the pain of our clients. But maybe we just need to listen a little harder sometimes.

Mama found all of her wedding candles... we put the food into a big cooler...in the bathroom there was a tree where the ceiling had been....

That night we rearranged the living room so that the whole family could sleep around the fire. We spent the rest of the night listening to the radio and using our lanterns for light. All that night my parents stayed up filling the fireplace with wood. I don't exactly know why, but I felt really good.

As we started looking at the power of narrative, we realized that the search had been leading us to a rediscovery of something we should have known. Stories, and the telling of them , have great value, whether it is a grandmother telling the kids how things used to be by the lamplight, or a kid telling us how that story affected him or her. Story telling is a natural form of coping, of reframing, and of healing. Narrative therapy tells us this, but maybe one has to happen upon this fact through a journey in order to understand just how powerful it can be. We did not see more pathology because people seemed to cope, often surprisingly well. The power of shared suffering encircled the experience and no one was alone in reflecting on the event.

Most people would think of the ice storm as being a total disaster, but to me it was one of the greatest things that could ever happen. It brought me and my family closer together...it's amazing how a disaster pulls everyone closer together. I was enthused when my dad showed me how he used to heat food over a roaring fire when he was my age. I was touched when my mom taught me how to study by candlelight. And most of all, I was overcome by the love and hospitality my family showed after our lights were turned back on. I can't explain the generosity my family showed to others around us who didn't have heat or electricity.

We often felt that we were involved in one big support group. Everyone had an experience, and needed to tell it. Many people were around who wanted to listen and to talk, to exchange stories — whether these people were at conferences, in grocery lines, in coffee shops, or waiting for classes. We recognized the "communal spirit" of the experience and in looking deeper, we began to find and add value to the experience. When explicated, these

stories exposed some common themes of family, community, hardships endured, and meaning-making.

One adult we came into contact with while gathering our stories shared with us a journal she had written about the death of her mother at the peak of the ice storm. She said that in going back to that time and sharing the experience, she somehow felt better.

Thursday morning it was raining and very cold or at least we thought it was raining. We looked out of the window and we were so surprised. It was sleeting and the ground was covered with ice. The trees were hanging very heavily and the limbs were breaking. Our hearts were also very heavy and breaking. My mother called me over to her bedside and she said. "I hate to leave but I have got to go." I could hear the cracking and popping and a loud crash outside. I told mama, "I know, I know." We had to wait until the ground thawed and the roads were cleared before we could bury my mother. ...Now I look back and I know that we have to got through trials to make us stronger. But I realize that this was a trying time in my life, but I had Jesus as my shield and knew he was by my side and he could help me get through this. I know there will probably be other storms in my life but I hope that the Ice Storm of '94 has prepared me to be a little stronger and to have more faith in God. ...we can weather the storm.

Not every account we came across was positive and nurturing. Situations which were already bad became worse. Miracles did not happen — sick families and sick people did not become well because the TV went off. Families with strained relationships were strained even further. One account told of a mentally ill man who became extremely agitated at the loss of his favorite pastime — watching TV. One night after the power had been off for over two weeks he attacked his sister. His brother came to her defense, and during the struggle in the darkness the mentally ill man was fatally shot. These "on-the-brink" situations probably accounted for most of the increase in social services contacts that our original survey did show. Some people were definitely "pushed over the edge."

Those were some really some bad days and nights. I was bored out of my mind. I couldn't watch TV or listen to the radio. All that any of us could do was sit and look at each other. We had to go outside and get ice to put on the stove to melt for water. Everything was so scarce, especially gas — people were lined up at the gas station, actually fighting over gas. When and if a grocery store opened, there were long lines.

Most people where I live mainly just stayed in their homes and tried to keep warm and keep food in their stomachs. Most people's food ruined, all their clothes got dirty and they couldn't wash them. At night some folks didn't even have candles so they could see where they were going in their homes.

Many of the journal entries seemed to reflect the search for meaning in the event, "the ice storm was a message from God..." Several mentioned God's assertion of His power — "He wanted to show us that no matter what works we [man] can do, He retains ultimate power..." *I guess it made you appreciate all the things you have. I've never thought much about power. We just always had it. It also made me realize who was in control... God showed us that He was the reason....*

...my grandmother, once when I was an upset little girl, told me that God sends us calamity not to punish us, but to make us strong.

Some accounts talked of loss — *"century old trees that had stood since childhood, brought to the ground by tons of accumulated ice." "Like old men bought down by the burdens of life." "Other trees misshapen and torn, but still standing"* were for some a testament to life and the will to survive. One elderly lady spoke through tears about the only tree left standing in her yard, the one under which her late husband had proposed to her a half century before, *"That's how we were — strong."* In some places, the landscape was totally distorted and the familiar had to be reestablished. A sense of being lost in ones own territory permeated.

Through some of this loss there were also accounts of healing, of increased appreciation of family and friends, and realization of what was truly important. The sense of place, connections to the land, the cleaning up and building back — all appeared many times through the writings of young and old alike. Wood from trees that had fallen during the storm was often turned into symbolic artifacts. One man did a thriving business turning the wood into small crosses, another turned a fallen favorite tree into a

totem pole which he placed in his yard. Our family's memento was a limb which had been naturally coiled into a spiral shape by a kudzu vine. One of the linemen from Alabama had cut it out of some tangled growth in the process of reconnecting our electricity. He gave it to my son, who turned it into a very handsome walking stick.

Objects became ways to connect to the experience. Maybe trauma was not delivered by the storm as much as the resurrection of the primal spirit with a sense of community and agency. In revisiting the experience in our stories, we found a sense of pride, wisdom, and accomplishment. We looked with new insight at the sweat shirts and tee shirts that displayed boldly, "I survived the Ice Storm of '94." Our Heroes were the linemen brought in from different parts of the country - electric power and telephone workers, revered, fed, and housed by the communities they served.

One of the men in the power crew from Alabama told me that his father had been part of the allied army that liberated Paris in World War II, and said how he'd always thought how great it must have felt to have been part of that liberation force. He said that yesterday he had pulled up into the yard of a rural farmhouse and people had come running from everywhere, bringing coffee and sandwiches, overjoyed to see him and his crew. He said now he thought he knew how his dad must have felt.

We found ourselves telling more stories, dramatizing the stress, and felling better, validated after reading or listening to others' experience. "Through stories we learn about people, settings, and ideas...stories help people work through internal conflicts and crisis...Other people's true stories of pain and heartbreak help people (McAdams, 1993, p. 31-32). Telling was important, the actions, the emotions, and the details. The survival attitude or stance was thematic. We began recognizing the Beginning, the Middle, and the End. As we told our stories and listened to others, we revised, revisited, made meaning. The journals we read led us through the "re-vision" of our search.

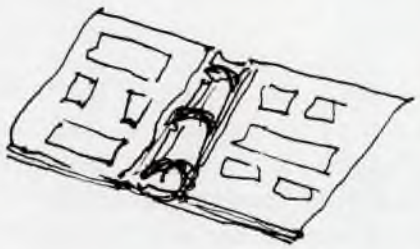
In "revising or revisiting" our experiences, we noticed that our language was also changing.

Our language became the language of the story, a literary language.

Stories have settings, characters, recurring themes, and images. Stories can be entertaining, instructive, and healing. Plots can be ironic, romantic, heroic, tragic, or a combination of all four. Plots have initiating events, attempts, consequences, and reactions to the consequences, climax, and conclusion. "In subjective and embellished telling of the past, the past is constructed - history is made...

In narrative mode of thought, we seek to explore events in terms of human actors striving to do things over time." (McAdams, 1993, p. 28). "Storying causes us to improvise constantly...in the jazz musician, each playing off what the other introduces...(Friedman, 1994, p. 458).

After reading the journals, we began to realize that for us the telling of the story of our own experiences was our way of establishing meaning to the experience for us. Our story telling had a value of its own. We embellished, seeing ourselves as heroes. Along with hundreds of other "survivors," we were creating our own family myth, which would become part of the larger community myth of "The Ice Storm of '94."



Stories can be viewed from the perspective of setting, of plot, of character, of theme. Choosing any one view can alter our assumptions. We had failed to recognize or acknowledge all the elements of the "Story". We had the setting. We had the characters. We had a plot and subplot. In deconstructing this story, we found action around agency and community. We found communal characters, "those characters who act, think, and feel in communal ways" (McAdams, 1993, p. 134). We found agenetic characters, "those who seek to overcome, conquer, master, control, create, produce, explore, persuade, advocate, analyze, understand, win" (p. 134). We discovered that parents were comforters, neighbors were guardians, children were nurtured and safe. Within each of us also were these communal and agentic characters.

...my grandmother and I became really close. We started putting to-

gether family photo albums, starting with her family and my grandfather's...

My parents taught us to use candles and lanterns... to be sure no one suffered. Our family cooked for others on our gas stove. Neighbors were glad to share bags of thawing meats. ...while it introduced the youth to past lifestyles, it taught many people to express love by sharing, helping, and giving.

My grandmother sat by the candles and prayed...the weatherman said that the sun would be out tomorrow...we all hugged each other...I went over and hugged my grandmother... she said it was God's blessing.

Out of boredom emerged insight and admiration of our elderly. The cultural and religious values of a geographic area encompassed meaning-making. Time was structured by survival tasks, meaningful tasks, whether it was gathering wood for a fire, telling stories as shadows danced on the wall as candles burned, or family members just talking and listening to one another. This was manageable. A myth was emerging through the journals, "I Survived the Ice Storm of '94."

According to Campbell (1968), "myth springs from individual experience" (p. 84). Hirsch (1988) stated that myths are "stories we share that provide us with our values, goals, and traditions" (p. 27) and that a "story is any account, written, oral, or in the mind, true or imaginary of action in a time sequence with a beginning, middle, and end" (p. 27). Campbell (1968) stated that man makes meaning of his experience, gains a "higher integrity of self" through myth (p. 16) — that "the shaping force of a civilization is lived experienced — a perspective and a processing" (p. 138).

We endured the dirty clothes, no baths, no toilet, no hot coffee, no way in or out of our driveways, ice-covered county roads, and city streets. We endured having to melt ice to have water to take a sponge bath or flush the toilet. Somehow maybe people found something thought lost — a sense of empowerment, control, i.e., cutting trees along and off the roads and driveways, cooking over fire, telling stories.

I now know why pioneers went to bed with the chickens — because there was nothing to do after dark

THE END

As helping professionals we think we listen with the third ear. What we often listen through, however, is the filter of the textbook. We often have a hard time hearing our clients without this filter. Sometimes it masks the essence of individual stories. Until we began listening to the experience of others, our own experience was silenced by this academic filter. We found ourselves enjoying our own healing process that we shared with an entire community that was geographically defined as well as culturally defined. This is the land that Faulkner wrote about, and there is a definite sense of place to be found here. We found resilience and coping that was connected to this sense of place.

There are some implications here when it comes to teaching our students how to become effective social workers. One obvious point is the value of listening to what a client has to say and learning to facilitate the telling of stories. Beginning social workers are not good at this because we somehow give them the idea that they are supposed to run the show, and that means they do most of the talking. They are uncomfortable letting the client talk for very long, because they get the feeling they are not "doing" anything. We need to teach that active listening is a perfectly legitimate social work skill, one to be learned and practiced. We must as Friedman (1993) suggested "help people exchange old plots for new" (p. 454). These plots, however, must be the client's, not our own assumptions.

Telling the story of one's life is integrative and expanding for adults as well as for children.... Participants find it much easier to tell a story than to disclose their feelings in a more abstract way (Hynes & McCarty, 1994, p.185).

Through...story...among everyday people, lessons, and precepts about life and survival are handed down from generation to generation (Smitherman, 1977, p. 73).

In any culture...language is a tool for ordering the chaos of human experience. We feel more comfortable when we have names for events and things (p. 77).

We have a tool that demands nothing except acknowledgment. We have to explore again how we gain knowledge from the world. Friedman (1993) quoted Bruner's theory about two modes of knowing - the narrative mode and the paradigmatic mode.

Paradigmatic Mode of thought seeks to comprehend experience in tightly reasoned analysis, logical proof, and empirical observation...It is not able to make sense of human desire, goals, and social conduct. Narrative mode of thought is concerned with human wants, needs, goals.

This is the mode of stories, wherein we deal with the vicissitudes of human intention...Words mean more than they say...It seeks to explain events in terms of human actions striving to do things over time (McAdams, 1993, p.29).

We began in the quantitative search (paradigmatic mode) only to find an empty net. We turned to the qualitative (narrative mode) to find our nets overflowing. As we explore the concepts of narrative or constructive therapy and learn that we are what our stories tell us, we can define ourselves as mice or men, as heroes or villains, as saints or demons.

This process was both a learning experience and a rediscovery of some ideas we had lost. We had forgotten the power of narrative and the strength of connection to the land. We had looked for pathology, we found some to be sure, but we found more positives than we could have imagined. Most importantly, we had underestimated the resilience of people and the various ways they will find to cope, whatever the challenge. By listening, we have learned how the telling of stories, an age-old process, still functions as an instrument of sharing, coping, and ultimately, healing. □

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A WALK IN THE WOODS

Nearly thirty-five years ago, when I was a social worker in a renowned child guidance clinic, I was asked to take on for long-term psychotherapy the little girl about whom this former patient and I are writing today . We think the story of Margaret's development may bring hope and comfort to some parents of special needs children.

By Nancy Staver

Nancy Staver was Chief Social Worker at the Judge Baker Clinic Guidance Center in Boston MA for many years. She is now retired.

Introduction by Ann Hartman, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus, and former Dean, Smith College School for Social Work, Northhampton MA.

The following reminiscence and reflection comes from Nancy Staver, much beloved and respected former chief social worker at Boston's Judge Baker Child Guidance Clinic. Nancy began her career at the Judge Baker as an MSW field student from Smith. She returned there upon graduation in 1942 and remained on the staff for over 40 years, with one year's absence which she spent at the Tavistock Clinic in London. She was an active member of the American Orthopsychiatric Association, a research advisor for Smith, and pursued a particular interest in children with learning disabilities. In retirement, she volunteered extensively, primarily at the Learning Center for Deaf Children in Framingham, Massachusetts.

She has sent us the autobiographical essay of a former client with whom she has been in regular contact for 35 years. She describes the seven year old she began to see in the early 60's. When the client was in her teens, and getting beyond the age range of the Judge Baker program, Nancy began to see her privately on a "non paying" basis. Their meetings finally evolved into an annual expedition with intervening phone calls. At Nancy's request, the client has written her story. They will both be delighted if their shared reflection is useful to others. "Obviously," said Nancy, "I put a lot into her and she put a lot into me." Thirty-five years! It does give one pause in these days of managed care!

Ann Hartman

Nearly thirty-five years ago, when I was a social worker in a renowned child guidance clinic, I was asked to take on for long-term psychotherapy the little girl about whom this former patient and I are writing today. We think the story of Margaret's development may bring hope and comfort to some parents of special needs children.

When I first became Margaret's therapist she was seven, and so tense that she seemed brittle. She was a compulsive hand washer, preoccupied with fantasies about her bodily functions, and fearful that she might hurt babies. She was so agitated by group talk and especially by group laughter that she could barely stay in the room. She did not make friends her age and seemed only to give quiet glances at the world around her. It was a red letter day for me when we were out for a walk and she noticed and commented on the scent of the flowering trees we were passing. In today's mental health world she would probably be treated as brain-damaged, but at that time we had little to offer her but psychotherapy and general supports. We met weekly for a good many years and her mother came faithfully to meet with a social worker, talking over such things as planning manageable schooling for Margaret and handling her difficulties at home.

Eventually, after some gaps in our contact, a plan evolved for Margaret and me to have an annual all-day outing, usually a picnic out in the country, an afternoon of leisurely walking and talking in the woods, and dinner at a nearby country restaurant. More recently we have gone to see the various places where Margaret lived when she was a child, and most recently to see her own attractive and well-kept apartment in a town a few miles away from her mother's. She respects my limitations as an octogenarian and has been able with her mother's help to shorten the outings. She continues to telephone me two or three times a year when she is worried about something, but is careful to check about whether she is asking for too much from me. She has other good professional help now and tells me a little about these services.

At my request and with great enthusiasm, Margaret wrote down the following account of her development and difficulties.

FROM MARTHA

In school once, everybody was having fun but me, of course. Laughter never really appealed to me because I really don't have that much humor and I always complained if the girls laughed and I felt so different from the others. Laughing aloud is just like little pricks sticking into me, it hurts my ears as well as feeling stressed. I'd be a phony if other people tried to make me have a sense of humor.

I complained about foolish things. One example is when

my sister's hair was curled or she was having a permanent. When she had her hair done I always thought she was a beautiful girl, much prettier than I was. I really thought that all the other girls were better. I used to be jealous of my sister because she knew more than I also, and she is seven years younger. A girl at my school was very pretty. A few times I was jealous a bit when she had her hair curled. I kept looking at her. She would say "How come you keep looking at me?" I don't know now what I said but it was because I was jealous. I probably didn't want to say that I was jealous.

This other time at school, well, I wouldn't do it today, but I would always go in front of the big door mirror in our homeroom to comb and try and fix my hair the way I wanted it to go. So this girl says "You are making your hair look worse." The teacher never liked me doing that either. It was because they thought I was stuck up doing this.

In school when I was making a smacking noise with my lips, a girl told me "Don't be so silly." Just making that noise made me feel amused a bit if nothing else did. I'd be hurt if anyone thought I was a real oddball. If I lived in a retirement home, I'd hope some people would understand me and not say "Well, you got to laugh." If they see people like me, there sure aren't very many.

My real father was always a problem to me. He would always scold me for things I'd fuss about and do. He said "You don't have the problems we have" which didn't make me feel better within myself As a teenager he used to put me up against the wall and just slap me across the face and say "What's the matter with you anyway, are you sick upstairs or what?" Which meant I was sick in the head. My real father thought that I didn't know as much as I should have at age twelve. He'd start quizzing me on a half a dozen questions and if I didn't know or made a mistake he'd say "You are Margaret Stupid Jones."

One Thanksgiving I was nerved up from the entertainment around and the laughter. My grandmother, as nice a person as she was, said to me, because I had tried to tell her how I felt, "Well, why don't you try to stay and enjoy the entertainment, you don't try," As nice as she was, I couldn't always do what she thought I should be doing. Sometimes I knew better. That just wasn't for me and I was smart enough to know that, even if I've done dumb things or said dumb things at those times. And sometimes still do. I was no angel. I did like my grandmother very much. My mom was in by the fireplace ly-

ing down, so I just went on in there, out from the crowd. I am glad to have my third floor apartment all for myself and I do not have to live at home. Although my rent goes up a little I still can afford it but I plan to go on to the Senior Citizen Housing later on. I need to be in a very nice area.

I like to go home to my mom's every other week because I think it is too much to go every week which is turning out well I help her clean house. I have flown by plane across the United States to Seattle, Washington to visit my parent's friends. I stayed a week. So, I can say that was one great thing I have done. No one else was with me. I love doing things on my own. I also traveled to Colorado Springs while my sister was out there visiting a friend. I stayed at a motel and I really did like that very much. I wish I could travel like that more often.

I don't like to travel with groups on tours for it's a lot of laughter. I went on a tour trip with someone once, I was miserable. I think I made a mistake then I'm a person that doesn't like groups of people for the laughing that I was bothered by, for I'm not the one for excitement. I'm very quiet, that's the way I like it. Years ago I tried to make myself laugh with the others at school plus other places, but it just made me feel even worse so I don't. I'm only doing what's right for me. I love to travel but not in groups. I go to Ogonquit, Maine for one week to a motel and that's a little different, I like that very much.

Several years back I found somebody's wallet on the side of the road. I was living in a Retirement Home working at that time, In fact, just since I've lived here, I've found someone else's wallet at the end of the street I live on, near the grocery store. I picked it up and took it to the Courtesy Desk. I'd say that was a good thing I've done for I think it's right to do those things and I feel sorry for anyone losing something like that I do help other people by doing things for them, if I can and try to respect them too.

When I was in my teen years I was never interested in the news around the world but now I've learned to listen to the news onTV and it is important to do so. I am glad to be interested in the news. I believe in knowing what I want and can do later on in the future. I'm glad I'm able to support myself and to stay out of situations that stress me. I was smart enough to know when I was real young that I could never be a mother also. Well other things bother me as well as what I've already written but I'm not telling anymore now. Now I will end my story, but I could really make a book out all these things that happened and how they affected me. As a child I had some crazy kicks also, I wish I had never done them today. □

THE IRONIES AND ART OF PSYCHOTHERAPY: A CALL FOR THE HUMANITIES

A Narrative Essay *

My purpose in this essay is not only to add to a genre of literature that represents the humanities, but to use a personal ethnography, a narrative account of my experiences in psychotherapy, with psychotherapists, and doing psychotherapy to illustrate the ironies, paradoxes, and other all-too-human idiosyncracies that call for the wisdom of the humanities and the arts for the education for and practice of helping.

It is a story that bridges over 40 years, most of my adult life and the total of my professional life Not only does the story begin without presuppositions; its origin is my initial state of confused innocence and naiveté. More than just a collection of anecdotes, the narrative mode has as its purpose the telling of more than it says in moral, critical, and cautionary terms. My license for this undertaking – augmented by whatever qualifications I have earned as a scholar, therapist, educator, and researcher – is age: simply, I have been around long enough – from the eras of Freud, Jung, and Rogers to those of Prosac and Wellbutrin have gathered a bit of wisdom about the vagaries of therapy.

By Howard Goldstein

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* The author differentiates between literary and "professional" sources. Citings for literary sources are unlisted.

1.

"What really happened?" A familiar question that not only dominates the courtroom but, one way or another, intrudes itself into the activities of everyday life. Why I make a point of these three little words is that one of them, the modifier "really," expresses the idea that there are indeed abiding doubts about what is real or unreal, what is truth or fiction, fact or value, intuition or reality. This dilemma is at the heart of great literature: the romantic misunderstandings of fiction and drama, the esoterica of science-fiction, the puzzle of mystery stories, even the sophistries of autobiography. The dilemma sits at the center of philosophy and its preoccupations with The Nature of Truth; of religion and its revelations; of social history and its revisions, and not the least, psychology and psychotherapy and their sober pondering about the relations between brain, mind, behavior, personality, and society.

The question of what is truth is, of course, critical to courtroom proceedings: one way or another, like it or not, judgments are made that settle the matter, if only for the time being. The question is no less critical to psychotherapy settings since how what we judge what we consider as truth, facts, values, intuitions, and the like will have serious consequences for how things progress — if they actually do. For one, these judgments, unlike the court's, cannot be settled because life and human nature are never settled. Moreover, such psychotherapeutic judgments are tenuous, even flimsy, because they are not supported by precedent, laws, or theoretical foundations made of universal truths about human behavior: they are necessarily devised of subjectivities rather than "hard evidence."

I use the term "psychotherapy" cautiously since it can refer to any of an immense and wildly varied array of schools, procedures, and belief systems.

And so I speak in generic terms of the "helping" situation where one or more people ("client[s]" or "families" or "groups" or "patient[s]") are (voluntarily or by persuasion) telling a specialist (e.g., therapist, analyst, social worker, counselor) a story about a "problem" — that is, any of the countless adversities, torments, stresses, and grievances that are the penalties of being a sentient, self-conscious, and social human being. Adding to this mosaic are the variants of method, technique, and goals of helping.

What these diversities hold in common is the clients' obligation to tell their stories; these stories are truly theirs – their "true-to-life," personal, deeply-held, perhaps shared version of reality. It may be admitted that the version in question may not be working too well at that moment in life; it is still, to the teller, not only "all I know" but "all I understand or can explain" about what is going on.

Now, what does the well-meaning, committed therapist "do" with this story? How is it translated into judgments, decisions, plans — guides for "how to be?" and "what to do next?" Variations on such questions about the therapist's role and responsibilities fill the literature of criticism and analysis that has burgeoned, starting, if you will, at the moment Dr. Freud set pen to paper. Over time, research variables of all kinds have been selected to test hypotheses about the dynamics of psychotherapy in empirical and computational terms. This essay does not pretend to employ such scientific pretensions. Its concern is with the dynamics of the therapist's frame of reference, the personal and professional world view — essentially how he or she thinks about, and makes sense of an ambiguous story to come to terms with questions of being and doing. To what extent is the client's story filtered and translated into the helper's preferred "truths" by artificial screens of theory and technique? Who knows best what it means, what it implies?

Let me start with the obvious: whatever we call psychotherapy or helping is fundamentally a human event, an experience between and among people which, at the same time, involves relationships that differ along many important dimensions from the relationships in ordinary social life. However else it may be studied – sociologically or psychologically — it seems obvious that we might gather some light, some deeper understanding of the event from the reflections and thoughts of human beings who "know" that experience first hand. As I will emphasize later, there is a valuable body of "non—professional" literature — autobiographies, poetry, essays — that offer rich and bountiful — and empirical, if you will — insights into what it means, what it is like to "be in" or "to do" psychotherapy.

For whatever reasons, professional literature is not particularly alive with — and perhaps is a bit suspicious of — texts of personal experiences. A rare example is *Rose's Story*[1] a 35 year old woman's stark and uncompromising account of her lifetime of experience with professional helpers. As I wrote in the forward to this book:

Straightforward and uncluttered by sentiment or apparent motive, her story is a personal travelogue of a journey through the backwoods of our social welfare system . . . readers find themselves involved in a private dialogue with Rose, trying to make sense of her life within the subjective framework of Rose's perception of it . . . Rose is, in important ways, every client . . . .

My purpose in this essay is not only to add to a genre of literature that represents the humanities, but to use a personal ethnography, a narrative account of my experiences in psychotherapy, with psychotherapists, and doing psychotherapy to illustrate the ironies, paradoxes, and other all-too-human idiosyncrasies that call for the wisdom of the humanities and the arts for the education for and practice of helping.

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cator, and researcher — is age: simply, I have been around long enough — from the eras of Freud, Jung, and Rogers to those of Prosac and Wellbutrin have gathered a bit of wisdom about the vagaries of therapy.

Given the gravity of the topic, some may misconstrue my accent on the many ironies of therapy as satire. This is not the intention: where irony reflects the paradoxes and twists of being human, satire attacks or exposes human vice or folly none of which reflects the nature or intent of the well—meaning actors, the good therapists described in this account. As a full—blooded human account and not a prim sample of scholarship, perhaps this tale be considered an allegorical narrative that stands for more than its literal detail and facts; its real—life absurdities and ironies and curiosities and fallibilities lead me to the kind of principle that allegories intend. Here it is the affirmation of respect for another's version of what counts. Consider what is at risk when we entrust our stories, their versions of who we are and what is real for us, to another being, who is equally human. Someone summed up psychotherapy as a relationship between people, one of which, it is hoped, is less anxious than the other.

2

Like others of my generation, what little I knew about psychiatry, psychology and psychotherapy, was learned largely from the romantic movies of the 1930s and 40s. I assumed most psychiatrists were like Claude Raines who, in the 1942 film, Now Voyager, was the omniscient alienist who ran the splendid, pillared "sanitarium" and who rescued Bette Davis from her cold, repressed spinsterhood. Gentle but powerful in demeanor, he roamed the spacious lawns where patients sunned and would not dare to be difficult for fear they would be trundled off in the muscular arms of huge white—coated attendants.

I had to wait until I was in my early 30s, as a student in a class called "Psychiatric Information for Social Workers," before I entered the presence of a real—life psychiatrist. He did not have the elegance of manner of Claude Raines nor did he have the continental character of Dr. Freud. An adjunct professor and renowned consultant, he was appointed only to indoctrinate us with the fundamentals of classic psychoanalysis. And "information" is what we got: nothing we learned would ever raise us from the inferior status of the callow uninitiated. Put on notice to not even think about probing the black chasms of the psyche, our noses could only vicariously be pressed against the window of the unconscious. Our lecturer reveled in being the guardian of the creed, condescending to answer the few questions that were put to him if they were not challenging. The erotic elements of the Oedipus were his forte; that the young priest and a few nuns, also students, would show their unease by their deliberate retreat to their missals, seemed only to awaken more carnality in his lectures. I was persuaded that my professional place was to be on the mundane margins of the psyche, its deeper mysteries the exclusive domain of the medical eminence.

3.

It was not long after that I had the occasion, the need, to consult with such a specialist. It proved to be just the first stop of a journey through the psychiatric domain. I will use ordinal pseudonyms to preserve the anonymity of the players.

Dr. One: If there was something specific that compelled me to seek psychological help for the first time, it is now lost in the morass of failed memories of those overwrought years. Strains and demands there were aplenty. I was trying to catch up on my lost years (like other veterans of the second War, married with two children, and fast approaching my thirtieth year) by carrying a heavy class load and racing through the undergraduate curriculum in three years (making Phi Beta Kappa along the way). I supported my family with what driving a Yellow cab on weekends added to my GI Bill income. This meant that I was not only changing hats at a frantic pace but always trying to remember where I

left the last one. The least fitting of these hats was the newest one — the crown of the credentialed professional; hindsight tells me that was probably the source of my compelling anxieties.

Dr. One was perhaps a few years my senior and also Jewish — but far more secular, polished, and free of the graininess of my kind of immigrant breeding. The subdued grandeur of his office made me wonder: since there are kitchen and bath designers, is there also another sub—specialty of interior decorators of psychiatric consulting rooms who can create an ambiance august and splendid enough to persuade you that you are indeed in the presence of unquestionable authority. Dr. One was insulated by his desk; he lounged a bit with thumb and forefinger supporting his pensive face, just as Claude Raines did while listening to Bette Davis' hysterical ranting. Dr. One could not be called verbose, his activity restricted to punctuated questions including non sequiturs such as, "What makes you think you're intelligent?" Still, I make it easy for these silent therapeutic types: just give me the go ahead and I will fill any 50 minutes with abundant verbiage.

If you can think of psychotherapy as a duet of sorts then, if I may enlarge on this metaphor, my experiences with therapists sometimes turned out to be episodes of psychiatric musical chairs. After just a few sessions with Dr. One, chance put me — literally — in the driver's seat. On one of my taxi driving weekends, I was dispatched to pick up a customer who, as taken aback as I was, turned out to be Dr. One: in unison, "OH, it's YOU!" Then what do you say to your therapist/customer after, "Where to?" In the flat light of day and sunk into the seedy back seat of my old De Soto cab, he was something less than his practiced imposing self. He was obviously vulnerable, certainly awkward without his professional script. He could only lament about his nasty head cold which he ventured was probably psychosomatic "because, well ...um."

The irony of the event: because we had been willing actors in a scenario designed to create an appearance of intimacy — the controlled ambiance of the psychotherapy consulting room — we had no practice in conversing as ordinary mortals in an ordinary setting. I knew nothing about him; all he knew about me was what I thought he probably wanted to hear. The usual candor and artlessness of human conversation — my companionable banter with my other passengers, for example — were replaced by stricken self—consciousness. The term "impasse" took on new meaning. He paid me my fare. I never returned to pay his. I think we both knew why. Sadly, had we been free and loose enough to confront the irony, we could have made something good out of it.

Dr. Two: No uncertainty about the reasons for this cry for help: We, my family, were moving to Cleveland. I was choked by panic and self—doubt, but there was no going back on the choice.

According to the rules of higher education, I had become professionalized. But as I stood at the threshold of my career, it seemed that my professional education had been only a secular mockery of religious conversion: you go through the rituals, repeat the dogma, endure purification and solemnization, and then stand puzzled, credentials in hand, wondering, "Now what do I do?" Masters degree in my grasp, there were terrible moments when I was unsure whether I was equipped even to sit in the same room with a troubled client, never mind say anything helpful.

At first it seemed like a great, even heroic idea: find the social agency — wherever it happens to be — that promises excellent training and experience and, perhaps eventually, professional self—confidence. I didn't stop to wonder whether other heroic adventurers — Lewis and Clark, the Conestoga wagon pioneers, or Albert Schweitzer — worried about renting their homes, or had mothers—in—law who grimly tried to block the move, or weren't sure whether there were apartments available and affordable in Cleveland. But I took the entry—level position at a social agency of considerable repute; we really were moving to Cleveland. Suddenly the terror struck me: Why am I doing this? Find a psychiatrist quick. Now. And cheap.

The *Yellow Pages* yielded a doctor who met the immediate criteria. He agreed to see me at a cut—rate price. I entered his well—appointed but hermetically silent waiting room, aware after a few moments that all I was hearing was my own anxious breathing. Softly, the office door opened and I was motioned in.

If this young analyst were

striving to meet the rules of anonymity of the Freudian persuasion — the idea that the therapist acts as a blank screen upon which the patient will project (according to the tenets of "transference") his id feelings and impressions — he did so with flying colors (well, with flying shades of gray). The scene, the doctor, and the 50 minutes were leaden and somber. I spilled the froth of my deep cup of fears but my words evaporated into his dutifully taken notes. If he said anything during that short hour, all that ever got conveyed that stays with me was that the time was up. He pointed to another door — not the one I entered — which led me into a small vestibule and then the street. (He made sure that his patients could not meet and therefore contaminate the cloister of analysis.) I stood on busy Westwood Boulevard, flummoxed about the last hour's monologue; still in awe of high priests and experts, I figured something had happened that perhaps I hadn't caught onto yet; at least the enigma was distracting enough to allow me to forget the panic for the time. What he might have said that would have made a difference, I'm not sure. Still, from his years of training and personal analysis, had he offered some Freudian equivalent of, "You'll be OK," I would have welcomed that.

Two winters in Cleveland proved my (our) talents for survival. I don't think I learned how to do anything seismic from my true mentor and supervisor, Loutilla; her impatience, however, with my well—learnt, working class, upwardly mobile awe of and obeisance to self—proclaimed authority allowed me to begin to confess to my own cynicism. She herself,

freud

a single, middle-aged, rotund brown lady had, of course, battled every breed of bigotry and brute power; her ability to cut incisively through pretension and sham was virtually surgical. Who better to disabuse me of such reverence than she who had trained and practiced, if not at the feet of Freud, then at those of another of his disciples: her career bore her impressions of some years at the esteemed Menninger Foundation. She lent me a parable, her story about a training session led by a bombastic psychiatrist who was lecturing a rapt audience (except for Loutilla). Loutilla was at that moment searching the deeper corners of her purse for a fresh pack of cigarettes, the perfect illustration of what the analyst was trying to drive home. "There it is," he beamed, pointing to Loutilla's arm churning the contents of her purse, "there's a good example of sublimated masturbatory tendencies." Loutilla slowly —very slowly — removed the elusive pack, looked the great doctor right in the eye, and firmly assured him that "Doc, when I'm looking for cigarettes, I'm looking for cigarettes. When I masturbate, I masturbate."

Dr. Three: My brief misadventure with Dr. Three and a dream stirred by our therapeutic alliance led to another step forward toward a greater trust in the authority of my own perceptions and judgments. Nothing acute that I can recall compelled me to call on him other than this was still the time when it was believed you couldn't be a really good therapist if you didn't have your own therapy (a truly elite therapist would have been in long—term, if not eternal, psychoanalysis). Also, that he was on the staff of the county hospital meant that his fees were reasonable for a first— year social worker.

Dr. Three always sat with legs propped upon his desk; I had a closer view of his soles than his face, although from the twitch of his eyebrow and the nod of his head, I could catch the clue that I should keep on talking. His pen and pad were at the ready and I tried to figure out whether I had uttered something meaningful or inane by carefully watching when he did and did not inscribe something I said. At any rate, I came to suspect that his impassive, silent reaction to my chatter was again perhaps the veneer of his analytic techniques. I also toyed with the idea that perhaps he had nothing to say.

The symbolic and rather obvious dream occurred a few weeks into the experience and, as I look back, it was a kind of literary gift to him: at that point I was not especially forthcoming about some troubling matters. The context in the dream was a prison; Dr. Three was its warden and I was a prisoner. He lived on the grounds with his family. I was a prison trusty, my responsibility to care for the grounds of his home and provide other services. The warden, it seemed, was oblivious of me, didn't know who I was, and so I was free to come and go, even

leave the walls of the prison without risk of penalty. His reaction to my telling of the dream was just another moue and a meager hint of a smile. I think he was amused; he should have understood. Or at least he might have asked.

Dr. Four: Some 20 years passed before I had the need or occasion to commune with Dr. Four. In those two decades I had divorced, remarried, divorced, and remarried again, taught in four universities — on the west coast, the south, Canada, and the Midwest — and in the meanwhile finally earned my doctorate. Clearly, there was enough psychological cargo to unload during these migrations — but I assure you that during this time I was not entirely seized by mania, instability, or capriciousness. Psychological help is not always necessary at such critical, even cataclysmic, times of choice and action: there are times when you need to discover your own strengths and the values of relationships more profound than the therapeutic. I must admit that my experience with my previous, brusque, two—doored analyst encouraged such thinking. Then too, psychiatric services in the deep south were not an inviting prospect since even ordinary surgical services in that (then) medical backwater nearly did me in. And while teaching in Canada, I was truly dismayed when a fairly well—glued client I referred to a psychiatrist for consultation barely escaped involuntary commitment. The psychiatrist turned out to be a green card holder who, because of his unfamiliarity with the native idiom, intended to hospitalize my client as a hallucinating psychotic when she casually mentioned, "When I have to make a speech, I feel like I have butterflies in my belly."

Although I vacated the patient's chair in the therapeutic duet during those years, I was never far removed from the view of therapists at work and at play. Two practitioners of the psychic arts — one, real, the other theatrical — lent me an image of what I came to value as the effective — the humanistic — psychotherapist. By "humanistic" I mean a helper who is spontaneously and openly responsive to the here—and—now of meaning and being and responsibility, to strength, spirit, and resilience, to what might be rather than what might have been, and to the pathological defenses and defects that shrink the human soul.

The first, Vince, a rangy, strong—fibered man, was much too earthy and real to think of himself as such an ideal or as omniscient in any way. He would have agreed with Saul Bellow's commentary in *The Dean's December:* "Psycho-analysis(sic) pretends to investigate the Unconscious. The Unconscious by definition is what you are not conscious of. But the analysts already know what's in it — they should because they put it all in beforehand."

Vince was our agency's consultant and soon became a friend and colleague. He was unassuming, even artless; you quickly learned to forgive the absence of jargon and heed his wisdom. Consider that the time was the early Sixties, just before the ascendance of client—centered, existential, or other Third Force, humanistic psychotherapies. Unlike most consultant/experts, he joined our agency's case discussions as an active learner, respecting presenters' firsthand authority about their cases. Vince's easy comfort with uncertainty and ambiguity leavened our insistent search for final answers and impressive diagnoses; they would, he cautioned, only short circuit the attempt to get a sense of the ever—changing, even temperamental, qualities of the wider world of the client.

His orthodox psychiatric training (also including some years at Menninger Clinic) cannot explain (and in fact was antipathetic to) his natural, here—we—are manner of joining up with his patients in a journey for meaning. I could identify with his communal ways of being with people: perhaps it had something to do with our respective immigrant parents' Old Country stories and values. Even here, however, Vince was an oddity: where Jews of Eastern European origins were well represented within the helping professions, the same could not be said about first generation Sicilians, such as he was. Indirectly, Vince taught me that it was possible to be properly respectful to one's mentors and their elegant

theories, but that it was within the plain prose and boundless meanings of patients' lives where you learn how to be of help.

It was delightful to soon come across a cinematic rendering of Vince's style of the humanistic psychiatrist—in—action, to see it in its dramatic forms. A British film, "The Mark," produced about that time, the early Sixties, portrayed a court-related psychiatrist (played by Rod Steiger) treating a released sexual offender. Virtually sacrilegious in its reversion of the priestly, restrained role of the therapist, this shirt-sleeved, tieless psychiatrist occupied an office — a loft — barren except for an old desk, a few chairs, and a water cooler. He was loudly impatient with his professional victim's self-serving, fine—tuned treatise on "what made me do it," circling, moving, challenging, but with such caring ardor that he would settle for nothing less than his patient's admission of his own worth and moral conscience. If this were psychotherapy, it was something far more open, full-blooded, without posture and affectation than the textbook or professional image revealed; it was the use of a beneficent authority not to cure but to free virtue and character by inviting the same plain matter-of-factness.

Human relationships are, by nature, metaphors of existence; beyond structure they are fully known, I say again, by the satire, pathos, and whimsy they embody and, not the least, irony. And irony indeed was the likeness of my relations with Drs. Five A and B. As it happened, our therapeutic chairs were switched: I was the therapist or, as they preferred, a marital counselor, and they — a sadly mismatched pair, husband and wife — were my patients.

Drs. Five A and B: Because of its "man bites dog" genre, it is doubtful this story would sell as fiction; it is, however, a tale that needs no inventing. Dr. Five (I will henceforth call him Ted) had briefly brushed through my life some 15 years before this turn of fate. About the same age, I was then a self-conscious apprentice completing my second year of field practicum at a Child Guidance Clinic in Los Angeles. Ted was already a rising star, at least a locally recognized expert in child psychiatry. In case conferences, Ted took charge, crisply stamping each case with his diagnostic imprint. It was said that he had already published a few articles on child therapy and was going places.

Now it is on the brink of the Seventies in Southern California, karma flourishes, and Ted and I are improbable neighbors: my family counseling office is around the corner from his child psychiatry practice. Again improbably, we happen to meet at the local chicken pie restaurant (I had to reintroduce myself and remind him of our previous association) and other lunch meetings followed. It was apparent from his languor and mood that Ted's promising brilliance had dulled considerably. By common measures, he was certainly successful: his practice was secured by a long waiting list for his services; his wife, El, was also a psychiatrist at the local mental hospital; their lovely home had one of the more exclusive and pricey ocean views; they had two sons. But the symptoms of middle—age vegetation were apparent. Super diagnostic skills were not required to see that lethargy, corpulence, and cynicism had progressively replaced his former joie de vivre, his ambitions. The irony here is that although the heart of Ted's practice had withered, he could still intervene in the lives of his young patients with the indifferent technical tools of his specialty.

Soon, Ted asked if he might refer some of his young patients' parents to me for counseling. He left me to gather that, while he wasn't exceptionally thrilled to spend his therapy days with whiny little people, their parents were beyond his sufferance. Not long after, he mentioned in passing that he and El might want to try marital counseling with me: "things weren't . . . well . . . I don't know . . ."

His diagnosis was an understatement if not entirely a euphemism. He could scarcely reflect on, find words for, the shambles of their marriage. Nor could I stir a trace of hope, or ambition, or lust, or despair in his bland weekly recitations of the indifferent this's and that's of everyday life. He had, he admitted, earned his one reward: his 11 months of practice allowed him to travel in August with his sons to other lands. And El? My few meetings with her proved her locution to be beyond the language of ordinary mortals. The standard opening therapeutic gambit, "How did it go last weekend?" was met with a shrug of dismissal and, "The same. Ted obsessed the whole time." Had I been misreading Ted? I asked her to explain. Impatiently: "He obsessed. What

can I say? He repaired the lawnmower, fixed the washer, replaced the water filter . . . "

Ted taught me much; the troubling circumstances in my life were raw enough at that time to assure I would be an eager learner. Every session was a rerun of his aimless and wretched life; he could not ask himself the questions he routinely asked his patients — even the trite, "How do you feel about that?" And so, what for some of us would be suffering and frustration for him was, well, humdrum. Gradually — in my eyes — Ted became a sad, overweight puppet on a loop of film running through the same motions and words forever. But for me, at least, he was an all—too familiar figure — a forewarning of my own destiny, all things considered. Unwittingly, Ted had achieved his best as a therapist merely by being just what he was. What he had become in his life was a warning that it was getting time for me to move out and on. I soon did.

Another act, another story, another year. By the Manual, it was Depression (but not in my own idiom) that led me again to reclaim the patient's chair. Explaining the "why?" of anything (especially sour moods) does not take much of a bent for storytelling for anyone to weave a fascinating plot to explain and justify any twist of mind and behavior. The account could be as romantic as a Gothic tale about my battle with my creative demons or as down-to-earth as a bleak account of life in the grimy, dismal winters peculiar to Cleveland; in any case, the mood, albeit distressing, did not notably handicap life in general. My own diagnostic preference, since the intermittent angst has lasted and resisted the best of pharmacology, self-help treatises, and the interventions of specialists, is "gridzh." Sounding like it feels, it is a peculiarly Yiddish idiom for an inner sense of gnawing or nagging or grinding — located, in my case, in the "kishkes." The last means the guts, but loses some of its depth in the translation. My Gridzh was sometimes my fretful visitor during dark moments of sleeplessness; more dependably, he was awake to greet me at the first moments of the new day. Pay heed, our fastidious catalogers of psychic disorders: to assume that the diagnosis of depression or any other condition of mind is as universal as, say, the diagnosis of appendicitis or bronchitis ignores the energies of culture, the power of ethnic disease.

By the frequency with which my trusted family doctor used the term, "geriatric" (even Sixty was yet — albeit not too far — ahead) he apparently had other ideas. He asked me to try an antidepressant ("Don't worry, it's only a geriatric dose") that immediately dropped me into a nonfunctioning, soporific state. A referral to a therapist "who specializes in geriatrics" followed. He was Doctor Six.

Dr. Six: Except for the absence of a little mustache, he was hardly distinguishable from the decades earlier Doctor Three, the warden of my dream. I recall his waiting room and office, tastefully done in tan and gold tones, muted as I would expect such a tranquil setting to be except for a number of eye-catching artifacts: photographs and models of World War II fighter aircraft including my favorite P-51 Mustangs and P—38 Lightnings. Based on his demeanor when I acclaimed the wonder of these unusual ornaments, the doctor seemed to be far more excited by his hobby of collecting and flying these vintage aircraft than listening to other people's sorrows, judging from his very temperate reaction to non-aeronautical complaints. We had some good war stories to talk about; he was particularly intrigued about my memory of the extremely welcome sightings of P-38s in flight during another South Pacific island invasion.

But as we got back to the more earthbound nature of my depression, so did his professional reserve; the image of a dashing pilot gave way to the man in the three-piece suit. During the few sessions allowed by my medical plan, my second book was hot off the press. With hope for a little lift and praise (or "support" as we call it), I autographed a copy and placed it in his hands. He mumbled something about the cover, expressed thanks, and that was the last I heard about it. I understand a little better the caveat about giving gifts to or taking them from your therapist: either way, you are left with an unresolvable paradox should a genuine response not follow. As my Old Country grandmother would say: "If you already have to ask, it's no good."

The budding realization that me and my pal, The Gridzh, were kind of stuck with one another persuaded me that I had used up the time and assets of the therapy. Indeed, there were the

grand mornings when I would awaken and, from my very bearable lightness of being, know he had taken leave; I also understood that sooner or later there would be another homecoming.

The recent coming of the Prozac era and its inescapable claims in word, picture, and sound of its veritable psychomagic — its potentials for dissolving depression by chemical means and liberating one's essential spirits — excited the idea that perhaps my moody in-dweller was merely a case of chemistry at work. It was not entirely a new idea: I was long disenchanted by theories of psyche and behavior that floated in some mystic or cryptic fashion, disengaged from the real matter and control of brain and mind: speaking about "unconscious motivations," for example, is as admissible as the assumption that your auto's ignition system is endowed with its own predeterminations and intentions. This much can be said: consciousness, thought, memory, and recall are, of course, subjective functions of the mind; they are also manifestations of neurotransmitters and therefore chemical processes of the brain. I did my homework and asked my family physician to refer me to a psychiatrist knowledgeable about pharmacological therapies.

And so enters Dr. Seven, a pleasant man in his early 40s wearing the prototypal beard; he deserves only brief mention. Always attired in suit (or sport coat) and tie, the discount store cut and quality of his attire hinted at an income something less than his private practice colleagues. His office down the hall from the psychiatric ward of the local hospital was furnished in standard gray metal, personalized slightly by some photos of his family and a few out-of-date psychiatric texts, relics of his residency. He was usually late, and in the grim, cramped waiting room piled with old *Newsweeks* and *Redbooks* and pharmaceutical flyers on Depression, I would fill the time imagining him as the Good M&M Fairy, tossing pink and blue and yellow and red wonder pills to the disturbed cast of characters certified by the latest *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual*. One positive thing can be said about him: he candidly admitted he really didn't know that much. Psychotherapy was beyond his ken, "But I think there is a good social worker or psychologist I could refer you to if you're interested."

Nor was he too sure about his pharmacological specialty. His authority on meds and the mind seemed to be based on some trial and error experiences ("I had pretty good luck with lithium"), data from the *Physician's Desk Reference*, and advice of the detail men, the sales people representing the various pharmaceutical distributors. I got the fairly standard, "Well, we're really not sure how it works" from him when I pressed him about chemistry of the brain.

He prescribed an alternative to Prozac that had immediate effects: bug-eyed insomnia. Another drug was less dramatic but not noticeably analeptic and so he suggested adding still others that required periodic checks of my kidneys. My hopeful attitude was the placebo that worked for a while. Also, our monthly sessions were pleasant diversions; for him, they seemed to be entertaining breaks in his otherwise workaday world of dementias. He stretched back in his chair as we chatted about my work, the latest word in popular psychology, and so on — even chuckling at times about some of my more preposterous misadventures.

After five or six months of biochemical diddling, the finale came. My inner anxieties and moods seemed almost chimerical when I was awakened to the existence of a far more serious physical, possibly fatal, symptom. It was necessary to cancel my next appointment with Dr. Seven when I was scheduled for consultation at a distant specialized clinic. I asked for another appointment; my panic begged for a sympathetic ear, something more than our former conviviality. Dr. Seven never returned my urgent calls. I don't know why.

Dr. Eight: With the medical problem no longer as urgent and aware that the previous experiment was, to say the least, inconclusive, it seemed only fair to give the meds another try. It took some perseverance to start with since I had to spend six weeks dangling on the end of his waiting list but finally entered the presence of Dr. Eight. This chap looked more newly minted than his predecessor, but far less buttoned—down; attired in L. L. Bean hiking boots, cord trousers, and an open—necked shirt, he was rather outdoorsy. Still, he insisted on wearing the badge of his profession, a crisp white medical jacket on which was embroidered his name and below, the label PSYCHIATRIST. I had no doubts

about who he was; I hoped he was as sure. Other than feeling a slight qualm, noticing that every door had apparently been refitted with large brass locks, his waiting room was tastefully designed and furnished, recent copies of *The New Yorker* and *Smithsonian* neatly stacked on end tables. His consulting room included a large partially screened desk where he answered phone calls, wrote his records, and signed insurance forms. The talking treatment took place in the small but gracious seating area, just large enough to hold a small family. One's gaze might be drawn to an Ansel Adams poster or an attractive plant or a bowl of mints but what couldn't be missed was any one of the room's four clocks — two digital, an analog, and neon — each strategically placed.

Dr. Eight greeted me with a smile, a handshake firm enough to remind me that my sprained finger had not yet healed, and asked a few questions to orient himself about how I happened to be there. And then expectant silence; it was for me to cast the first die.

His manner radiated an aura of scientific confidence, an assured expertise about pharmacology and the brain. He was even more instructive when, after he continued to escalate the dosage, I felt no discernible change in mood. More as instruction than explanation, he assured me that because of the structural changes that had to take place in neurotransmitters, it usually took six weeks for the sprouting of first signs of relief; I wondered how some severely depressed soul living on the desperate fringe of hope would deal with the news, "Hey! Only six more weeks of black despair!"

At any rate, the story grows thin and repetitive. We reached an unspoken impasse: Dr. Eight tried but could not convince me that the "condition" he was trying to treat was an abstract mood disorder listed in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual; I, in turn, tried to inform him that my moods — no matter where they were on his scale — were mine and legitimate. Even if one didn't watch CNN News twice a day, the cricks and cramps of getting old, the increasingly unwelcome reminders of mortality, the undeniably frequent funerals of friends and family, our children and grandchildren spread over creation; the isolation of the state of emeritus from former professorial status and collegial stimulation, and other unsettling circumstances were surely likely to disorder the best of my — anyone's — moods every now and then if not frequently. I tried to tell him, like my grandmother said, that is life, and that is where we should have started. That is where understanding begins. Where I am.

4.

Before I verbally boarded this psychotherapeutic carousel, I said this account should be considered an allegory in contrast with or even as an adjunct to the conventional body of controversial literature on the nature and methods of psychotherapy. It is the symbolic essence and meaning that count here, more so than the "truths" of my experience or "what really happened." Whatever really happened in my therapeutic ventures was overshadowed or displaced by the ironies that shaped and colored these events. The postscript (or in the now popular nomenclature subtext) of this narrative is that any helping experience is, in itself, one defined and marked by its ironies — however it begins and however it turns out.

Let me explain. Irony occurs when there is contrast — or better, incongruity — between what is expected and how things turn out. The perceptive helper knows that when people voluntarily seek professional help for whatever reason — painfully personal or practical — they usually entertain some assumption about what is wrong and what needs fixing; when others are compelled to do the same, their expectations are likely to be less hopeful if not antagonistic. If these incongruities are not respected and, in some ways, harmonized, things begin to get bungled and especially ironic when felt or expressed attributions of "resistance," "hard—to—reach," or "hostile" begin to intrude.

Now to the broader implications that I promised at the outset. The ability to recognize the ironic nature of human affairs is a sure test of what we consider the best attributes of the genuine helper: sensitivity, responsiveness, openness to ambiguity and metaphor, wit, an appreciation of paradox, and other humanistic traits. He or she understands that people don't "present problems" like the patient with acne or nephritis or the householder with a leaky basement; rather, they are fellow beings who find them-

selves beset by ironic outcomes — if not tragedies — even though they tried to do what they at least believed was the sincere "right thing." The irony may be dramatic (the loyal employee who is suddenly a victim of being downsized); poignant (who will care for the aging parent who unexpectedly recovered from a fatal illness?); mocking or bitter or brutal (divorce, abuse, and child—custody cases); and on the other side, even comic or romantic. Not the least, there is the peculiar irony of psychotherapy when distress in these arts and skills of living is subjected to the protocols of systems of change or the science of behavior.

Thus, whatever psychotherapy stands for, and whether it is focused on practical predicaments, providing for certain adversities, or the search for lost meanings, it is, broadly put, an event touched by drama and story of ironic proportions. When we dig into a good novel or biography or make up the audience of a play, we ordinarily do not have at our side a text on literary criticism to resort to for guidance on how to analyze what we are reading or observing. Nor do we require a blocked out structure of plot and characters. It would be gratuitous for me to tell you how you read a book or observe a play. The British author, Angela Carter, put it well: "Reading a book is like rewriting it for yourself . . . You bring to a novel anything you read, all your experience of the world. You bring your history and you read it in your terms." There is, of course, a difference between the personal ways we read or observe in our terms and the professional obligation to make responsible judgments, the reasonings that guide what we do. Knowledge and training and skill are essential: the question is, how do we find balance?.

What the distinguished political scientist, Sir Isaiah Berlin, has to say about excellence in political judgment pertains equally to psychological judgment.[2] Challenging the intrusion of the pure sciences and its universalities and laws into matters of human concern and judgment, he acknowledges that to be a good doctor, or gardener, or cook, or safe to say, therapist, requires a theoretical background. But how to apply a theory to specific cases — a particularly sick patient, spring garden, catered affair, or troubled family requires personal experience and a special art and aptitude that, in some instances, may overrule or disarm the theory. Berlin argues that even laws based on a large collection of empirical data or on hypothetico—deductive methods are not readily applicable to the complexity, the variousness, and peculiarities of human affairs. The art that cannot be taught (but can be learned), the gift that is not altogether unlike that of artists and creative writers, is not occult or magical but is:

*a capacity for integrating a vast amalgam of constantly changing, multicolored, evanescent, perpetually overlapping data, too many, too swift, too intermingled to be caught and pinned down and labeled like so many individual butterflies. . .a gift akin to that of some novelists, that. . .convey a sense of direct acquaintance with the texture of life ... of what matters from the rest ... it is a sense of what is qualitative rather than quantitative, of what is specific rather than general. . . it is what is called natural wisdom, imaginative understanding, insight, perceptiveness, and more misleadingly, intu*ition.[3]

From yet another field, music and arts, Albert Murray, a man of letters, a student of American culture and jazz speaks about his quarrel with the social sciences as the basis for education:

Oversimplification of motive. Questionable underlying assumptions. The social function of literature, of all art, is to help the individual come to terms with himself upon the earth, to help him confront the deepest, most complex questions of life. . .If you deal with sociological concepts, you never deal with the basic complexity of life. You reduce everything to social and political problems. . . .When you look at the deeper and much more complicated personal problems, you'll find the oldest answers are still the answers. There's nothing outdated about fairy tales, about legends, about the religious holy books, and so forth. When you know how to decode them and apply them to your life — well, you approach wisdom...[3]

As I have argued[4] elsewhere irrespective of the credibility that may be attributed to knowledge, theory, and skill, the arts and humanities deserve attention as a valuable means for tempering and humanizing our methods, for drawing closer to this wisdom. Let us say that the professional credentials earned by the initiate are, at best, a passport for a journey that is launched only when the newly minted practitioner steps out of the abstractions of the classroom and into the real world of clients. Ideally, the lec-

ture hall has prepared practitioners to acquire knowledge and, even more, to think and act in analytic and reflective terms; still, as Berlin [2] claims, the academe cannot prepare them to anticipate the remarkable exorbitance of thought, feeling, behavior, the variability of values and beliefs, the rigidities and resignation, and myriad other particulars of being human even in its most ordinary sense. Reliance largely on the promises of science and theory can only dull creative acuities and sensibilities, and worst of all, impede the emergence of the mark of whatever we might call effectiveness — and that is personal style. A term that does — and should — resist definition, style is, for each person, a seamless synthesis of self, experience, and knowledge and, more, a deep caring for one's subject matter. Simply, it is one's professional signature that never lets the client forget that he or she is in consort with a vital, authentic human being. All in the metièr of the arts and humanities, one's style might at times resemble the editor who helps clients rewrite their narrative, the accompanist who provides the harmonic background for clients' solo attempts at expression, or the conductor who makes sure everyone is reading the same page.,

Where and how the humanities might be integrated into standard curricula is a challenging question.[5] But you who are curious and seek, who are taken with the art and style of helping, who remain in wonder about the ironies and paradoxes that characterize anyone's life, who have a sense that at the heart of everything are more questions than answers, may need to make your own special choices: what are the humanistic ideals, the philosophy of change, the orientation to how one works with people that fit and enhance your perspective? Saul Bellows, the modern novelist, recommends the many poets, novelists, and dramatists who "give new eyes to human beings, inducing them to view the world differently, converting them from fixed modes of experience." [6]

Perhaps an historical turn should be the first step, a profession's epistemological story. We like to think that prevailing educational systems and protocols of practice, perspectives on humanity, have evolved in rational ways, the consequence of dependable proofs and in accord with standards of technological growth. Not so. This narrative will not prove to be a romantic account of battles of wills or of revolutionary ideas but more of the helter—skelter influences of personalities, politics, transient fads, and ongoing empiricist—humanist debates[7]

Since our engagement in the storied lives of irony, hope, need, and courage is our forte, I suggest the values of autobiography. The poetry of Anne Sexton and selected essays or novels of Seymour Krim,[8] who, having been psychiatric patients, offer firsthand reflections that have no equivalent in standard mental health texts. At the other end of the autobiographical and biographical spectrum are insights into the lives of the masters whose ideas we have inherited, a vast library of often contentious and factious biographies of Freud, Jung, Sullivan, and other magisterial analysts And if you feel uneasy about the received wisdom, the ethics, the assumptions underlying psychotherapy, there are veritable shelves of incisive, sometimes biting, criticism including the work of Thomas Szasz. There is an endless harvest in the arts and humanities when it comes to reflections on and the meanings of critical moments of change, growth or regression among individuals, families, and communities: psychotherapy serves as a marvelous foil for writers, critics, philosophers — particularly those who see the pathos, irony, and even comedy when the scientific pretensions of psychotherapy and the proletarian miseries of being human trip over one another. These suggestions aside, the joys of your travels in the humanities are guided by your individual inspirations and motives, about what you want to know, what inspires you, as well as what you are officially required to know.

5.

My proposal about the significance of the arts and humanities for how we attempt to make sense of and work within the world of experience of our clients will, I hope, add to and support the scanty literature on this topic. In addition to Maxine Green's early article on deepening understanding of moral dilemmas through the use of novels, Hugh England's thoughtful book and Max Siporin and Mark Kaminsky's articles deserve your attention.[9]

The question that began this essay, "What really happened?" might well serve as a substitute for the "Conclusion" that ordinarily closes an article. Since my intention was to speak to the significance, meaning, and vitality of the humanities, it struck me that it would be slightly inconsistent if not incongruous to employ the familiar and sober structure, composition, and syntax of the social sciences to make this point. Thus, I wrapped my advice in a few of the styles of the humanities — the essay, narrative, autobiography, and allegory. The risk in using this style is that the readers is not taken by the hand and instructively led through the article and its conclusions as is the case with research reports or standard scholarly treatises. The reader may righteously be left with the question, "What really happened?"

My best conclusion is to underscore the importance of this question by topping off this essay with two rhetorical examples — one academic, the other poetic. Although both in their respective ways deal with the grief about the impending end of life, they are equally pertinent to any profoundly personal human circumstance wherein What does it really mean? What really matters? Are fundamental questions.

The first is an article published in a professional journal concerned with issues of aging and dying.[10] Very thoughtfully presented, the authors not only identify the "variables" that might influence the "grief process" including "stigma," "multiple losses," and "psychosocial death," also show how each variable calls for special tasks. As the stages of the chronic illness are outlined, the reader is given, in effect, a map of the dying field and thus, from the outside looking in, useful guidance as to what to look for and what to do. But to what extent is this objective, structural approach sufficient? How can the helper whose ordinary mission is the enrichment of the vitality and quality of life grasp the meaning — the deeply personal, subjective state — of something as bizarre as the inescapable experience of one's slow dance with death?

Listen to an excerpt of a poem, "Message to Myself," written by Esther Fibush, herself a social work psychotherapist, author,[11] and poet — and as she had been for me, a frequent source of inspiration — at the time she first learned she was stricken with a terminal illness. □

Letting go cannot be done
with the flick of the wrist,
like tossing salt over one's shoulder
to ward off evil.
Oh no, it is done with great pain like
giving birth,
or the slow death of a long illness.

Letting go is preparation
for a burial — ones own,
digging the grave oneself,
day after day, night after night:
A laborious rehearsal, over and over
again, until one has become letter-
perfect
for the final performance.

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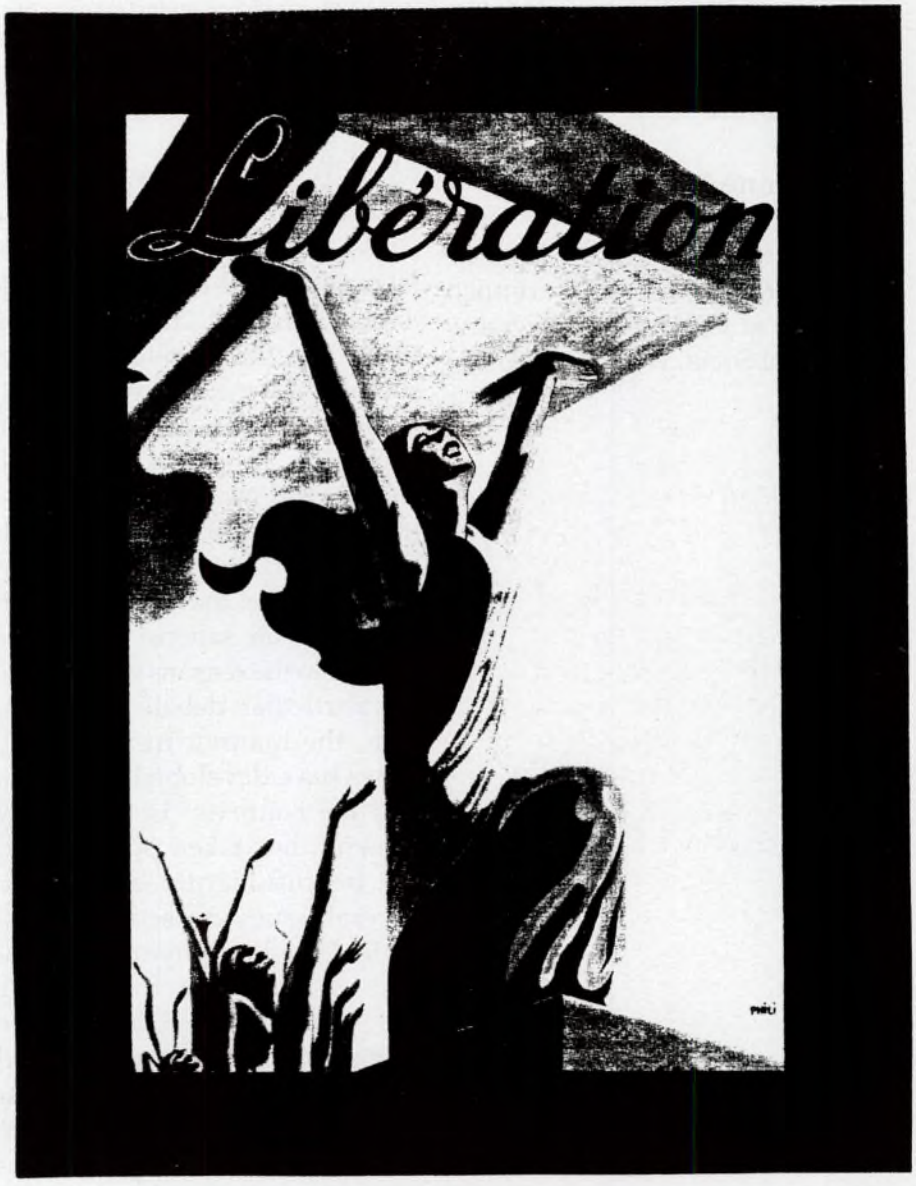

IS SOCIAL WORK A LIAISON ACTIVITY? A PROFESSIONAL DEBATE, OF SORTS

The debate I address is one with which I have struggled since I decided to become a social worker: How is social work to be defined, and what characterizes the social worker's activity and purpose? My thinking related to the nature of social work has its roots in my upbringing in Scotland and my education and social work practice in London and New York. Tracing the development of my ideas might appear self-indulgent. However, understanding this process might enable me to grapple with the history of internal debate and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of my position. Without reference to the development of my thinking over time, my position within the context of the professional debate is not made fully explicit.

By Yvonne M. Johnson

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FOREWORD

The following debate was to be presented in the usual academic manner. The debate was to be depicted as follows: first, a summary of the opposing views; second, a critique of the positions; and third, an evaluation of the weaknesses inherent in my particular stance. Such an approach is, no doubt, adequate. However, I began to feel that this approach had severe limitations. Questions related to the reasons why I chose this particular debate for discussion, the manner in which my views have developed over time, and the contexts in which my thinking has taken place would not be sufficiently addressed. Several issues crossed my mind while I tried to construct this paper.

I remembered applying to Columbia University School of Social Work. When I applied for a place in the doctoral program (I am now in my third year), I was asked to outline my reasons for pursuing doctoral education. I remember trying to summarize my reasons for applying and what I hoped to gain. Now in my third practice course, I am aware that this is the final course in my area of specialization. Despite there being no requirement to write an essay that readdresses the questions raised in my application to the school, I feel that this is an opportune occasion to reflect on what I hoped to gain and to evaluate my development thus far. Am I any clearer in my thinking about what I conceive to be the nature of social work? Have I taken the opportunity that doctoral education allows to consolidate my practice-wisdom as well as my critical thinking on professional issues?

The reader might wonder in what ways the topic of this paper relates to reflection on my professional development. The answer is quite simple. The debate that I will address is one with which I have struggled since I decided to become a social worker: How is social work to be defined, and what characterizes the social worker's activity and purpose? My thinking related to the nature of social work has its roots in my upbringing in Scotland and my education and social work practice in London and New York. Tracing the development of my ideas might appear self-indulgent. However, understanding this process might enable me to grapple with the history of internal debate and evalu-

ate the strengths and weaknesses of my position. Without reference to the development of my thinking over time, my position within the context of the professional debate is not made fully explicit.

I note, with interest, that journal articles rarely address such issues. It is as though an investigation of the author's thinking is "unscientific" or, at least, hardly scholarly. This belief appears mirrored in the split in the social welfare literature. Professionals are permitted to explore the development of their thinking and describe their experiences in the journal *Reflections*, but the professional's more "scholarly" work (usually devoid of the personal) is reserved for other journals (e.g., *Social Service Review* and *Social Work*). Although postmodern thinking connects reader to text, and researcher to person under study, there continues to be, in my view, a split between the personal and academic. This gives the impression that the personal and the academic exist in separate spheres. They obviously do not. Without the personal interest, not to say excitement, that a topic holds for an author, no academic work would be done. Without the development of ideas, no formulations would exist. I am aware that my thinking on whether social work can be characterized as liaison was not suddenly formulated in my recent past. (Or is it fully articulated or in its final form!) As Mannheim points out, thought does not take place in a timeless vacuum, but is "always bound up with the existing life situation of the thinker" (Mannheim quoted in Geertz, 1973, p. 194).

I will trace the history of my thinking on the nature of social work, presenting it in the form of an imaginary debate. The debate draws on the discussions I have had with others and my personal and professional experience, and elaborates on the issues that have framed my academic development. I hope that this format will bring the debate alive, allowing for alternative perspectives on the questions raised, and that a more rounded picture of my position will result.

A DEBATE, OF SORTS

Most of the diners had left the American Hotel, and only those staying overnight remained. A few residents, after a superb meal, wandered through to the lounge for coffee and brandy. A group of three, Evelyn, George, and Yvonne, headed for the three comfortable chairs by the fire. A healthy looking fire too — it looked as though it would go all night. Yvonne hoped the fire might not last that long. The family had a habit of starting a debate and not throwing in the towel till the early hours. "Well, here's the waiter with the coffee and drinks, so no harm in having that nightcap," Yvonne thought.

Evelyn: You'll be writing that dissertation soon. What was it you were saying — you've nearly finished with course work?

Yvonne: Yes, I'm in my last practice class.

E: You know, after all these years, I have to admit, I really don't know what made you choose social work as a career. What a job. Not that I have much idea about what social workers actually do!

Y: Join the club!

George: Now, Yvonne, come on. You can't be serious! You're studying for your Ph.D. in the subject. Don't tell me you don't know what social workers do!

Y: Well, I might have an idea, but there is a lot of debate in the profession about how we define social work. (Tries to avoid getting into this debate.) You know something about Aberdeen made me go into social work.

E: Goodness, first I've heard!

Y: I think bumping into all the alcoholics, no matter the time of day, made me wonder what had happened to them. (Thinking: An event can be important despite its drab features and everyday-feel. That it should occur on an afternoon shopping expedition in downtown Aberdeen, Scotland, when I was about seven years old is noteworthy! I was walking down a street with Evelyn and we came across a drunk in a doorway. He was unconscious, and we stepped out of the way to avoid his slumped body and the stream of urine trickling down the pave-

ment. Given the prevalence of alcoholism in Scotland, this wasn't the first or last drunk we'd come across. What was surprising was that a conversation ensued between E. and myself after she had grabbed me by the arm to cross the street. I wondered what had happened to him, and I asked E. what she thought. I cannot recall her exact words, but I remember the general drift of her reply. E's view was that the cause of the drunk's problems resided with him alone. I knew at once that I did not share her views. I could not see how anything related to his character had anything to do with his plight. This view stayed pretty much intact over many years. I think I stubbornly refused to allow issues related to personality to enter this picture, and only gradually allowed for such factors.)

E: Oh, yes, the poor drunks! Yvonne still seems to have more sympathy for them than she does for those who show some restraint.

G: Well, if you're down on your luck and on the streets, you might spend your money on drink. (Much in accordance with Samuel Johnson's [(1709-1784)] views, but exact quotation not found.)

E: (Looking at the glowing fire) Speaking of Aberdeen, this wee place reminds me of our guest house, don't you think?

Y: Do you remember one of the first people who stayed with us — the social worker? She didn't stay long, but she left that book behind, and I still have it! It is Ferard and Hunnybun's *The Caseworker's Use Of Relationships* (1962). I rather liked this book when I was a child. (I was around nine years old and I would read the case vignettes, the only parts I could really grasp. I discovered that social workers worked with the poor, and, no doubt, the drunks I had seen.) Of course, I now think that the authors of that book are wrong about what social workers do — they thought that social work was defined by casework that concentrated on the individual's psychological problems. They employed a psychoanalytic perspective with the aim of helping the client develop insight into his/her problems.

G: You've started now! If these authors got it wrong, then maybe you can say who defines social work better. Let's hear you answer Evelyn's question, after all — what is social work?

Y: (Thinking: This is hard. Socratic dialogues appear easy. Yet, when Socrates asked, "What is justice?" for example, the interlocutor would try to answer simply, and make a fool of himself. In a similar vein, answering the question, "What is social work?" appears easy, but it is not.) It's not an easy question to answer, but I'll give it a go. It's not a new question either — over the last hundred years, ever since the profession has tried to define itself, there has been no clear consensus. This has been true on both sides of the Atlantic. Studying in the doctoral program has certainly brought home to me the historical pendulum swings on this issue. At times the social worker's focus has been the individual, especially the individual's psychological problems, and at other times changing the environment (Germain, 1970; Meyer, 1983; Payne, 1991; Taft, 1937). It's true to say that my own thinking has been marked by its own shifts.

E: Tell us how these changing interests manifest themselves in practice.

Y: Well, when I started my Masters social work training (in the 1980s at the London School of Economics), my first placement was in a teaching hospital. In supervision I was surprised by the undue interest in the client's mental life, and by the content of interviews with clients. (There was also an interest in the mental life of the trainee social worker. When one is a novice, one feels quite self-conscious and fragile, and exploration of personal matters might be contraindicated, though social workers can sometimes overlook this basic fact.) There is no shortage of social work literature on ways to engage a client in the interview: how to encourage the client to open up to the worker, tips on how to listen, and how to make an assessment (e.g., Biestek, 1957). I rarely experienced problems in this part of social work — clients seemed to talk freely, and I did not have to rely on pointers for conducting interviews. I proceeded as Mary Richmond had done at the turn of century: I collected social evidence, that is, "facts as to personal or family history which, taken together, indicate the nature of a given client's social difficulties

and the means to their solution" (Richmond, 1917, p. 43).

E: The social worker tries to help clients, one by one, taking into account their particular circumstances. Surely you need to interview clients to make an assessment, no?

Y: Yes, I agree — one needs assessment in order to proceed. However, I found that the social work literature on assessment and interviewing was not complemented by guidance on finding ways to solve problems. My difficulties arose after the interview. Alone, an assessment is useless. Once the facts were gathered, what could I do? For me, a dissonance resulted. I was being trained to gather information on the client, but not to explore fully the means of alleviating the problems that clients and I identified. This jarred with my ideas on the purpose of social work and where I thought the sources of the clients' problems lay. I believed that one of the social worker's key responsibilities was the provision of services to those in need (Timms & Timms, 1977; Titmuss,1969).

G: So, training and textbooks prepared you for the face-to face work?

Y: Yes, but social workers spend relatively little of their time in interviews! How social workers spend their time became, and still is, an interest of mine. My experience and interest prompted me to examine workloads in a busy London social services office. My study found that the social workers spent less than 30% of their time with clients, a finding that concurred with earlier research (Carver & Edwards, 1972). But my training seemed to ignore the activities that occupy the other 70% of my time. The bulk of my time involved advocacy, attempting to obtain resources, attending meetings, writing reports, and collaborating with colleagues.

E: I see what you are getting at. You wanted to refer your clients to services and obtain resources. But are you not implying something else, too? Are you not saying that all of the change has to occur in society, and none in the client? Are you not taking an extreme view — just as extreme as the one you blame Ferard and Hunnybun for adopting — namely, that the problems faced by clients have nothing to do with them personally, and that it is all society's fault?

Y: I think, to some extent, I used to think in this way. I'd created an artificial split between the individual and society. My experience at a community work agency, where the leaders held radical social work views, helped me clarify my thinking. I ended up questioning their emphasis on society.

G: I would have thought radical community social work would have been right up your street!

Y: I found that my community social work colleagues, although they did emphasize the political context, sometimes left the individual client out of the picture. By the 1980s, in Britain, there was evidence of a growing interest in community work as the intervention of choice (Younghusband, 1978). There was some conflict between social workers, who used casework methods, and community workers. Some in the latter group accused the former of being putty in the hands of the state, and of focusing on the individual and not the wider societal context. While I agreed to some extent with radical social work theory, my practice contradicted some its tenets. For example, not all of the clients with whom I worked on a South London housing estate wanted to be involved in collective action. However, something that radical social workers do highlight (that other theorists frequently underestimate) is the immense power invested in the social worker (Payne, 1991). This power, which is especially evident in cases of child abuse, has been stressed by several authors (e.g., Bailey & Brake, 1975 and Jordan, 1979 in Britain; and Klein, 1968 and Rein & White, 1981 in the USA).

E: Well, I'm not sure I follow all of this. First you say you don't want to focus simply on the individual's problems, and now you don't want to focus solely on the community. Where do you stand?

Y: I have come to the conclusion that social workers need to act as liaison between clients and their wider society, their environment.

G: Liaison...say more about this

if you think it is so important. You mentioned advocacy, now liaison — are they not the same?

Y: I don't think they are. Liaison refers to a broad range of activities, and includes advocacy. Interestingly, liaison was first used by cooks in the 17th century to refer to the substance that binds and thickens sauces (*Oxford English Dictionary*, 1971). The word now refers to cooperation between agencies and, "a person who acts as a link or go-between" (*Oxford American Dictionary*, 1980, p. 381). The current usage is not far removed from the seventeenth century one — instead of many ingredients, we have a multitude of organizations! Liaison is not the same as advocacy. I define advocacy as representing clients or speaking up for clients on their behalf — this activity is subsumed under liaison and can be done on a micro and macro levels (Kahn, Kamerman & McGowan, 1973; Mickelson, 1995).

E: You're saying that social agencies are so complicated that people need a social worker to get through the maze?

Y: Social systems are very complex — for example, clients become lost in bureaucracies. Social workers can adopt a unique role in providing a link between clients and the wider social system. I agree with William Schwartz that, in this role, the social worker is "not exclusively identified with either the client or the agency, but with the process through which they reach out to each other." (Schwartz, 1969, p. 40). Schwartz calls this role mediation. Although I agree with most of Schwartz's depiction of this role, mediation does imply the existence of conflict that needs to be resolved (Gitterman, 1986; Schwartz, 1976). Sometimes there is no conflict; yet, liaison is required.

G: But, isn't it obvious that social work involves liaison?

Y: You know, I think that clients have grasped this, while social workers have been slow to acknowledge this fact. If we examine what clients look for when contacting a social worker, it is interesting (though not surprising) to note that many clients expect the social worker to do something. Clients appreciate a warm and accepting relationship with the social worker, but research has indicated that, often, this relationship is not enough by itself (e.g., Mayer & Timms, 1970; Rees & Wallace, 1982; Timms & Timms, 1977). Indeed, it would be interesting to examine whether clients using social services expect more from the professional relationship than patients do from the doctors, or clients from their attorneys — surely, social workers do not hold a monopoly on relationships characterized by unconditional regard (Wootton, 1959).

Studies of social workers' perspectives on outcomes also suggest that social workers place high hopes on changing clients' circumstances through the relationship itself, ignoring the fact that the environment and clients' social networks play important roles (Maluccio, 1979).

In 1915, Abraham Flexner argued that social work was useful as it linked clients to resources (Austin, 1983). Flexner went on to conclude, however, that the need to refer clients elsewhere demonstrated that social work had no knowledge base to call its own. Instead of attributing sophistication to this linking activity, social workers seemed to have agreed with Flexner that a liaison-profession was an oxymoron. On the contrary, I believe that liaison might be the unique characteristic of social work, as the United Nations has suggested (Kahn, 1979). In addition, liaison involves the development and application of professional knowledge.

E: This discussion seems a bit abstract. Why not give examples of liaison and we can see whether your claims are borne out?

Y: OK...I'll start with an apparently simple example, and move on to a more complex situation. In New York, I often assisted pregnant women and new mothers obtain benefits. Frequently, they required Medicaid, nutrition for themselves and baby, and food stamps for other family members. The social worker needs to match the client with the appropriate agencies. All of the benefits that I've just mentioned have to be applied for separately and at three different offices. Something that was startling to me coming from Britain was the fragmentation and complexity of the social services in the United States. The social worker needs encyclopedic information on eligibility criteria, registration procedures, the locations of and

transport to these agencies, as well as the ability to assist with the completion of application forms. Referrals are successful only if the social worker's liaison has been adequate.

G: Does this liaison role, then, turn you into a glorified clerk, a paper-pushing bureaucrat?!

Y: I hope not! I hope I'll be able to convince you otherwise. Let me describe a more complex situation. A few years ago, I worked with a young man whom I'll call Michael. I was working in a mental health team in London, with bases in the hospital and the community. Michael had a history of multiple suicide attempts, and was admitted following his most recent one. Assessment revealed an intelligent young Irishman, with a long history of depression and difficulties living on his own. Michael spoke of family arguments and disappointments in his life. He wasn't talking to his parents in Ireland, and his relationship with his older sister, also living in London, was conflicted. While he was an inpatient, we focused on finding a hostel place (we would go together to assess various residences), and on looking into job opportunities. Michael voiced a wish to reestablish contact with his sister. We talked about ways this might be achieved, and Michael made visits to his sister's home. I mention this because it is sometimes assumed that liaison only refers to connecting clients to concrete assistance. Liaison also involves connecting clients to others, be they family members or support group members.

On discharge, Michael stayed at a hostel, and entered job training. I attended bi-weekly meetings at the hostel acting as link between the hospital outpatient services and the hostel, and to provide continuity of care.

G: I see you're moving from the simple to the more complex.

Y: Liaison activities can "range from the simple writing of a letter or the making of a telephone call at one extreme to a lengthy and complex series of negotiations with a variety of agencies and departments at the other" (Haines, 1975, p. 49) Interdisciplinary collaboration involves interpersonal skill, negotiation, knowledge of institutional practices and familiarity with various terminologies (Leathard, 1994). A few months after Michael's' discharge from hospital, I received a telephone call, on Michael's behalf, from a police station. He had been arrested the night before, after being found disorderly and shouting in the street. I went to the police station where I found Michael in a holding cell, huddled on a bed. He was barely recognizable, and at times his speech was incoherent. I said that I would accompany him to court and I could speak on his behalf, a plan to which he agreed. I consulted the police officers who said that Michael would go before the magistrate later that morning. The police were going to charge Michael with disorderly behavior, resisting arrest, and assaulting a police officer. Michael had hit one of the arresting officers, but no injury had resulted.

In the short time before Michael's court appearance, I contacted the on-call psychiatrist (with whom I had collaborated before) to request an immediate psychiatric assessment. I described Michael's behavior. In light of my experience on the psychiatric unit and with other patients, his behavior and speech were of concern to me (though not to the police officers that day). The psychiatrist agreed to see Michael as soon as possible, though he could not guarantee reaching the court before Michael's appearance. The psychiatrist said that if an admission was necessary, a bed was available. I contacted Michael's hostel and they said that Michael had not attended his job training over the last couple of days and had been in touch with his parents by telephone, but only arguments ensued.

G: You know, at first I thought that liaison might involve your being a "middleman," a broker trying to please everybody. But presumably the police weren't too happy with your presence!?

Y: No, I don't think so! Liaison is not conflict-free, by any means. In this case, I did not agree with the police officers' treatment of Michael. The police made their assessment of Michael based on their brief observation of him.

Having known Michael for several months, I could see that his mental state was severely compromised, and a holding cell was not the "treatment" he needed. I didn't agree with their intent to press charges, either. In other instances, my judgment might conflict with that of a peer or multidisciplinary colleague . Getting back to Michael, he appeared before a magistrate, and after the police read out the charges, I asked for permission to speak in court. I summarized my involvement and Michael's contact with the psychiatric service. I emphasized that a psychiatrist had been alerted to Michael's change in mental status and had agreed to assess Michael as soon as possible. My knowledge of the prison system, as well as psychiatric and community resources, prompted me to add that imprisonment would not be the least restrictive, yet safe, disposition for Michael. The magistrate thanked me for my contribution and decided to release Michael on the understanding that the police would transport Michael to the hospital for a psychiatric assessment. The attending psychiatrist met us on our arrival and, following an examination, Michael was admitted.

E: You need to clarify a couple of things for me. You said before, that liaison involved knowledge. Spell out what knowledge you used here.

Y: I brought together knowledge of the English mental health legislation, (which mandates social workers to recommend the least restrictive environment for clients) my experience as a team member in a psychiatric setting and knowledge about the client and the community's resources. Undergirding this knowledge and experience was my ethical sense of the most appropriate outcome for the client, taking into account client needs, community resources, and the safety of others.

In Michael's case I believe that social work liaison prevented him from falling between the cracks of a complex array of organizations. I feel frustrated at times, not so much with systems and bureaucracies themselves — though hard at times, I see it as my job to help clients navigate them. I'm more frustrated with the social work profession for not cultivating this unique role of ours. If we formulated the skills and knowledge needed, then they could be communicated to the novice, and, indeed, expertise could be shared among colleagues.

Something that is becoming apparent to me, through my conversations with masters students at the school, is that they frequently ask doctoral students what they should do in particular situations in the field. Their questions are important and need to be answered. I think students are asking about liaison. They have learned what to do in the beginning stages of contact with clients, the assessment stage. It's interesting that we have a lot of literature on beginnings and endings, but the middle stage of our involvement with clients needs to be further developed. It's during this stage that liaison usually takes place.

G: Why the reluctance to articulate the knowledge and skills involved in liaison?

Y: I think there are a couple of factors explaining this reluctance. First, although social workers engage in this activity, not all of them want to! The sociologist, Andrew Abbott (1988), noted that although social workers spent an inordinate amount of time on the telephone, few were keen on this liaison activity. Some find liaison tiresome because they would prefer to spend more time with clients than they do engaged in liaison. This preference appears to be based on the belief that it is only through the relationship that help is provided. Second, Bartlett observed "that social workers characteristically work through two channels — through a direct relationship with the people being served and through collaborative relationships with others" (Bartlett, 1970, p. 175). Bartlett hoped that these two channels would not be deemed mutually

exclusive, but I think they have become separate in our minds.

I think we continue to think in polarities. (A tangential point: Thinking in terms of polar opposites has been evident in the debate on social work research methodology. Often, the debate (in the journals, and among doctoral students and professors) has been couched in terms of quantitative versus qualitative methods. Only more recently has it become apparent that using both methods might be the way forward, and that triangulating data might yield richer results.)

E: This brings me to the other issue I want you to clarify for me. In your description of your work with Michael, you don't really describe in any depth the nature of the "direct relationship" with him. Don't social workers counsel clients as well as engage in liaison?

Y: I think we have come full circle in this conversation. I started with Ferard and Hunnybun's casework relationship, and I'm glad we've come back to it. As a social worker I do offer clients a relationship that could be defined, in some instances, as a counseling one. And I hope it is therapeutic.

Going back to Michael, it wasn't unusual for us to talk about his relationship with his family, and his childhood experiences. However, I do not see the counseling aspect of my work as being a defining characteristic of my social work role. Counseling is an activity that social workers share with many other professionals, e.g., pastoral care practitioners, therapists, doctors, nurses.

What I was trying to do tonight was define the activity that social worker's engage in that we can call our own — unique to the profession. I think Abbott (1995) is right when he says that "probably the vast majority of what people with the title 'social worker' actually do in the United States is indeed connecting together services provided largely by other professions and other institutions" (1995, p. 559). There is a well-worn phrase in social work: person-environment. I think that liaison is the hyphen in the phrase. Social work liaison links the person and the environment.

G: Have you thought about ways of teaching liaison to the student?

Y: Only roughly, I think.....

At this point, the proprietor of the hotel joins the group, and says that it's great to see people staying up around the fire, engrossed in conversation. Being "half-Scottish" herself, she asks us if we know the little town where her great-grand- father was born.

Proprietor: You're over to the States to visit your daughter, then?

Evelyn: Yes, George and I arrived yesterday. Yvonne's studying social work at Columbia.

Proprietor: Great — you know I even toyed with the idea of going into social work myself. But I wasn't sure I'd be up to it. Tell me...what, exactly, do social workers do?

POSTSCRIPT

There is a universal tendency in all human development to progress by extreme swings from object to subject, from the external, the physical and the social, to the internal....At one moment we place all truth in the outside world where we try to analyze the object as a separate entity; again we turn upon the self, the doer, and study him in all his subjectivity. Either concentration destroys or ignores the reality that lies only in the living relationship between the two. (Taft, 1937, p.1)

To say that there has been an oscillation between the internal and the external, the person and the environment, in the history of social work theory is to state the obvious. However, the liaison function of social work, though not fully delineated in the literature or by myself, appears to be one way forward in bridging the gap between the person and the environment.

As evidenced in the previous debate, my ideas are far from completely formulated. Nevertheless, the chance to pursue doctoral study has helped me draw together my practice experience. Added to this, the opportunity has enabled me to make links between the British and American social work literature. This paper has reflected many of the dualisms that pervade social work, and the separation between the social work literature on both sides of the Atlantic is yet another.

I hope to develop further my thinking based on the my contention that liaison has been underrated and grossly underdeveloped. Today, "we have a welter

of social services so confused that no one can figure it out" (Abbott, 1995, p. 562). Our clients request our assistance in navigating through this confusion. Without social work liaison, our clients will be ill-served. □

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REDESIGNING THE PAST

This story involves a gutsy therapist who, many years ago, pushed me to revisit old pain, The work was heavily emotional. The points of change were hard but brilliant moments etched into the underlying materials of my old experiences they now replace. He used my own ability to fantasize, and whatever he gleaned from his *therapist, Fritz Perls. I wanted to add to my own repertoire of helping behaviors the kinds of things he did to help me. This is a story of my journey.*

By Gale Goldberg Wood

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E.E. Cummings, my favorite poet, says in one of his short pieces, "twice I have lived forever in a smile." I did not really understand what he meant until I lived forever in the smiles of Lisa, Sandra, Bonnie, Walter, Arthur, and Claire, six people with whom I worked in a small, private practice I maintain in addition to my primary job as professor of social work.

The preface to my story involves a gutsy therapist who, many years ago, pushed me to revisit old pain, which resulted in filling in some of the gaps in my childhood experiences as well as changing some of the painful ones. The work was heavily emotional. The points of change were hard but brilliant moments etched into the underlying materials of my old experiences they now replace. He used my own ability to fantasize, and whatever he gleaned from his therapist, Fritz Perls. And he helped me change parts of my life forever. I wanted to add to my own repertoire of helping behavior the kinds of things he did to help me. This is a story of my journey.

The first thing I did was review the gestalt therapy literature (an academic's occupational hazard), looking for how to do it. My search was fascinating and intellectually rewarding, but not instructive. That is when I realized and attached the adjective gutsy, in both senses of the word, to the man who did that therapy with me. He worked from his gut, and he took risks. Realizing that, I was initially afraid to try it with clients. Although I have been doing therapy for many years, as well as teaching direct practice to graduate students in social work, the idea of using Gestalt techniques made me feel like a novice, scared and unknowing. Gestalt therapy is not like ordinary therapy in which things develop over time. It is fast and powerful. It generates and requires almost total immersion of both practitioner and client in a sea of raw emotion. It would have been less frightening to contemplate doing if I could take a client's hand and, together, we could wade gradually into that sea. But I remember from my personal experience that it demands a dive, head first, then quick responses to whatever the water churns up. I was not at all sure that I had the guts to do it. I was not sure if I could protect my client and me from the undertow.

I thought about the safety of my clients. The dictum first do no harm ran back and forth across my mind. I told myself that if I get in trouble I can always shift back to the familiar comfort of ordinary therapy, but I suspect that I was whistling in the dark. I wondered if I could initially risk me, immerse me, without risking a client. I needed

an interim step to try out my capacity to risk myself. I thought of Ramona. Yes, I have an appointment with Ramona today.

I sit with Ramona, who is paranoid. She knows it and I know it. We have said the word to each other many times. Today, I am going to try seeing and feeling her world through her eyes in a way that I have never done before. Beyond empathy. If I can, I am going to get inside of her and look out through her eyes. I feel my own resistance. Partly, I do not want to see what she sees. I am afraid of it. And what if I cannot get back to being me? There's the rub. I am scared, but I force myself to try. I imagine that I am she. Nothing happens. I envision standing behind her, then stepping into her. Still nothing. Then I see it! The mine field. She/I am walking through a vast mine field. Every step is treacherous. I am terrified!

I say it. I say, My, God! You're walking through a mine field. No wonder you're so frightened! Ramona connects with it instantly. She cries. She did not think I really understood before. And up to that moment, she was right. I had not. I say, no wonder you restrict your sphere of movement! No wonder you stay at home, alone, so much! She nods while tears continue to roll slowly down her cheeks. Ramona feels that she has finally been understood. But it is I who have had a major breakthrough. I can do this.

I can swim a stroke or two in the sea of emotion without flailing around and reaching for a life preserver. I am a bit less afraid now. Still respectful, but less afraid. I trust my gut more as well as my capacity to work fast now that I have been able to understand Ramona's experience so quickly when I stepped into her. I am much closer to trying out some Gestalt therapy techniques to help clients redesign painful aspects of their past.

I am surprised that I have no trouble getting myself back out of Ramona. But something else happens that I did not anticipate. Her mine field stays with me. Part of my world is now a mine field. I wonder what I will come out with the next time I step into a client and look out through her or his eyes.

FIRST ENCOUNTER OF THE GESTALT KIND

I sit with Lisa. She says that she is edgy and she seems constantly on the verge of tears. She thinks she thinks she may be depressed. She says that her elderly, next-door neighbor, a woman whom she has grown extremely fond of since she moved in three years ago, is dying from cancer. As she tells me this, she breaks into sobs that last for several minutes. I am very moved by her affection for her neighbor both love and pain bring tears to my eyes. I try to envision standing behind her and stepping in, as I did with Ramona. And again, I resist. I wonder what I am afraid of. Surely what I see and feel will not be as threatening to me as looking through the paranoid eyes of Ramona. Am I risking something I am not yet aware of? Am I afraid I will lose my self ? My sense of self? Again, I force myself to do it. My self. My self.

I step in, and the first thing I sense in the depth and power of Lisa's affection for her neighbor is family love. That, coupled with what seems to me the all-consuming nature of her response, seems out of proportion, and I start wondering if Lisa might be grieving for more than one person. I do know that for many people a death brings back old losses, as well. On the other hand, I think, who am I to define what the appropriate intensity of someone else's emotion should be? I do not like my arrogance. And it violates my social constructionist leanings. Perhaps Lisa's neighbor is a mother-figure for her. Maybe Lisa's capacity for love is greater than or at least different from mine. But I keep coming back to my sense that she's grieving for more than one person. I remember she told me that she could not help her neighbor because she burst into tears whenever she saw her. That fits with grieving for more than her neighbor. And if I put that together with my first impression that the depth of her affection feels like family love, I think that Lisa may have some unfinished business probably does have some unfinished business prior deaths, perhaps ungrieved, that surfaced with learning of her neighbor's impending death. And if that is indeed the case, unfinished business can be getting in the way of her desire to be supportive of her neighbor. So I go with my gut and ask her about her prior experi-

ences with dying persons. The sense of family love leads me to ask about family first.
Gale: Are your parents both alive?
Lisa: Yes.
Gale: How about your grandparents?
Lisa: I only knew one grandmother, and I loved her very much. My other grandparents died before I was born.
Gale: Did you go to her funeral?
Lisa: Yes, I did.
Gale: And did you cry?
Lisa: No. I couldn't cry. I didn't want her to be dead.

This seems to validate my hunch that Lisa is grieving for more than one person, that her unfinished business is that she did not grieve for her grandmother, that she is grieving for her grandmother now, along with her beginning grief over the impending death of her neighbor. I know about wishing for one last hour with someone who died before I got to say what I wish I had said when they were alive — my mother or to take back something I wish I had not said. So I tell Lisa what I think may be going on and I ask her if she would be willing to try something with me. She is willing, and I am delighted for the opportunity. I am going to try and give her a few last moments with her grandmother, and a second chance to grieve at the funeral. I'm excited. I'm intense. I'm ready.

I place three chairs side-by-side, in front of her, and lay a long coat across the three seats. I ask Lisa to imagine her grandmother lying there, still alive, but on the verge of death. To help her get a sharp image of her grandmother lying there, I ask questions about what her grandmother is wearing, what position her arms are in, and so forth. Then I tell her to look at her grandmother and tell her grandmother everything she wants to tell her.
Lisa: Grandma, I love you. You've been so good to me. You always told me I was good when my parents said I was bad. You read to me. You colored with me. You held me in your lap and rocked with me even when I was nine years old. I want you to know I remember. I'll always remember. (Lisa's eyes fill with tears)
(Silence)
Gale: Is there more you want to say to her?
Lisa: Yes. Grandma, remember the day your little mirror was broken? I'm the one who broke it. I was angry because you were sick and wouldn't play with me. I'm sorry I did that. You were more like a mother than a grandmother to me. You always had time for me when nobody else cared. (Teary silence) I'll miss you very much. (More tears, then silence.)
Gale: Is there anything else you want to say to her?
Lisa: No. (She touches the coat.)
Gale: Is it O.K. to let her die now?

I am rushing Lisa. I do not want her to lose her singular concentration on the fantasy we are creating. I do not know how long she can maintain this level of intensity. I stand very close to her. My voice is intense and urgent. I try to keep her energized with my own energy. It is good that I have a lot of energy and a sense of drama.
Lisa: (Sobs for several minutes.)
Gale: Is she dying yet?
Lisa: (Still sobbing.) No. I want to hold her hand.
Gale: Do it.

Again I am rushing her. My energy is finite, and I want her to hurry before my energy is used up!
Lisa: (Touches the coat again, then gets on her knees, buries her face in the coat and continues to cry.) This is the last time I'll see you, Grandma.
Gale: Is she beginning to die?
Lisa: (Crying; nodding.) Yes she's dying. (Pause.) She's dead.
Gale: (waits)
Lisa: (Crying gently.) My grandmother is dead.

I feel relieved. We can move to scene two now. In that moment I withdraw my energy from scene one and I am re-energized and ready to help Lisa focus intensely on the second phase of the work.
Gale: (Softly.) Now bury her. Take her to the corner over there (points.) and bury her. Use the sheet or the tarp if you want. (I move with Lisa to the corner.)
Lisa: (Carries the coat to the designated corner; gently lays it on the floor, then covers it with the sheet.)
Gale: Now perform a funeral service. Say a eulogy, then tell her goodbye.

My voice is again urgent. I want her to complete the work. I am afraid that she will lose her concentration and her train of thought will derail the potential for this enactment to have enough emotional reality to produce a lasting affect.
Lisa: You were the best grandmother I could have had. I'll miss you terribly. I miss you already (crying). Thank you, Grandma; thank you for your love. I needed it. I still need it. I wish you were

alive to give it to me now. You're not alive, though, and you don't have to worry about me. Your death makes me very sad...and my life will go on because I hold your love inside me.
(Silence)
Gale: Are you finished?
Lisa: (Nods; tears run down her cheeks.)
Gale: Now tell her goodbye, turn your back to the grave, and walk out of the room.
Lisa: (Looks at the sheet, then, softly) Goodbye, Grandma. (Turns and leaves the room)

I am tremendously relieved. I am also exhausted. I worked hard, and I think Lisa did sustain her focus in both scenes of the drama.
Gale: (Follows Lisa out of the room.) How are you feeling right now?
Lisa: Mostly, exhausted. Shaking a little, kind of like my muscles are twitching. Sad. I'm kind of sad, and kind of relieved, too. I can't believe I pretended my grandmother was alive all these years!
Gale: Now you've said your good-byes and you've allowed her to die Let's see what happens with your neighbor this coming week.

Lisa leaves and I do not. I am still in the drama, but it is my own grandmother I am thinking about. I realize that I envy Lisa's relationship with her grandmother. I was never close to my grandmother. I feel profoundly sad about this. I cry. I momentarily resurrect her and tell her that I was too busy for old people. I feel ashamed. I realize that I have more work of my own to do, and I promise myself I will do it at a later time.

When Lisa comes back a week later, she says that she has been able to sit with her neighbor, prepare some food for her, and do some other little things without falling apart. She says that she still feels very sad, but that the sadness is not getting in her way. She says that she is still amazed that she mixed up her neighbor with her grandmother.

Three days later, Lisa phones to say that her neighbor has died, that she is very sad, and that she is O.K., too. She is not overwhelmed by her sadness. I am thrilled! I did it! It is several weeks before I can appreciate that Lisa did it.

I cannot wait to try redesigning the past with other willing clients. I feel bolder now, more willing to push. So when Sandra comes to see me with a more complex issue, of longer duration, I am ready.

DEEPER WATERS/BIGGER RISKS

I sit with Sandra, a woman in her early twenties. She tells me that she is afraid of men. Although she has no problem working with men, she has never dated and says she experiences nausea and dizziness whenever a man makes a personal overture toward her. So far, it sounds like panic to me.

I ask her when she first had this reaction, and she says it was as far back as she can remember. I ask if she means before she was 10. She said no, not that far back; maybe in junior high, about 12 or 13. She recalls a boy in her class asking her for a movie date and how sick she got. She says she thought it was strange, because she and the boy were good friends, that they played baseball together and all kinds of things. I ask her if after this episode she continued to be friends with him and play baseball. She says no, that she couldn't stand to be around him afterwards, that she felt mad at him and afraid of him all mixed together. She says she knows it doesn't make any sense, but that was what happened.

I say that it sounds to me like something may have happened that hurt her or scared her before she was 12, and I ask her if, as a little kid, she had any bad experiences with men or boys. Given that at least one-third of all female children are molested before reaching age 18, I often ask this question. Sandra paused, then said no. I ask about her father, did she like him when she was a kid? She smiles and says yeah, that she was crazy about him. She says she used to watch for him coming down the street in his red truck and he'd stop and pick her up and let her ride in that real high cab with him all the way back to the shipping dock. Then she frowns, and there is a long pause. I say, You're frowning. She nods but doesn't speak. After several seconds I ask if she remembered anything. She nods again and looks disturbed. Again there is silence. Then Sandra says that she hasn't thought about it in a long time. She says she can't believe she forgot it, that she used to have nightmares about it. I ask her what happened, and she tells me that when she was about 7, when she was standing on the curb watching for her father's truck to come by, a red truck did

come by, so she started waving like she always did. But the truck didn't stop, so she ran after it. Then it did stop, and she ran around and opened the door and climbed in. But it wasn't her father, and the guy wouldn't let her get out. Her facial expression is pained and she starts to cry. She says the guy exposed himself and tried to make her touch him. That must have scared you, I say. She says it sure did, that when she finally broke loose of him, she ran home as fast as she could. I ask her if she told her mother what happened. She says no, that she just went up to her room and closed the door. She never told anyone.

My heart went out to her. How and why do children learn not to tell adults about the horrors perpetrated on them. How do we, as a society, as a world, communicate to children that they should not tell about abuses they endure because it must somehow be their fault, and/or that no one will believe them and, even more ludicrous to me, that they, the children, must protect not only the adult perpetrator who may have threatened them with further violence to themselves or those they love, but also the adults who are their parents, their aunts, their uncles from losing their romantic concepts about childhood. I ached for Sandra. No one comforted her. She went through the trauma and the nightmares all alone.

It certainly seems to me that the event Sandra described could have been at least one factor, if not a major factor, that lead to the fear of men she was still experiencing. Based on many things I have learned from adults who were physically and/or sexually assaulted as children and teenagers, as well as my review of the literature for use in a course I teach on social work practice with survivors of interpersonal assault, I think it quite possible that whenever a man approaches her now, she could be responding to the man in the truck long ago instead of to the man in front of her. So I tell Sandra what I think, and ask her if she would be willing to try something with me that may relieve some of her current fear of men. She says she is willing and I tell her we will try to reenact the scene and change it a little. She says she is scared but that she will try. I want her to try. I tell Sandra to close her eyes and picture herself at age 7, standing at the curb watching for her father's truck. I ask her if she is able to get the image, and she nods. To make the scene more vivid, I ask what she is wearing. She says shorts and a T-shirt from Purdue that her uncle gave her. I tell her to let the truck come into view now, and start to wave. I wait.

When I ask her if she's waving. She says, Yeah! I'm excited and I'm waving, but the truck isn't stopping. She looks perplexed. What are you doing now? I ask her. I'm running after it, she says. And I'm waving and yelling Daddy, Daddy. After a brief silence she says that the truck is going around the corner now, and it's stopping. I ask her what happens next, and she says she goes around to the passenger side, climbs up and... Her voice trails off and there's silence. I wait. Gale, she says, I don't want to get in! My heart's pounding real fast! I say, Yeah. It'll be very painful for you inside that cab. And frightening, even though this is just a fantasy. She nods, and I wait. Then I ask her if she's willing to stay with it and bear that pain for a few more minutes.

I'm pushing her, and I'm a little uneasy about the pushing I'm doing. Is it for her or for me? I tell myself it's mainly for her, so I keep going, demanding and pushing and hopefully supporting her through it.

She says she'll try, but she isn't sure if she can. She's shaking visibly. I say that all anyone can do is try. Then, after a moment or two, I ask her if she has opened the door to the cab yet. She says she's doing that now. Then she says, I'm climbing onto the seat, and I look over, and that's not my father! She looks terrified and begins to cry. I try not to let her tears lead me or Sandra to stop.

After a few moments I ask her what the driver looks like. She says he's about 22 or 25; he's wearing a brown leather jacket, and his skin is bad. And I'm saying to him, she continued, Oh, I'm sorry. I thought you were my father. I feel really embarrassed, she tells me, and I start to get out of the cab, but...but...(tears) the guy won't let me (deep sobbing). I ask how he is stopping her, and she said that he grabs her left arm just above the elbow, and he pulls her back. She says she's scared and she's trying to break loose, but she can't. He's too strong. Now he's unzipping his fly, she says in a trembling voice, and then she whispers, He's pulling his penis out and he's trying to put my left hand on it. I ask her what she's feeling at this moment, and

she says she's getting dizzy, like she's going to vomit. She holds her hands over her mouth and actually heaves. I want to get out of here! She sobs.

But I do not back off. At this point I tell her I want her to stay there just a minute longer, and I want her to imagine that she is as big and strong as he is. I asked her if she can picture that. Yeah, she says, and her face registers some relief. I, too am relieved.

I was afraid she would stop. I do not want her to get stuck in the middle of the same old scene, newly reactivated. I want her to enact the drama through to its hopefully victorious conclusion.

What do you want to do to him, I ask her. She says she wants to punch him; she wants to pound him in the chest, and in a very angry voice she adds that she wants to punch him in the face! I tell her to go ahead and do it. I tell her there's a phone book on the seat next to her, and that while she's fantasizing, she can pretend the phone book is him and punch it. She starts punching it hard and fast. After several minutes I ask her if he's bleeding at all. She says he's bleeding a little from his nose and lip. I tell her to say anything she wants to while she is beating him up. She pounds and yells, "You rotten Bastard! I'm going to beat you to a pulp!" She continues beating on the phone book with both fists, hard and fast, for several seconds, then slows down, panting, and finally stops.

I ask her if the guy is dead. She says he's not just dead, he doesn't exist anymore! He's just a puddle with a leather jacket in it. Okay, I say. Now open the door on your side of the cab, get out, and close the door behind you. I ask her to tell me when she's done that. When she tells me she's out, I tell her to open her eyes slowly and take a deep breath. After she does this, I ask her how she's feeling. With a big grin on her face, she says she's exhausted, but great. Exhilarated. I am also exhausted and exhilarated. She says she really got him good. I agree, and I suggest to her that in the next few weeks she pay attention to whether she gets less dizzy or not dizzy and nauseated at all when a man next approaches her.

We keep in touch by phone for several weeks, and she reports little or no dizziness or nausea when two different men where she works ask her out. She even accepts one invitation and enjoys herself. We decide that any time she does feel a little of the old dizziness, she can visualize the puddle with the leather jacket in it. This seems to work for her, and over a period of time, the dizziness goes away entirely. She redesigned her past and made a better present for herself.

It has been suggested to me that the man in the red truck may well have been Sandra's father, himself, and the episode an incestuous one. While it is impossible to refute such supposition, for therapeutic purposes, as opposed to legal ones, the matter may be inconsequential. I think that what I did would have been applicable in either instance. Beyond my own impression, the only evidence to disclaim incest here is the fact that Sandra continued riding in the truck with her father after the painful episode with one modification: She climbed up on the driver's side in order to look in, then ran around to the passenger door.

Reflecting on my work with Sandra, I see her strength to do what I demanded of her. I am relearning that people who need help are nonetheless strong people. I begin to appreciate my own strength when, years ago, I endured the demands of my therapist in order to make a better life in the present for myself. I am pleased for Sandra and for me.

On further reflection of my work with Sandra, I also see a me who energized much of the work with my own energy. I wonder if she knew that I did not know how it would turn out. My own boldness frightens me. I love the drama. I wonder if I am becoming an intensity junkie.

FIGHTING THE UNDERTOW

When I try fantasy work with Bonnie, who is 15, I am out of my depth. Bonnie's stepfather raped her several times a week from the time she was 9 until she was 11, when he was killed in an auto accident. She still has trouble sleeping. I propose a fantasy in which she is big and strong and has a baseball bat next to her bed. When her stepfather enters the room in her fantasy, she is going to pick up the baseball bat and bash him so he cannot rape her ever again. But she is unable to do it. In the fantasy, as it was in reality, she is immobilized the mo-

ment she visualizes the lighted end of his cigarette in the darkness of her bedroom. I see the lighted end of the cigarette, too. She is terrified. She is screaming. And I can't get her out of the fantasy! My heart is pounding.

I don't know what to do. My efforts to get her to pick up the baseball bat are futile. I try to get her to open her eyes and see she is not really back in that bedroom. She says she is trying to open her eyes, but can't. She knows me from some other work I've done at Childrens' Village where she lives and I know she likes me, so I try to hug her, hoping to comfort her and bring her out of the fantasy, back to the room we are in at present. But as I approach her, her terror increases, so I back off. I have done something stupid and terrible to this child and I can't undo it!

I think somehow I have to go into the fantasy and get her, but I don't even know what that means. Then I hear myself directing her to picture me kneeling on the floor beside her bed. I am yelling, hoping to be heard over her terror. Can you see me?! Can you see me yet?! She says she can't. She can't take her eyes off that cigarette. I tell her to reach out with her left hand. I actually kneel on the floor next to her chair so that if she can reach out her hand, I'll actually be able to grab it and she'll know I'm there. She reaches for my hand and I give it to her. I tell her to watch me pick up the baseball bat. I yell at her stepfather to back off or I'll kill him with it. I ask her if he hears me. He does, but he won't back off. I tell her I'm going to bash him, that I'm walking toward him now. I tell her to watch me. Can you see me yet?! She can. She sees me bash him. Let's go! I yell. Let's run out of the room now that he's dead. I pull on her hand. She actually gets up and runs out of the room with me. Then I hold her while she sobs. Finally, she opens her eyes. I am sure three hours have elapsed. But the whole thing actually took place in less than 15 minutes.

Bonnie smiles. She is pleased. She says she now knows that he's really dead. It turns out that she has less trouble sleeping. She does not know that we were caught in an undertow. I know more about the sea of raw emotion that my use of gestalt techniques can generate. I am glad for Bonnie, glad she sleeps better now. But I vow to never again do anything like this with children or teens. My heart pounds even as I write this. I have never had a more frightening experience in all of my years in practice. And like Ramona's mine field stays with me, the lit end of Bonnie's stepfather's cigarette is now part of my life.

THE NEXT DIVES

Like Sandra, and to some extent Bonnie, Walter had a specific, unwanted reaction that began to get in the way of his present. I sit with him and he tells me that he visibly shakes in the presence of authority figures. He tells me that since he was rarely in their presence, he could explain away his occasional shaking as a function of being cold. Therefore, up until Walter was promoted, his shaking was not sufficiently problematic to warrant seeking professional help.

I know that many people structure their lives to accommodate long-standing, unwanted reactions like Sandra's nausea and Walter's shaking, and they never free themselves from it. Walter could have done that by refusing the promotion he had earned. But he accepted the promotion, despite his knowledge that he would be attending many weekly meetings with those holding top positions in the corporation. He accepted the promotion and sought psychological help.

Walter tells me that his father sexually abused him for many years, and that he tolerated it to protect his younger sister from similar abuse. That was the deal he and his father explicitly negotiated. What happened just prior to the onset of Walter's shaking that would cause most people to shake, but Walter did not? Walter discovered that despite his deal with his father, the father had begun to sexually abuse his younger sister. Walter called the police and pressed charges. He did not allow himself to feel his fear in doing this, because he thought his fear would interfere with doing what he needed to do. Before his father was released from jail, Walter left for college. That is when he began to shake in the presence of authority figures.

To try to alleviate his shaking around authority figures, I help Walter return, in fantasy, to the original situation with his father, and complete it in fantasy, this time, feeling the fear he dared not feel then, lest it stop him from taking action to protect his sister. This time he does shake as he stands against that original au-

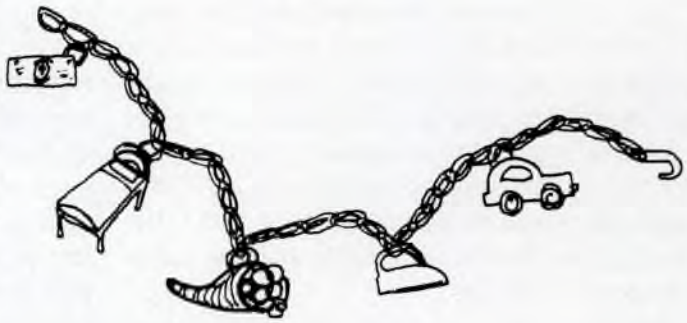
thority figure, his father. And while his shaking does not entirely disappear as the result of our work together, it is reduced to a more manageable level.

I find my work with Walter to be a much needed healing and humbling experience for me. My work with Bonnie left me doubting myself and my use of Gestalt techniques. I see now that I am still able to do it, but not always achieve dramatic results. I'm sad about that part. I got into the drama with Walter. I think that I put just as much energy into my work with him as I did with Lisa, Sandra, and Bonnie. And while I am not disappointed with Walter, I am disappointed with the outcome. Even though I know that dramatic success all the time is an unrealistic expectation, I feel let down. Walter, on the other hand, is very pleased with what he has achieved, and his smile is one of the ones in which I continue to live. So he had the outcome he needed and I, apparently, had the outcome I needed. Good-bye grandiosity.

DIFFERENT STROKES

It is with Arthur that I do my first post-grandiosity effort to help someone redesign part of their past. Arthur is a young man who was still tied to his abusive father, although he had neither seen him nor heard from him in several years. Arthur wants his father to realize that what he had done to Arthur was wrong. He wants his father to apologize for all the hurts he inflicted and he wants his father to feel guilty.

When I ask Arthur to imagine his father in the chair across from him, he flinches. He is still afraid. The more vivid the image, the more frightened Arthur becomes. We talk briefly about Arthur having complete control over the fantasy, that it is his fantasy, that he can keep his fantasy/father from hurting him, or that he can allow his fantasy/father to hurt him if he wishes.



Arthur decides to talk with his fantasy/father only after imagining that his father's arms and legs are tied to the chair. Then Arthur tries to reason with his father. When I ask about his father's responses and facial expressions, Arthur says, None. He's not listening to me. He never did. I suggest he tell his father how he feels about not being listened to, and Arthur says it makes him feel like he doesn't exist.

Arthur has little energy of his own, but I do not try to energize him with my energy. I am neither intense nor immediate. I do not rush him. I do not know why. This is new behavior for me. I wonder if it is it a sign of more patience or less investment. What I do know is that it just feels right to be laid back while Arthur works at his pace. I am trusting my gut. It feels good.

For several sessions Arthur talks with his tied-up, imagined father, at one point seeing his father reach toward him with some affection. That is short-lived, however, and Arthur's fantasy/father goes back to not listening. Arthur gets nowhere except increasingly frustrated.

It is at this point that I suggest to Arthur that he acknowledge that he will never get what he has always wanted from his father, and that he tell this to the father in the chair in front of him, then walk away. With my direction, he tells this to his fantasy/father and sobs deeply for several minutes. Then he unties the fantasized father's arms and legs, and walks away from him. Arthur says he feels some relief and a lot of sadness. His smile is small and sad. We talk about the grief process to help him understand his feelings between sessions.

In retrospect, I think that Arthur did something very important for himself. He let go ; he stopped hanging on. And once he did this, he was able to grieve for his father, who was ostensibly dead for him, then turn his attention to other issues.

Though I no longer wonder if I could have brought Arthur's fantasy to a happier conclusion for him, one in which he might have gotten what he wanted from his fantasized father, I did wonder at the time if I could have done it had I not been frightened by my episode with Bonnie

and humbled by my less than triumphant work with Walter, and if I had energized Arthur with my energy and urged him with my urgency. I no longer think that for two reasons. First, I've had other successful experiences with clients, some dramatic and some less so, sometimes using my urgency and sometimes being laid back. And second, I finally came to understand that Arthur was triumphant; letting go is a triumph!

DEEP WATER/BIGGER RISKS AGAIN

Some of the fear I felt after my traumatic experience with Bonnie has faded and I am willing to risk again with an adult. So, with Claire, I plunge in and immerse us both. Claire wanted very much to resolve her differences with her grown daughter, Kathy. Differences which resulted in silence between them for two years. I ask Claire to fantasize Kathy in the empty chair. Claire does it, opens her mouth to speak with Kathy, then shuts it without uttering a sound. She tells me that as much as she wants to talk with Kathy, she is still too angry to do so. I asked her what she is still too angry about, and she says, sobbing, she gave my grandson away! Claire takes out of her wallet out a picture of a newborn baby and shows it to me. This is my grandson, she says. He looks just like the Clarksons, my family. Claire says that Kathy was not married when she gave birth to the child and had given him up for adoption when he was four days old. Now he's living with strangers, Claire sobs.

I look at Claire's grandson through her eyes, knowing that I am about to kill the relationship with my next sentence. But I do not hesitate. She will hurt, and she will cope. Then you don't really have a grandson, I say, my gut twisting as I say it. You have a picture of a baby. Yes! Claire shouts, Because of her! She points to the Kathy chair. When Claire is calmer, I ask her how long she has been carrying that picture around with her, and she says, Two years.

At this point I believe that Claire's relationship with the baby picture is a block to the work on her relationship with her daughter, and that Claire will have to let go of her imaginary grandson before any reconciliation with Kathy will be possible. Claire and I discuss this at length, and she sadly concurs.

I ask her to put the baby picture in the empty chair and tell the baby everything she wants to tell him. Claire has enormous energy of her own and she will not need mine. She tells the baby in the picture that she loves him and all the things she hoped they would do together. When I ask her if she is ready to say good-bye to him, there is urgency in my voice. It is a controlled urgency. I am not driven as I was in my earlier work using Gestalt techniques. Claire asks for a few more minutes. When the extra time is gone, she is still reluctant to say good-bye. So I asked her to own her decision by telling the baby picture that she is not going to let go of him. Tell him, I prompted, that you will keep him in your wallet so you can look at him and hate your daughter whenever you want to. I can still hear my voice saying this. I was pushing her ahead, closer to a possible reconciliation with her daughter her expressed wish. I am not doing gentle work. I am in that sea of raw emotion again. No time or place for gentleness. One cannot float here. One swims. And at the moment I am reasonably sure of my strokes.

After taking my prompt and telling it to the baby picture, Claire says, You are only a picture. I wish you were really my grandson. I ask her if she is ready to say good-bye now, and she nods.

I kneel by her chair. I think my immediacy provides a measure of emotional support. I see and feel her pain. Despite it, however, when I hand her an aluminum pan and a box of matches, she puts the baby picture in the pan, strikes a match, says, Goodbye, baby, lets out a mournful wail, and puts the match to a corner of the picture. She is a brave woman. Through her tears, she watches the photo turn to ashes. At the end of the session Claire says she feels some relief as well as lots of sadness. She grieves for several days.

In subsequent sessions, Claire speaks with her daughter, Kathy, in the empty chair and responds as she thinks Kathy might when she changes chairs. After a month or so, Claire actually invites Kathy to dinner, greets her warmly (to Kathy's surprise, Claire reports) and begins the slow process of building a new relationship with her daughter.

My work with Claire is satisfying to me. I am less hesitant. I have more faith in the strength and resilience of human beings. I have a more reasonable perspec-

tive on the power I wield: I will not shatter lives with a phrase.

REFLECTIONS ON SWIMMING IN CHURNING WATERS

As I review and reflect on my journey over time, I am aware that I feel stronger, surer, and sadder. I know some things. I know that when I step into other people, I sometimes come out with pieces of their misery, haunting souvenirs like Ramona's mine field and Bonnie's stepfather's lit cigarette. I had to decide whether or not I was willing to have pieces of other people's misery inside me. I am willing. And I am no longer afraid that when I step into other people I will lose myself. The iffy-ness is gone. My sense of self is stronger for knowing that.

I know that raw pain, like the distilled pain that workers and clients deal with in ordinary therapies, is not something to be avoided. Like distilled pain, it is part of the process. My clients can cope with it, and so can I. I can also say the hard things that produce raw pain, like telling Claire that she does not have a grandson, just a picture of a baby. It twists my gut, and I can do it. I think that if saying hard things ever stops twisting my gut, it will be time for me to pack it in, time for me to retire from practice.

I know that I can use aspects of myself more deliberately: my energy, my immediacy ,my urgency; my intensity. I have much better control of these aspects of self, and I can push or lay back, relying on my feelings to guide me. And I am less driven. I can live with and appreciate small victories. I am not sure about no victory at all, but I know that I will find out as I continue. □

"THE SINGULAR POWER OF INFLUENCING DAILY LIVING"

This article offers suggestions about writing narratives of professional helping, using Jane Addams as inspiration and guide. Addams skillfully used autobiographical writings to reach, a wide public audience. Her works helped create a sympathetic understanding for those receiving and giving help. Her writings demonstrated the singular power of narratives to influence daily life. Following her example may help contemporary writers learn new ways of writing narratives about professional helping.

By John A. Kayser

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"I was conscious that all human vicissitudes are, in the end, melted down into reminiscence, and that a metaphorical statement of the basic experiences which are implicit in human nature itself, however crude in form the story may be, has a singular power of influencing daily living." Jane Addams (1916), *The Long Road of Woman's Memories*, NY: Macmillan, p. 25.

The purpose of this article is to offer some suggestions about writing narratives of professional helping, using Jane Addams as inspiration and guide. As the quote above indicates, Addams had a deep appreciation that reminiscence and stories have a "singular power to influence daily living." Indeed, several scholars have noted that Addams' primary method as a social reformer was essentially autobiographical (Davis, 1973; Lasch, 1965). As Lasch observed:

> The shock of discovery and the reversal of conventional perspectives were the persistent themes of Jane Addams' works, and they were themes that could best be treated by recreating again and again, the experience of one who had felt the shock at first hand...Where the discovery of the poor was bound up with the discovery of the self, the result was a literature notable for its clarity, its immediacy, and its power to evolve in the reader sympathies whose existence. . . [were] rarely suspected" (p.xxvi).

Although the subject of numerous biographies during and after her life, Miss Addams was the first to interpret her own life story. Beginning in 1905 (when she was not yet 45), she began writing a series of "narrative" articles for the *Ladies Home Journal*, at the time one of the largest magazine circulations in America. The articles were in response to the widespread public interest and admiration about her life as a social reformer. These articles, in turn, became the core of her first autobiography, *Twenty Years at Hull House* (1910), in which Addams drew on reminiscences about her childhood, young adult years, and the formative years at Hull-House in Chicago, one of the first American settlement houses.

As Davis (1973 noted, she organized her memories "into a pattern, reflecting upon incidents, even on dreams, that may or may not have happened as she remembers, but which then take on a new reality in writing and in the

brooding over the recollections" (p.157). It is this "new reality" — the social construction of her identity and the discovery of her purpose in life which characterizes Addam's work as narrative. Using Addams an example, then, suggests the following ideas about writing narratives of professional helping.

1. Jane Addams wrote with her target audience clearly in mind, and her choice is instructive. In these works, she was not writing primarily for or exclusively to her settlement house workers or to those engaged in doing "social works." Rather, she sought to reach the widest possible audience—"ordinary Americans everywhere" (Davis, 1973, p.173). Addams' example suggests that contemporary narrative writers must not only have other professionals in mind as potential readers, but also the audience of the public-at-large. More than ever before, the public of today appears profoundly mistrustful and ambivalent about professional helpers. Narratives of professional helping, therefore, must help illuminate who we are, what we do, and with whom we work to an audience that seems increasingly skeptical, polarized, and alienated. In that way, powerfully written narratives may evoke in readers "sympathies rarely suspected" both for those in need and for those providing the helping services.

2. Jane Addams found evocative ways to make universal her own experiences((Davis, 1973). Readers could vividly imagine and vicariously live Addams' experiences—particularly her long search to find a productive purpose and fulfilling direction in life —and thus connect her experiences to their own struggles. Although comfortable with occupying the role of central protagonist of a story, Addams also knew when to fade into the background, letting other "narrative characters" (e.g. the neighbors and the residents of Hull House speak authentically about their own life experiences.

Addams' example suggests that contemporary narrative writers may need to become more comfortable with being the heroine or hero in their own life story. We need to be willing to craft our private experiences of success and failure into public narratives that reveal the drama, tension, and complexity of the helping process. From the narrative perspective, it does little good that we have changed or been transformed as a result of clients treated, students taught or supervised, agencies run, community activities undertaken unless we vividly convey the details of the experiences. We need to give examples of our work — what transpired, who was there, when and where did it happen, how it felt, and why things unfolded as they did.

At the same time, however, we must take care to avoid so dominating the story, either as narrator or protagonist, that other characters cannot be heard. In Addams' autobiographical accounts, the strength and dignity of individuals and families facing incredible hardships are conveyed with vivid clarity. This example suggests that contemporary writers must take great care when depicting the narrative characters inhabiting their helping stories. When characters are turned into cardboard caricatures (e.g., clients portrayed as embodiments of dysfunction) the complexity and multiplicity of viewpoints embedded in the stories cannot emerge.

Readers need to see the helping process not only through our eyes, but also from those with whom we are working. Often, there are unexpected parallels between ourselves and those with receiving help — ways in which their struggles ironically shadow or mirror our own. Perhaps, we missed these connections at the time of the actual work. However, writing a narrative often helps in seeing the experience in new ways. By sharing these experiences and connections with both the professional and lay public, we invite readers to enter into the story as well. By joining in the process of mutual discovery, readers can live the experience vicariously and can connect it to their own. In doing so, narratives make the professional helping process more accessible and universal.

3. Jane Addams used stories about her life and her experiences at Hull-House creatively to teach a point of view — the moral of the story . The moral lessons Addams had in mind were those of a large order — democracy, social justice, peace, human rights. Yet, Addams also made sure that readers never forgot the intimate connections between the need for major improvements in external social conditions and the internal fulfillment of individuals' growth and potential.

The idea that this example suggests — that contemporary narratives should also strive to

teach moral lessons — at first may seem to conflict with professional values and ethics, particularly those emphasizing workers' non judgmental attitudes toward clients. However, the moral lessons which need to be drawn are not judgments about clients, but judgments about ourselves as helpers. What did we learn — what meaning did we make — as a result of the experience? More importantly, what did we do differently? What do we hope readers will think, feel, or do as a result of the story we are narrating?

The example of Jane Addams also suggests that we must aim our moral lessons beyond ourselves — to the higher order of things. While it is important and necessary for narratives to describe our professional enhancements — theories revised, techniques improved, training programs transformed, agencies reorganized — this is not sufficient, if our aim is to produce narratives of singular influence. We must also begin to answer the larger questions: How did individuals or neighborhoods change? How did society benefit? How was justice served? In w hat ways was peace made? Where were human rights respected and enhanced?

If professional narratives are to have a wider scope — "to influence daily life" then our stories must be powerful, dramatic, challenging, uncomfortable, and compassionate. They must reach a wider audience. We must invite the public into to our world, and ask to be invited into theirs. We must willingly shed the comfortable robes of professional expertise — be it therapist, educator, policy maker, administrator, researcher, or community activist— and view our stories from the general public's perspective. We must connect our daily work to the public's daily life and link both together to the larger order of things. In the end, we must describe for ourselves and for our often skeptical readers what is universal about the experience of professional helping. We must pass on the moral lessons learned about how "ordinary people everywhere" have been helped to grow, heal, become strong, overcome internal and external barriers, and come together in community. □

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A CLIENT'S REFLECTIONS ON INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL WORK "BY THEIR FRUITS SHALL YE KNOW THEM"*

I have been traveling the road of professional social work practice for more than thirty years. Along the way, numerous of my co-travelers—my clients—have stopped to give me feedback on how my interventions had affected their lives. In this narrative I stop to reflect upon my own relationship as a client of an international social worker in Greece. My reflections make clear my deep appreciation of her personal qualities and professional craftsmanship. From where I now stand, I also allow myself, with whatever objectivity I can muster, to view her professional practices and the efficacy of her interventions critically.

By Agathi Glezakos

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IN THE AFTERMATH OF A CIVIL WAR

I am a middle aged woman. I am also a social work educator, a social work clinician, and a social services consultant. I practice these facets of my beloved profession in America, far away from the source of the idea to become a social worker.

This narrative is a very personal story, and the first time that I choose to tell it. My purpose is to give the reader a glimpse of how international social work was practiced, at least by one social worker, almost half a century ago. That was when an American social worker entered my life and changed its anticipated course. I did not know anything about social work nor the profession's jargon. In ignorance, I became a social worker's client.

It was, 1949, the post-civil war era in Northern Greece; a mountainous region mercilessly ravaged by a war that turned daytime neighbors into nighttime enemies. Our status as "war refugees" ended the day military trucks returned us to our small village, Lefkohori (white village), from which guerrilla atrocities had forced us to flee 3 years earlier.

I go back to that time and selective memories:

Human chaos as trucks hurriedly unloaded families collected from several villages; wild berry vines that had taken over covering the roads, pathways, and yards; of the large gray rats, that in the eyes of bewildered child, appeared ready to attack to protect their exclusive territory; the food distribution lines; and life in a three room house we shared with two other families.

We returned in spring.

Repatriation had pulled me out of the third grade. I spent the spring and summer months cutting weeds, helping carry stone and mortar to the construction workers, and fetching water from the village's only water fountain in the central square. I missed the classroom environment and longed for a book to read, any book. But books were unavailable, and even if they had been, taking the time to read, instead of work, would have been unthinkable.

On a Sunday late in August, a government official visiting the village announced that a

teacher would be coming in the Fall. The prospect of being a student again obsessed me.

A TEACHER'S INFLUENCE

The teacher was an older, soft spoken man. He converted the small office of our one-room schoolhouse into a bedroom and an impressive library, and set out to become acquainted with the sixty young students that would comprise the first through sixth grades. Soon after classes began the teacher announced that students were welcome to borrow books.

I became a regular borrower. He had a good selection of books by Greek authors, translated classics, fiction, biography, travel, mystery and suspense, et. al. ; delicious food for the "starving" mind of a young student I discovered a world far beyond the narrow horizons of Lefkohori.

A few months into the school year a jeep carrying Americans and their Greek translators appeared regularly in the village. The current rumor was that they represented an American relief program (the Congregational Christian Service Committee,(I learned later) searching for villages to adopt.

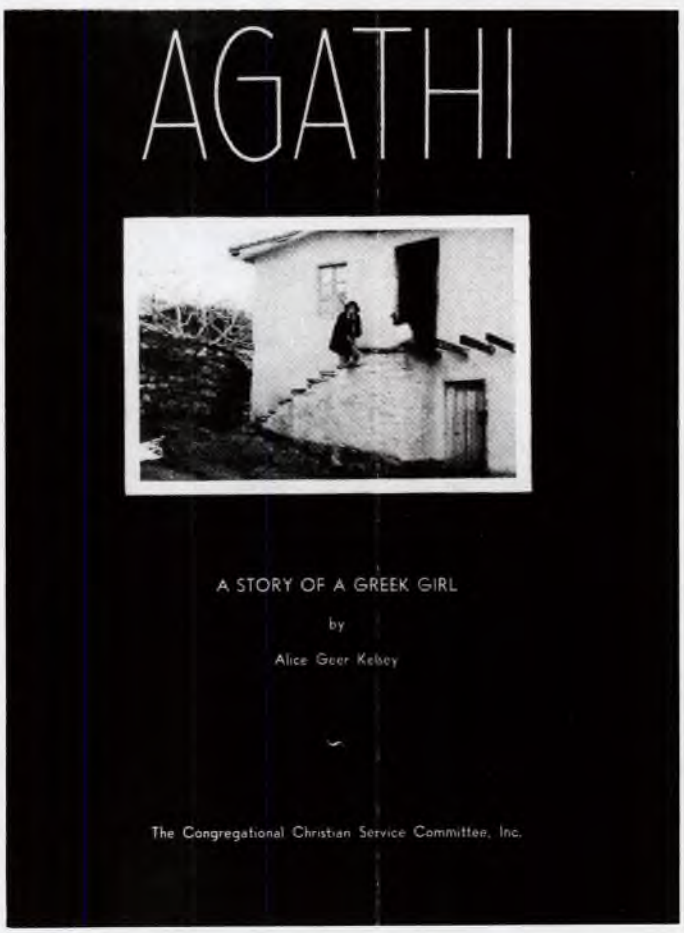
One Saturday afternoon when I came in to check out a book, my teacher introduced me to an American couple, William and Ione Mendenhall, and their Greek interpreter. While he discussed the best selection, the others observed in silence. Before I left, the Americans asked the interpreter to translate our dialogue. The teacher, generous in his praise, told them about me and my interest in books.

A SOCIAL WORKER'S INTERVENTION

The following Sunday a jeep drove up to the front of my house and the same trio, accompanied by the teacher, came to the door. The American woman spoke to me through the interpreter. She handed me a small package wrapped in the prettiest paper and ribbon I had ever seen. "It is a book" the interpreter said, "from Mrs. Mendenhall to you."

I knew nothing of the book— a translation of *The Story of My Life* by Helen Keller. Mrs. Mendenhall summarized Helen's life, and talked about the relationship she had with her teacher, Anne Sullivan. I was overcome with emotion from what Mrs. Mendenhall was telling me, and what she had done. That three strangers had driven from the city on a Sunday afternoon to see me, and present me with a gift, was mind-boggling. In my world this was alien behavior.

Shortly after it was announced that the Congregational Christian Services Committee had adopted our village. From that day on, I watched an array of Americans of all ages and genders, with diverse skills and expertise, come and go. Some came once to take photographs , and were not seen again. Others visited regularly, bringing the happiness of games, food, clothing, and books. Others stayed for weeks to improve the school grounds and build a community center.



Mrs. Mendenhall was my special visitor; coming to my house with more books, telling me about America, and showing me on a US map her own city, Ithica, NY. I looked forward to her visits, and the time she took to be with me.

One day, she

asked how I liked the book *Uncle Tom's Cabin* by H.B. Stowe, that she had given me. I answered (through an interpreter) how I was affected by the story. Looking at me intensely she asked: "If you had the opportunity to go away to school, what would you want to become?" (The word "away" was used because the closest high school was 37 kilometers from the village). "A grammar school teacher. " I replied without hesitation. My teacher, who selflessly gave of himself to educate us was my role model, and I wished to be like him

After an exploration of the reasons I wanted to become a grammar school teacher, she emphatically said, "I believe you will be happier if you became a social worker." "What is a social worker?" I asked. She explained that social work was her profession, what they did, and the process by which she had become a social worker. I was astonished that students in America went to the university to learn how to help others. As puzzling as this was, however, I took what I heard seriously, because judging from Mrs. Mendenhall, this training worked

The months went by fast. The village began to lose its "ghost town" appearance; the fields had been cultivated and the first harvest of wheat, corn, and lentils was good. I was now in the fifth grade. I had a burning desire to pursue an education beyond grammar school, but the chance of this ever happening seemed nil. I knew the reasons, but had a hard time accepting them. Financially, it was impossible. Culturally, it was not condoned. No female in the history of the village, settled by Greeks in the early 1920s during the Greek Turkish population exchange, had ever left to pursue an educational objective beyond grammar school. My destiny, as had been the destiny of my oldest sister and that of hundreds of other young women who preceded me, was determined by strong cultural norms. Grammar school provided females with basic skill in the three R's; anything more was superfluous. A 6th grade female graduate was expected to work for five or six years, help her family build her dowry, and then submit to an arranged marriage before she entered young adulthood. The prospect of this collective destiny depressed me.

Mrs. Mendenhall expressed concern about my future educational plans. She vigorously implanted the idea for high school education without, it seemed then, thoughtful consideration to my circumstances. The more she talked about how my "good mind" would be wasted if I were to stay in the village, the more became depressed I became and began to feel a growing resentment toward her. One day when I no longer was able to contain my helplessness in the context of my economic and cultural reality, I shouted out "shut-up and leave me alone." My mother reprimanded me later, and the interpreter lectured me on the spot. They found my emotional reaction abhorrent. Mrs.

Mendenhall 's response, however, was different. "I understand the reasons for your anger" she said. "In your position, I would have felt the same. I know you want to go to high school and I wish to help you arrange for it" she continued. From that point on we became partners in a joint effort to make the impossible possible. I soon discovered that Mrs. Mendenhall , in addition to compassion and resourcefulness, possessed the knowledge and the skill of her helping profession.

RESOURCEFULNESS AND THE POWER OF OPPORTUNITY

She knew why I believed that I could not attend high school, but was determined to find a way to remove these obstacles. She began with the economic factor, and as I later found out, convinced the Board of the Congregational Christian Services Committee that my educational expenses could be covered through implementation of a plan that she had devised.

She introduced me to her

friend, Alice Kelsey, an American journalist. Over a period of weeks, I spent many hours with Alice Kelsey , who had begun to write a brief story about the village, and about me. The story, in the form of a pamphlet (a copy of which I still hold dear), was read to Sunday-school students in America who were then asked to contribute towards an educational fund. The early generous donations convinced the Board, and they committed themselves to supplement the monthly contributions if a deficit occurred during the six years that I would be in high school. These assurances were very important in securing my parents' consent, as they were concerned about my well-being if I were ever forced to discontinue my schooling because of the lack of finances.

Mrs. Mendenhall worked to surmount the more sensitive cultural barrier. She made good use of the teacher's support, a man whom my parents had come to revere and whose ideas they valued. He became the intermediary between my parents and the social worker. Halfway into the sixth grade it became apparent that the obstacles had been overcome, and I was instructed to start preparing for the high school entrance examination in June of 1952, which I subsequently passed.

During the next six years I met more social workers from America and American-educated Greek social workers. I took classes in English and struggled through two social work readings that Mrs. Mendenhall gave me when she returned to America: *Interviewing: Its Principles and Methods by* Annette Garret, and *Theory and Practice of Case Work* by Gordon Hamilton. Now, having had social work role models and a better understanding of the profession, I wished for an opportunity to study social work.

The opportunity presented itself the day I received a letter from yet another friend of Mrs. Mendenhall 's, Dr. Margaret Stewart, a visiting professor at the Department of Social Welfare at Pierce College, the American college in Athens.* She wrote, prompted by Mrs. Mendenhall, to inform me of a scholarship available to a qualified freshman student for the Fall of 1958. I immediately prepared the necessary papers and the following month flew to Athens to take the qualifying examination for the scholarship. For four years in this undergraduate program, I gained social work knowledge and developed basic practice skills while completing three different internships. In the summer of 1962 I left Greece to enroll in the M.S.W. program at the School of Social Work, University of Southern California on a Fulbright scholarship supplemented by other forms of financial assistance.

On my way to the West Coast, I accepted Mrs. Mendenhall 's invitation to spend a week with her and her family in Ithica. She and I did not discuss then, or at any other time, how instrumental she had been in making what I was experiencing possible. She minimized the magnitude of her contribution and, instead, attributed my progress to numerous sources of financial support, my family's and teachers' encouragement, and to my own motivation and aspirations. Her response to my apprehension about my success in American University was : "Just believe in yourself and remember that obstacles should become your challenges." Mrs. Mendenhall died in 1982, and I felt her loss deeply. I expressed my gratitude to her in an obituary that was read during her memorial service.

FROM A CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE

In the years since these events took place, I have repeatedly scrutinized my client-worker, mentor-friend relationship with Mrs. Mendenhall. Though I clearly acknowledge the art and skill of her practice I remain troubled about her application of two professional tenets.

The first is the tenet of client self-determination. Did Mrs. Mendenhall respect my right to self-determination when, going beyond an explanation of options and of resulting consequences, she insisted that I pursue a high school education? Was her intervention premature when she introduced the idea for a career in social work, rather than accept my expressed preference for the teaching profession? Was it ethical that she proceeded to devise and implement a plan for financial support without informing me of what would be involved in the process?

Woods and Hollis (1990)

*Dr. Stewart served as Department Director and President of Pierce College before returning to the U.S.

ask that social workers recognize that the concept of self-determination is a relative one. Its application, the authors state, requires "...a casework relationship that fosters mutuality [and] techniques for drawing out the client's own reasoning and decision-making capacities" (p. 27). This definition had not yet been developed when Mrs. Mendenhall studied social work. However, the importance of self-determination in practice was acknowledged.

As early as 1934 Bertha Capen Reynolds wrote: "Naturally the philosophy of self-determination for the client, relatively little tried as yet, and obviously difficult in application, presents a challenging opportunity...." (p. 43)

The second tenet is worker objectivity. Was Mrs. Mendenhall crossing the boundaries of professional objectivity when she drove to the village on her own time to bring me books she would purchase with her own money? Or when she chose to remain actively involved with my future educational and career plans long after she left the agency that brought her into my life?

The social caseworkers of Mrs. Mendenhall 's time were instructed to make continuous attempts to sustain disciplined ways of thinking and feeling (Towle, 1946). In later years the role of objectivity in practice was more specifically described by Helen Perlman (1957) when she stated that "...if he (sic) remains involved in his (sic) own feelings, the case worker is in no position to perceive with any clarity or judgment the feelings and needs of his (sic) client or his client's differences from him (sic)" (p. 81 - 82).

Was Mrs. Mendenhall driven by the fact that "the most important area in which they (Greeks) need outside help is in social welfare education" (Pauley, 1946, p.536), or by knowledge that financial assistance would only be available if I were to go into social work? Or was she driven by a desire to enhance her own professional standing in her agency by making me her "success" story?" Was she seeking personal satisfaction or was she struggling to meet some other personal need of hers?

IN SEARCH OF AN UNDERSTANDING

During my graduate studies, I learned to define the social work client as a person who is experiencing a breakdown in his/her capacity to cope with a situation due to either factors within themselves or to external forces beyond their control. My professors, American and Greek, were educated in the United States sometime between the 1930s and the 1950s. Social casework was the basic method for all fields of practice, with little of the confusion that the methodological pluralism created in later years.

Numerous formulations of the goals of social work were developed, but at the core of each there was "...implicit the assumption that the social caseworker's aims or purposes are directed toward helping the individual to develop his (sic) capacities for achieving a more personally satisfying and more socially productive life through bringing about a different relationship between him (sic) and his (sic) social environment." (Lowry, 1942)

In my own training, I learned that the social worker's intervention should be centered on the internal factors which caused the breakdown in the individual's coping capacities. Although the contribution of environmental influences was acknowledged, the person was still the system targeted for the social work intervention. While this approach made it more difficult for me to understand Mrs. Mendenhall 's entrance into my life, Slowly I came to attribute this emphasis to my professors' psycho dynamic theoretical orientation rather than to my occupation of the position of the "dysfunctional" client.

I still remember how during those early years, I would often pore over some passage of a book or of a lecture note, looking for answers to the question "where did I fit as her client?" Was it my poverty or lack of resources? The first was the result of a brutal war, while the second was due to a combination of economic factors and cultural beliefs. Both were external, environmental problems. During my high school and college years I perceived Mrs. Mendenhall as my great benefactor. I thrived in the learning environment that her persistence and resourcefulness afforded me, but I nevertheless kept wondering why she had "chosen" me!

In graduate school I studied the evolution of the social work profession in greater depth. Although the program at the Uni-

versity of Southern California favored a psychodynamic approach, my concentration in the social group work method enabled me to gain a deeper understanding of, and appreciation for the impact of environmental factors on individual social functioning and on realization of human potential. At the graduate level, I expanded my knowledge base and through well supervised internships I refined my practice skills. Never, however, did I cease to wonder why I had been a social worker's client.

I had, on occasion, posed the question to Mrs. Mendenhall as over the years of my residence in America and before her death, our relationship became more personal. Her customary response was to first present me with a list of "promising" qualities that she had seen in me, then to state that it was her expectation that others might benefit from my training, and finally to end with "...and my belief that human beings respond to opportunities which, as a social worker, I must strive to create for my clients." It was not until much later that I realized how profoundly her belief system, as expressed in this rather routine answer, had affected my own approach to practice; especially her unshaken conviction in the power of possibilities and opportunities.

The fact that so many years later I have written this narrative might be a renewed attempt on my part to better understand her practices in the international arena by placing them in a macro—historical context.

FROM A MACRO HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Mrs. Mendenhall completed her social work training in the early 1940s. She was a student during an era when philosophical differences between two schools of thought, the diagnostic and the functional, created a professional schism and divided social workers into "diagnostics" and "functionalists" (Smalley, 1967). The diagnostic school was influenced by Freudian psychoanalytic theory and practice. It approached clients from a psychology of illness. The word "treatment" was used to describe the nature of the caseworker's work (Hamilton, 1940, 1948; Reynolds, 1942, 1934; Lowry, 1938, 1942; Richmond, 1922; Towle, 1941, 1946, 1948).

The functional school, on the other hand, was influenced by the teachings and writings of Otto Rank and worked from a psychology of growth. The term "help" was used to describe a relational process between the worker and the client and was defined by an agency's function (Pray, 1947, 1949; Robinson, 1930, 1942; Taft, 1937, 1944).

Mrs. Mendenhall had a diagnostic orientation; nevertheless, her practices seem to have been more representative of the functional school. From my current perspective, that of a seasoned social worker, I am able to ponder her application of method and use of technique with greater insight and a better understanding.

Mrs. Mendenhall was a generalist, one whose practice went beyond the definition Mary Richmond gave the term at the Milford Conference in 1929. She used the psycho social model before Florence Hollis conceptualized it. She focused on client strengths rather than on individual pathologies; by doing so, it seems, she departed, consciously or unintentionally, from the practice principles that she had been taught. Her interventions were goal directed, however unilaterally these goals were set during the early phases of our relationship. Her respect for cultural practices surpassed the significance accorded them in the literature available to her. Belief in the client's self-worth and in his right to be treated with dignity; advocacy on the client's behalf; and, above all, ingenuity, foresight, and resourcefulness characterized her practice.

There was efficacy in Mrs. Mendenhall 's practice but some aspects of it, as stated earlier, raised questions. These may have been inevitable, given the profession's evolution at the time. In my eyes and heart, she delivered what Hamilton (1948) asked all of us in this field to believe in; the idea that "...the greatest gift anyone can offer is to enable another to realize his own capacities for change and growth" (p. 294). And while this was the outcome of her interventions with me, I have been unable to ascertain with certainty whether there was violation of professional tenets in her practice or whether experiences like mine call for an ongoing evaluation of professional principles.

From my personal perspective, Mrs. Mendenhall 's prac-

tice in the arena of international social work and within a historical context made all the difference in who I am, and what I do and value. And thus I am led to ask: Can it be that for the benefit of our clients we need to assign relative rather than absolute meanings to basic professional tenets and principles within differing socioeconomic, cultural, and other human contexts? And, can it be that this becomes a critical question for current and future social workers challenged by increasingly more diverse client orientations, behavioral practices, and outcome expectations. What paradigm shift would we need to make? □

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REFLECTIONS ON A PROFESSIONAL'S LIFE AS AN INTERNATIONALIST
AN INTERVIEW WITH KATHERINE A. KENDALL

During a distinguished career with the United Nations, the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), and the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW), Dr. Katherine A. Kendall visited, met and consulted with colleagues in nearly 50 countries around the glob. Her work in giving leadership to the international advancement of social work education has been accorded widespread and well deserved recognition. Perhaps the most readily available recognition known to many members of the social work profession is a collection of her articles and addresses conceived as a way of honoring her at the time of her retirement from the IASSW in 1978. The collection appears in a published volume aptly entitled Reflections on Social Work Education - 1950-1978.

Dr. Kendall continues to contribute actively her time, thought, energy and inspiration in behalf of the social work profession and social work education, both nationally and internationally.

By James Billups

James Billups, Ph.D., is Professor, The Ohio State University College of Social Work, and President, Inter-University Consortium for International Social Development, Columbus OH

In late March, 1996, I interviewed Katherine Kendall in her home just outside of Washington, DC. Pictured at the left are the interviewer and Dr. Kendall during a meeting of the Executive Council of the Inter-University Consortium for International Social Development, University of Calgary, Alberta, Canada, July 1995.

Jim Billups (JB): *We begin at the beginning, as far as your professional career is concerned, what prompted you to take up a career in a helping profession?*

Katherine Kendall (KK)That's an interesting question because my motivation may have been a bit different from that of many people entering social work. It is a long story, let me begin.

The story begins at the University of Illinois in Urbana. That is where I did my undergraduate work in romance languages, history, and philosophy. It was there that I met my future husband, Willmoore Kendall. Only a year older than I, he was already an assistant professor in romance languages while working on his doctorate. He entered Northwestern University at 14 as a boy prodigy and had earned his B.A. and M.A. degrees. He started out as my teacher but he ended up as my fiancee. We traveled in a young, rather Bohemian faculty crowd, more interested in literature and art than in anything political or social. My firm intention was to become a journalist and, especially, a foreign correspondent. And there was the usual sophomoric wish to write "The Great American Novel."

That all changed when Ken, which is what I called him, won a Rhodes scholarship and spent three years in Oxford. He studied (what is called) "Modern Greats," a combination of economics, political science, philosophy, and, in general, the social sciences. When I finished my degree, I followed him to England.

Again, we found ourselves involved with an interesting group, young student leftists and some rather special professors, mostly neo-Fabians. Everyone seemed to be left-wing in Oxford in that period of the thirties. You will remember that the thirties also were dominated on the Continent by popular front movements. We were in Paris at the time of Léon Blum and the famous sit-down strikes. Later, after we were married in London, we lived in Madrid where Ken was a foreign correspondent for the United Press —so, he became the foreign correspondent and I tagged along trying to learn all the things he was learning, first at Oxford and then in his work.

We were in Spain before the Civil War and again became very involved, this time with the supporters of the United Front which elected Azaña in 1935. (I believe it was.) We saw this as a triumph of democracy and Ken decided Spain would no longer be very interesting! Also, he wanted to return to academia. An offer of a teaching fellowship from the University of Illinois, which we always associated with a very happy period in our lives, prompted us to leave Spain in 1936. This was just before the Civil War broke out. In fact, we were on the high seas and almost decided to return, particularly after Ken was offered a public relations assignment in the Loyalist government. But we had burned our bridges and had made inviolable commitments to family as well as to the University of Illinois. Our support of the Loyalists got us into a bit of trouble at Illinois and with the Chicago Tribune newspaper.

The point of all this in relation to social work is that the years from 1933 to 1936 constituted a period of total transformation in my thinking and my life. I have never lost interest in literature and the arts, but the social and economic problems, the injustices, and the causes to which I was exposed completely changed my goals. My experiences in Europe colored me not "red" but "pink." I wanted to reform society. It was always understood in our marriage that I would have a career and I knew by 1936 that it had to be something "social." But I had no idea what until I found social work.

JB: *Then what happened? How did you discover social work?*

KK: It took a little while because Ken who was working on his doctorate in political science had a teaching fellowship that barely kept a graduate student alive. To keep us going, I worked at two part-time jobs, one on the local newspaper and the other as a tutor in a sorority house. The latter was interesting because it was the sorority to which the Dean of Women belonged. She was a very bright woman and it was a source of personal embarrassment that her sorority was pretty much at the bottom of the list academically. She recruited to me spend several hours every night, except Friday and Saturday, as a tutor. I had to keep their noses to the academic grindstone. It worked well enough and I was out of a job at the end of the year.

That was fine because Ken had finished all his work on the doctorate except the dissertation and we moved again — this time to Louisiana. That is rather an interesting story, too, which starts with Huey Long's ambition to make LSU a great university, famous for more than its marching bands. Money was appropriated by the legislature to bring in famous people. They garnered some really outstanding faculty members, such as Cleanth Brooks, one of our great literary critics, and Robert Penn Warren, the famous novelist. Charles Hyneman of the University of Illinois, one of the well-known imports, was recruited to head the Government Department and he brought Ken and me to LSU with him. At last, it was possible to start my career as we had an income on which we could live comfortably. But what should I do? Law had been uppermost in my mind because, as a lawyer, one could certainly attack injustice. But law was not an attractive option in Louisiana where the Napoleonic Code still made it difficult to practice elsewhere.

All my life, I have been lucky, and at LSU I was lucky again. Ken came home after his first day and said: " You know Katherine, they're starting something new here, right in our building. I don't know what it is, but it sounds like what you have been looking for. It is called social work. You had better look into it."

And so I did, the very next day. Louisiana was fortunate in starting pretty much from scratch in establishing its Department of Social Welfare. Relief had been handled by the parishes (counties) under old poor-law provisions which were readily abandoned after the passage of the Social Security Act. A number of first-rate, social workers were

imported to help set up and administer the new department. And one of the first things they asked for was qualified social workers to staff the local offices. This led to the establishment of the social work program at LSU.

I was interviewed by the Director, Runo Arné , a venerable old chap who recently died at the age of I00. He asked me a lot of questions and I asked him a lot of questions. I decided that this, indeed, was what I was looking for. Classes were starting the next day so he decided to let me in immediately. Later, when I was in charge of accreditation at the CSWE, I used to tease them about "buying a pig in a poke. " My references weren't checked and I did not make out a searching personal inventory of my strengths, weaknesses, and desires. Just think of what they might have discovered!

JB:: *Now you have entered professional education. Is there anything else you would care to share?*

KK: I have mentioned my desires and they did create problems. I must have been a frightful pain because my passion for social action kept me on a soap box all the time. In my view at that time, the real job of the social worker was to put ourselves out of business by changing the social and economic conditions that led to poverty and injustice. All of that I proclaimed until I was placed in field work. When I started working with clients, I discovered there were other things in heaven and earth than the abominations of society. I learned that impoverished human relationships can create every bit as much misery as inadequate social institutions. So, by the end of the first year, I became really convinced that social work had, and would always have a helping function as well as a social reform function. I decided that we shouldn't go out of business after all. And I am still convinced we can do both. Perhaps only the rare person can function equally well as both a social and individual change agent, but the profession can and should make room for both.

I became even more convinced of this in my first year in practice. As the first qualified social worker in the Baton Rouge Parish Department of Public Welfare. I was given a specialized caseload, hopefully to demonstrate the value of professional education. It was a great responsibility and a marvelous experience which really helped to pin down the course of my professional life. It was a small caseload drawn from all the assistant categories. What the clients had in common was a perceived potential for a return to independence. There was so much that I learned from them about living conditions, about relationships, about what happens to children, about resilience. Most of all about the ability of people to use help and resources if it is there for them. When I hear the discussions now on workfare and welfare reform, I remember that case load. Good social work with adequate resources and sustained professional support on the road to independence is a better answer than any I have yet heard.

JB: *Then, you went on for your doctorate?*

KK: One of my professors, Henry Coe Lanpher, convinced me that I needed to study under Edith Abbott and Sophonisba Breckinridge at the University of Chicago. There was a question about whether my unaccredited master's degree from LSU would be accepted. The LSU program was accredited only for the first year.

My second year was highly individualized and I was the only student. It was

almost like Oxford, with tutoring in social work subjects along with specialized field work. I took extra courses in the social sciences to fill in what I considered gaps in my earlier education. It was effective because of the personal attention I received.

Edith Abbott did accept me for doctoral study, but it was agreed I should have more field work. Later, I was fortunate enough to serve as one of her research assistants. Being that close to her was another marvelous experience. Working on the doctorate was pretty wonderful throughout. With Sophonisba Breckinridge and Charlotte Towle in the classroom and Lois Wildy as my field instructor in child welfare, I was in clover.

JB: *Could you tell us something about the series of international responsibilities that you have assumed over the years following your doctoral studies?*

KK: I suppose it was in my bones to become international. I was born in the Highlands of Scotland and educated there until the family immigrated to the United States. I was 10 when we came to this country. Being an immigrant, it is perhaps natural that I should feel I belong to more than one country. Then, going back to Europe and living in England, France, and Spain, I felt very much at home overseas. I have always enjoyed getting to know people in other countries and working with them. I also loved the Romance languages which I mastered in the written language. I became somewhat fluent in spoken Spanish, but never quite made it in French.

In Spain I was fascinated that I could go into a shop with a picture from *Vogue* and get an exact copy made of a hat or dress or whatever. I decided it would be fun to learn how to make hats and talked myself into a job as an unpaid apprentice in one of the fancy shops. That was really something. I didn't know much about sewing, but the girls(sic) in the workroom took me on with much amusement as a rather hopeless case. They were right. I may not have learned much about hat making, but I certainly learned a lot of idiomatic Spanish. Best of all was getting to know some of the girls (sic), visiting in their homes and meeting their families.

It was knowledge of Spanish that started my international career. In the forties, the US became involved in exchange programs with Latin America. Actually the first group to come to the US under the program were social work educators. The Children's Bureau, then in the Department of Labor, set up a special unit to organize their study and travel experiences. Elizabeth Shirley Enochs, who was an extraordinary talented woman, headed the unit. She needed an assistant and Edith Abbott suggested that I might be the right person. So I delayed my doctorate work for an exciting period with the Children's Bureau, working at first with Latin-American social workers and later, after the end of World War II , with social workers from all over the world.

By that time, Ken had gone to Hobart College in upstate New York. This was the beginning of my living in one place and his living in another. Sometimes I tried to follow him and once he tried to follow me, but that didn't work. In time, this was a factor in ending the marriage, but not our friendship.

JB: *When did you go to the United Nations and what of your work there?*

KK: After my experience at the Children's Bureau, it was perhaps inevitable that I should go to the United Nations because one of the first studies they commissioned had to do with the training and exchange of social welfare personnel. I turned it into a survey and analysis of training for social work all around the world.

It was a fabulous experience working at the U. N. in those early days of 1947 as all the programs were shining new and idealistic. We were located at Lake Success in a barn of a building that had produced material for the war effort and now it was peace factory. In that period, people there were so imbued with the promise of the United Nations that there they had no question that the world would eventually, if not soon, be safe from the scourges of war and other evils. In that period, too, the UN. was not bureaucratic to the extent that it became later. Communication flowed easily. I got to know members of the Social Commission and had their help in locating the best people o provide data. I was able to go directly to government agencies and practically everywhere for information. Later, such requests had to go through departments of state or foreign affairs and communication became more difficult. As a result, I got to know, at least by corre-

spondence, leading social work educators in almost all countries where there were schools of social work. Then in 1950, at the first International Congress of Schools of Social Work after the War, Ibecame involved with the IASSW — the International Association of Schools of Social Work.

JB: *Yes, your involvement with the IASSW is certainly well-known. What was your experience?*

KK: The 1950 International Congress of Schools of Social Work was my first Congress but I had been in touch with officers and members of the IASSW in connection with the UN study. It had just been completed and I was invited to keynote the Congress with a report on its findings. It was a frightening experience to stand up before all those important social work educators and I was pretty scared. However, it turned out all right, although the speech itself created something of a flap because I was making the case for university education for social work before an audience of Europeans. Except for the United Kingdom, social work education at the time was conducted under non-university auspices in Europe. It took quite a while for university education to become the norm in some of those countries and in others it is still not accomplished.

At any rate, after the Congress, Dr. René Sand, a very good and great man, tapped me on the shoulder and said: "You are on the Executive Board of the IASSW." (I was elected secretary.) That was how board members were recruited and "elected" in those days! René Sand was one of the greatest people I have ever known. He was truly a Renaissance man. A medical doctor with a social mission, knowledgeable about everything from art and architecture to the furthest reaches of science. He founded the International Conference of Social Work (ICSW) and with others, the IASSW. He initiated social work education in Latin America and was a key figure in WHO and other international organizations. He believed in social work and professional education.

JB: You began your administrative responsibilities with the IASSW as it's elected secretary. Could you tell us how that came about?

KK: In a way it was René Sand again. As a member of the Board, I became fascinated by the organization and the people in charge. They were mostly Europeans, and all of them were leaders in social work education. Also, I had decided to take on the IASSW as a cause, not just because of the invitation to keynote the 1950 Congress. Before that, while I was still with the United Nations, I had persuaded Sir Raphael Citento, the Assistant Secretary General in charge of Social Affairs, to sponsor an expert group meeting of social work leaders to advise the UN. on its social welfare activities. Most of the people invited were already on hand.

This was right after the end of World War II. Both the ICSW and the IASSW were in a state of disintegration and shock. To help them come back to life, the National Conference on Social Welfare sponsored a mini-international conference at the time of its annual conference in Atlantic City. In those days, it was also the custom of graduate

schoolsof social work in the American Association of Schools of Social Work to hold meetings at the time of the National Conference.

René Sand was there as the major representative of the ICSW. As president of the IASSW he was invited to speak at the end of a business session of the American Association. Because of a slip-up of some kind, there were only 6 people in the audience to hear him bring a poignant and beautiful message from "the schools of the old world to the schools of the new world." He was visibly shaken and very angry. He thought the American schools were turning their backs on their international colleagues. I, too was angry, and made a vow that I was going to make American schools aware of the International Association if it was the last thing I ever did. This was a little like my social action days back in my youth. The IASSW became a cause.

JB: *And this has been one of your continuing causes?*

KK: Oh, absolutely, absolutely, without question. Actually, it wasn't long afterwards that the American Association signed up its entire membership as members with the IASSW. I wonder if my becoming Executive Secretary of the American Association had anything to do with that! And I guess I'm still at it.

René Sand died in 1953. The other leaders in Europe were old and tired. Dr. Moltzer of the Netherlands was doing his best as Secretary. He was a dear old chap who knew it was time for a change. He said, "It's not for us now. Younger people have to take over." I had already become involved and was offered the job as President or Secretary. It seemed to me that what they needed most was someone who would do the work so I opted for Secretary. But I had to be sure it was okay with my boss, Ernest Witte, because by that time the Council on Social Work Education had been established. I was the Educational Secretary and Ernest was the Executive Director. How I loved that man. People either loved him or disliked him, but I am sure everyone admired him. He was a hard-driving worker, wonderfully principled with great vision, and almost as compulsive as I am about getting things done — maybe even more compulsive. We saw eye-to-eye on most things, but there were moments of red-hot arguments.

I went to him and said, "This job of Secretary of the International is going to take some time." I was in charge of accreditation, curriculum development, consultation, and all the educational services. We were understaffed and very busy. Ernest said: "All right, you can do it, if you do it on your own time and it doesn't cost us anything. Your own money and your own time." "Okay," I said, "I'll take that "

And it worked out fine, because of all the people who were working with me. That was the joy of it. The new President was Jan de Jongh, Director of the Amsterdam School of Social Work, the oldest school of social work in the world. He was also the Dutch representative on the UN Social Commission. The old guard had a hard time persuading him to take on the job. He finally agreed when he understood he would have the help of a great team. There was Dame Eileen Younghusband of the United Kingdom, one of the greatest of our forebears, who came on as Vice-President. There was Charles "Chick" Hendry of the University of Toronto, another giant in our field, who took over as Treasurer. The team, including myself as Secretary, was elected in 1954 at the second post-War International Congress of Schools of Social Work held in Toronto.

Now it was time for what Dr. Moltzer, the former Secretary, described as "new managers, new laws." We started doing all sorts of new things, some of which our old friends in Europe were a little worried about. Remember we were all volunteers. They wondered how we could possibly manage to run the organization, working across the Atlantic Ocean, that great expanse of water! How were we going to do it with a secretary in the US, a treasurer in Canada, and the others, including most Board members, in Europe. Up to that point, almost everything had been European. We immediately began to involve the developing countries, all the nations that were producing their own leaders. Latin Americans had been somewhat involved, but only peripherally. We got them in up to their necks. That led to the establishment of the Latin American Association of Schools of Social Work. As more and more schools and educators in Africa became involved we helped them create the Association for Social Work Education in Africa. It was in Asia that we probably had our most far reaching influence. Our

family planning project produced the Asian and Pacific Association for Social Work Education. Those were some of the acomplishments in the years when I was Secretary due without question to the many outstanding prople who gave wolunteer service to the IASSW.

After Jan de Jongh, Dame Eileen Younghusband served as President for 8 years. She stayed with us as Honorary President until her death in an automobile accident in 1981. For me, it was a tragic personal loss as well as a loss to the field. We had worked together for so long at the UN, the council where she did a special consultation job for us. Then, Herman Stein continued the tradition of great leadership. I had worked with him on countless projects at the Council. He was Council President while I was Executive Director. It was a tremendous joy to work with him as President of the IASSW after I had become its Secretary-General. Finally, the last President with whom I worked was the delightful and wonderfully talented Robin Huws Jones, who was another of the outstanding British educators who were committed internationalists. All those Presidents had much in common. One outstanding feature they shared was a marvelous wit and a sense of humor. How often their light touch and ready wit eased tensions and saved the day when the Board members got tied up in knots.

It will be a nostalgic experience at the Congress in Hong Kong. Herman and Robin will receive the Katherine A. Kendall Award for outstanding international contributions to social work education. I will be there to present it. The ceremony will come at the end of the Eileen Younghusband Lecture that willl be given by a dear friend and colleague Sattereh Farman-Farmaian. What an emotional time that will be for me. I hope I survive it.

JB: *Tell us about your international work with the Council. When did you become Executive Director and what was the arrangement with CSWE and with IASSW?*

KK: I was with the Council from the very beginning in 1952 As Executive Secretary of the American Association of Schools of Social Work (the graduate schools) I was one of the midwives at the birth of the council. Betty Neely, who was the Assistant Secretary of the American Association, and I were the first staff members. My job was Educational Secretary. In 1958, Ernst Witte decided he needed an Associate Executive Director and I was appointed to that position. When Ernest left in 1963, I somewhat reluctantly agreed to serve as Executive Director. I said I would try it for three years as I much preferred working on educational questions. Ernest had done a splendid job of fund raising and administration and I knew it would be difficult for anyone to match his talents in those areas. However, I did enjoy it and was able to keep a hand in the IASSW through the employment of Alix Szilasi as an administrative assistant for international work. She was a life saver with her many languages and exceptional secretarial talents.

From the beginning, the Council had a strong international outlook. Ernest Witte had carried out a number of overseas assignments. Mildred Sikkema, who early on had been added to the staff for accreditation and other educational services, was deeply interested in cross-cultural studies. She helped enormously with the IAASW. Betty Neely had close connections with a variety of international organizations. Arnie Pins, who joined me as Associate Executive Director, was also very international. I was not alone by any means.

From 1954, 1 served the IASSW as the elected Secretary. We had completely revamped the By-Laws to introduce some democracy into our operations. There was a clause limiting terms of office to four years with the possibility of reelection for another four years. An exception for the position of Secretary was introduced when my name kept coming up every four years for re-election. It became rather farcical to think of this as an elected office. But that was how it was until 1966 when I had to make a decision.

The IASSW Board, looking toward the possibility of an independent Secretarial, changed the elected office of Secretary into a staff position as Secretary General. Jane Hoey had left the IASSW a little money which enabled us to work on plans to raise money. This was the period when President Johnson had declared strong support for international education. The US Congress in 1966 passed, but unfortunately, never funded the International Education Act. John Gardner, one of my favorite people of all time, was Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare(HEW). He was given authority to admin-

ister the act, and set up a Center in HEW for that purpose. Money was to be made available to educational institutions and associations. He was a good friend of the Council and all of us saw this as a beacon of hope for financing international activities. The Council Board established a Division of International Education. Universities all across the US. were doing the same thing.

JB: *What happened then?*

KK: I had to make a choice the IASSW wanted me to take over, to the extent possible, as Secretary-General. Of course, there was very little money available for a staff position. At the Council, we had already added (1964) an amendment to the By-Laws to affirm our interest in international cooperation. When the smoke cleared, I had made my choice. I left the post of Executive Director of the Council to become its Director of International Education. It was pretty much understood that I could also serve as Secretary-General of the IASSW. In other words, we split the difference, using whatever resources were available from the IASSW to add to CSWE resources for the new Division of International Education. Herman Stein was President then, and Arnie Pins taking over as the Executive Director, I had strong support for our international work. It didn't last long, but it was great while it lasted.

I left the Council in 1971. With a huge grant from AID and additional support from the Swedish and Canadian counterparts of AID the IASSW set up an independent Secretariat. We remained in New York with the Council. I not only had a full-time job as Secretary-General, I had a staff in this country, and regional representatives in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. We recruited educators from the different regions as regional representatives. The funds were given to promote social development and family planning. It was the right moment. Both social development and family planning were emerging as new responsibilities for social work education, particularly in the developing countries. The projects made possible all sorts of good things, seminars, advisory services with consultants drawn from every region, books, and teaching material. It was a great period and lasted until my first retirement in 1978.

JB: *You certainly wore a number of hats with an international emphasis.*

KK: In the US, the international emphasis was very strong in the fifties. That was when many faculty members had opportunities under UN and UNICEF or with Fulbright grants to go around the world. They came back with a very different attitude toward the international aspects of social work and social work education. They were convinced it was important. That rubbed off on other faculty. Also, the American Association of Social Workers (now NASW) had international committees in a great many chapters that worked with graduate schools on international projects. This was a period of heavy international involvement.

Then, towards the end of the sixties, the international emphasis began to fade because other matters became more important. You'll remember this was the time of student and faculty uprisings. Then, there was the whole new look at minorities and their position in social work and social work education. When I moved into full-time work with the IASSW, the international emphasis was no longer as significant in the American schools. By that time, they had too many other things on their minds.

Some years later, colleagues such as Werner Boehm, another committed internationalist, began agitating for an international committee at the Council. He finally succeeded and international was resuscitated. And now it is alive and well. Now there is a Commission on International Education. Lynne Healy, in her research, discovered what was being done in the schools in the way of comparative study and international courses She found there were more faculty members interested in international work and content than we had realized. It was a matter of bringing them together. The Commission has done that. We now have symposium

sessions at the Council's Annual Program Meetings and the newsletter *Inter-Ed*, which has a wide circulation. We have a special initiative with Mexico. And we even have a new IASSW regional association for North America and the Caribbean. Mexico is also involved in both the Latin American and North American Associations.

Everyone talks about our "global village" and indeed that is what we are. What with all the technological developments, we have come closer and closer together. We can get on Internet and talk to colleagues almost anywhere. We can fax letters and documents in the blink of an eye. So, I am really quite optimistic about what is happening at the Council. Of course, there is the usual problem of no money. But there are lots of us who keep it going as volunteers. Don Beless, the Executive Director is wonderful. He is internationally oriented and couldn't be more helpful. Moses Newsome, the current CSWE President, is also strongly international. The future looks good.

JB: *Yes, I noticed in a recent Issue of* Inter-Ed *that there was quite a long list of courses on International social work, social welfare, and social development taught in American schools. That seems to be a growing trend. Correct?*

KK: To my delight that is correct. There are some significant players. Lynne Healy is in charge of a new Center for International Studies at the University of Connecticut. A Curriculum Resource File at the Center is where the course outlines you mentioned are listed. Terry Hokenstad at Case Western Reserve is deeply engaged in international curriculum development and exchange around the world. Dick Estes, too, is a world-traveled expert, a technological whiz. He is doing a great job at the University of Pennsylvania preparing social workers for employment internationally. Janet Wood Wetzel of Adelphi is in the thick of the women's movement internationally. Mark Lusk at Boise State has had extensive experience in Latin America and right now I think he is in the Republic of Kazahstan as a World Bank consultant on agricultural reform. Jim Midgley at Louisiana State University(now UC, Berkeley) is internationally known for his scholarly work on social development. He, along with others, such as Chuck Guzzetta have made great contributions to the professional literature on international social work and social development.

I don't think, however, that we will really have a full resurgence until there are more opportunities for international employment. If international work is available, it can be seen as a career. Then, you know that something will happen in education. Unhappily, most of the international organizations in our field are not well-off. They don't have big payrolls, Also, there is the problem that many of the organizations that should or might use social workers don't know enough about us. Beth Rosenthal discovered that in her doctoral research. International voluntary agencies might employ social workers if they knew more about what we could offer,

JB: This is certainly a major challenge for the profession. But back to you. What would you say are the highlights of your career?

KK: Well, I think my work with the United Nations was certainly one of the highlights. It was important in setting me on course for the rest of my professional life. At the time, it was important for the profession, particularly for social work beginnings in the developing world. As a result of favorable discussion of the report on training for social work, the Social Commission sent a significant resolution to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly where it was adopted in 1950. 1 can show you the resolution and it might be interesting to copy out the important part which put social work on the map, so to speak. Here it is:

> *... That social work should in principle be a professional function performed by men and women who have received professional training by taking a formal course of social work theory and practice in an appropriate educational institution... and that these courses, whether provided in universities or special schools, should be of the highest possible quality and should be sufficiently comprehensive to do justice to both the variety and the unity of social work. (United Nations, Social Commission Report 1950: 3).*

This was the United Nations calling for social work education. Well, social work in the newly independent nations took off like a rocket. The important phrase was that social work, in principle, should be "a professional function performed by men and women who received professional training. You see, that, in effect, established social work as a profession whose practitioners had to have special preparation. That had not been thought of much before in the work of the United Nations. So, in providing social welfare advisory services, the UN gave high priority to training programs. That meant starting schools of social work or improving any schools of social work that already existed. UN and UNISEF programs also included international and regional seminars, expert groups, and fellowships as well as technical assistance. The IASSW was a partner in all those activities. We were called upon to chair or participate in all the seminars and expert groups. We recommended educators for the technical assistance activities. In general, we worked hand in glove with the Social Affairs staff at the Secretariat At that time, many of them were highly qualified social workers.

The study did have quite an impact in the beginning. It analyzed what existed at the time and set forth recommendations for future action. I guess it could be rated as an accomplishment. But it is one I have forgotten and everyone else has forgotten by this time. Now that we are talking about it, I do remember particularly having a great time with a collection of definitions of social work, They came in from quite a few countries. They ranged all the way from social work as alms-giving in Saudi Arabia to the advanced professional services of the US and the UK.

As an exercise, I played around with the international definition of "health" in the constitution of the World Health Organization. It was amazing. With a few word changes, it could have been a definition of social welfare, broadly conceived. Alva Myrdal, who was at that time the head of the Department of Social Affairs, loved it. But there was no way we could use it as an international definition of social work. It would have been great for social development but our data simply could not support it.

The Social Commission members at that time were mostly ministers or heads of social welfare programs in their countries. It was lucky they were so well-disposed toward professional training. The Commission asked for a follow-up report at two-year intervals. One of the follow-up studies was the third international survey of social work training. Eileen Younghusband did that one. It was much more significant than the first one because it got into the nuts and bolts of professional education. For many years it served as the Bible for curriculum building in new schools in the developing world. Much of what she defined as the core still holds true. I believe there were five studies before the Social Commission and Economic and Social Council became less and less social and more and more economic in their resolutions and activities. Today, there is very little evidence of interest in social work or social work education.

JB: *I see that this study,* Training for Social Work: An International Survey, was *published by the United*

Nations Department of Social Affairs In 1950. Didn't it later become the basis of your doctoral dissertation'?

KK: Actually, in effect, this was it. Helen Wright, the Dean of the School of Social Service Administration at the University of Chicago, was my advisor. We talked about the study as a possible dissertation before I took it on. She wondered whether there would be enough depth and analysis to make it viable as a dissertation and kept that question open. We worked together on the questionnaires and I made frequent trips to the University for her guidance. You see, there was nobody at the U. N- in the Department of Social Affairs who could work with me on this. Very few of them knew much about social work or social work education or research. As the data piled up and as the study took shape, it was obvious that all the requirements for analysis, depth, creativity, etc. could be met.

I don't want to go on and on about the study. But It was such a great experience that now we have started, I remember so many things. The New York School (Columbia now) placed a foreign student with me for field work. She was Swiss and practically lived with me throughout much of her second year. Our methods were pretty primitive. Everything had to be sorted by country and, then, by the different subject areas. We had all these little piles of information about the individual schools and about social work. When we ran out of space on desks, we sorted on the floor. Then, when we ran out of space at the office, we sorted on the floor of my apartment in Great Neck. There was no clerical help to speak of, so I did most of the typing. Most of the material was in English, French, or Spanish with a little in German. My student knew German as well as French. Between us, we could handle translation of the data. The translation of the questionnaires and the final translations of the report were done by professionals at the UN. And thereby hangs another tale.

When the questionnaires were sent to the translation service, I asked for a Russian version. That could be done only if authorized by the USSR delegate to the Social Commission. I buttonholed him, told him about the study, and asked for his help. He would have none of it. He said the USSR didn't need social work because there was no poverty. Also, he was sure that what came out of the study would be US propaganda. Well, I answered that he knew more than I did because I wouldn't know what would come out of the study until I had the data. If he wanted to outdo the US., he should be sure that the USSR point of view was represented. For that, we had to have answers to the questionnaire. Well, he agreed to talk to me in my office, but only for 30 minutes.

I had pictures of three of my Godchildren on my desk When he came, he looked at them and asked if they were my children. I said, "No, they are my Godchildren." He looked puzzled and asked: "What are Godchildren?" I explained as best I could and then asked if he had children. Yes, he did and they lived in Brooklyn. We talked about his children and how they were doing at school, etc. Then, I asked about children in the USSR. Were they ever abused, neglected, abandoned, etc.? Most countries had problems like that. Yes, the children in Russia sometimes had problems. Then, I asked how they were handled and learned about the special cadres to take care of such things. And did they have special training? Yes, they did. Well, we went through the whole range of Charlotte Towel's common human needs and problems — all, that is, except poverty which I carefully avoided. The upshot was that they did have ways of dealing with social problems but, as you would guess, they were not the ways of the West. He stayed for almost an hour and agreed to have the questionnaire translated and sent to Moscow. That was the last I heard of it. Although it was foolish to think there would be a reply from the bureaucracy in Moscow. It was a disappointment. One good thing that came out of it was my realization that there are many different ways of sharing experiences. Even when there may be great differences in the approach and handling of problems, there is much that we can find in common. I always like to look for universals.

JB: *Let's look now at some of your personal challenges. What are the greatest you have encountered?*

KK: Of course, we are constantly being challenged in social work. That seems to go with the territory. It was hard for me to juggle both jobs, the Council and the International Association. I have hinted that I am somewhat compulsive and I had to do right by both of them— So, it did mean long hours. It also

meant I always used week-ends and vacations for IASSW business. As Ernest said: On my own time and with my own money. Actually, I did take time away from the Council for some of my international activities and Ernest was always very good about it. Almost all the trips I took, hundreds and hundreds of them, I had to do on my own money and the only money I had came from my salary. But then, I don't live expensively so that didn't matter too much. I'd rather spend money trotting around the world than buying a house or automobiles. Time was perhaps more of a problem. I did a lot of writing at the Council — reports and policy statements. Also a lot of traveling in the US. as a consultant. On the plus side, I had wonderful help. I was blessed with first-rate secretaries and, as the years passed, a great many dedicated IASSW volunteers. I suppose the challenge was to get enough people interested so that they would become committed. That was certainly one of the most satisfying aspects of my work with the IASSW. There were so many committed colleagues in Europe, in Latin America, in Asia and, of course, in the U S. and Canada. I can't begin to name them all. We didn't have as many in Africa, but Yvonne Asamoah, who was then in Ghana and now heads the CSWE International Commission, was one of our best.

JB: *Have you noticed that some professionals in social work today will hardly go to the next city, much less to a more distant place, unless they are paid?*

KK: Yes, we used to have much more volunteer activity than I think we do now. In fact, some of my colleagues tell me I set a very bad example in not expecting payment for all the volunteer work I do. I guess I feel the need to "pay back" what has been given to me in my career. There have been so many opportunities. I really wish there was more of a sense of giving instead of always expecting to receive. This may be something in our field that we should look at. As social workers, we do a lot of asking for support for the people we serve and the causes we believe in. Perhaps, on social work salaries, we can't be philanthropists, but I would like to see ourselves as givers as well as beneficiaries of financial help. There are lots of benefits in working as a volunteer at something you believe in. And in the long run, believe me, the benefits in friendships and missions achieved are better than money.

JB:. *Were there other personal challenges you recall?*

KK: Yes, there are indeed. One of the major challenges, particularly at the beginning, was to make the IASSW truly an international organization. It was called the International Committee of Schools of Social Work until 1954. It had started in Europe and, not surprisingly, remained pretty much European until after World War 11. Europe was where the international action was in social work education. Belgium, France, Switzerland, Holland, Italy, and the Scandinavian countries dominated the scene.

Before the Nazi period in Germany, the schools there played an important role. Alice Salomon, one of the founders of the IASSW and the first President and Secretary, came from Berlin. I must tell you about her. She has been called the Jane Addams of Germany. Her family had lived in Germany for many years. When it was discovered that she was Jewish, she was expelled in 1937 by the Gestapo. She became a refugee and it broke her. She had always had a red carpet welcome wherever she had gone. As an exile, her life was very different. Many people tried to help her, but the adjustment was too difficult. In 1948, she died a lonely death in the United States. Fortunately, her truly remarkable contributions are now being brought to light in research by German social work educators, notably Joachim Wieler. That was a detour but I had to say something about Alice Salomon. We don't pay enough attention to the contributions of our pioneers.

To get back to the challenge, parts of the world other than Europe were represented in the IASSW, but only peripherally. There were some Canadians and a few from the United States. Also one or two from Chile and Brazil where Rene' Sand had so much influence. We worked awfully hard to identify schools and individuals and get them involved. The UN study helped. All the schools that had been identified and the leaders who had contributed data became interested in continuing some connection with international colleagues. The new schools that were being established were eager to join an international organization. So, it took a little time, but it wasn't too long before the membership

increased by leaps and bounds. This made it possible to hold our Congresses in parts of the world we had not been before, not just the Western world. And now, of course, the influence of the West is no greater than the influence of any other part of the world. In fact, it may be less.

There were other challenges, too. The ongoing challenge that all social welfare and social work organizations face is the challenge of finding money to do the job. It's not at all ennobling to be poor. It is a pain. And it keeps us from doing what really needs to be done. The IASSW has done remarkably well in helping the countries in Eastern Europe develop programs of social work education, but it could do a lot more if we had assured financial support as we did in the seventies.

Perhaps I should just mention that there have also been physical challenges. I sometimes describe myself as a bionic woman with ersatz ears, corneal transplants, and a rearranged interior. In my early twenties, I learned that I was losing my hearing. Fortunately, hearing aids took care of that and again 1 was lucky. I had excellent bone conduction so the aid I used the rest of my professional life was tucked away behind my ear. Very few People knew I used one. Now, I flaunt hearing aids in both ears just like most of the old folks here where I live. For a brief period I was legally blind, but corneal transplants came to the rescue. Finally, I had the good luck of having stomach cancer discovered early. I lost the stomach but survived with no great continuing problem. These were all challenges of a sort which were inconvenient although not in any way a hindrance except when I wanted to go overseas during the War. I was with the Red Cross, but couldn't pass the physical exam, Thanks to modern medicine and my Scottish genes, I am in good health and am what you might call "well preserved."

JB: *And indeed You are. Now that you have reviewed some of your accomplishments and challenges, have you ever experienced failures in your career? Maybe that's too strong a term. Let me put it this way. Has there been anything you would have done differently?*

KK: Well, I didn't do very well in Madrid as an apprentice milliner and I was hopeless as an aspiring dressmaker! Those were absolute failures, but fun. I guess you are more interested in my life as a social worker. There are lots of things I wish I had done differently, but there is one area in which I failed.

At one time, I thought that the real answer for social work education consisted of producing graduates who were first well educated and then well qualified through professional preparation. It was my idea to put together the social studies they had in Britain before it changed and the graduate training we had in the US before it changed. In other words, I wanted our undergraduate education to achieve what the British saw as social work education. This was a broad social science curriculum with a lot on economics and political and social theory together with some social work subjects and practical training. There was a professor in Britain by the name of Roger Wilson who once said something I have never forgotten. I can only paraphrase it. He said that social workers get such a bellyful of life in working with people that they have to know a tremendous amount about society, economics, politics, etc., in addition to what they know about people and how to help them. It seemed to me that building on such a base would prepare students to make good use of the more rigorous social work preparation that characterized our graduate programs in the US. I did speak and write about this a bit and tried to include some of the ideas in the first guide to social welfare content for undergraduate education that I put together at the Council. Our undergraduate programs do some of what I had in mind, but not nearly enough.

Of course, there were other things I wish I had done differently. I wish I had been more aggressive about some things and sometimes I wish I had been less aggressive. It is hard to find a happy medium. There was evidently a suspicion at one point that those of us who worked so enthusiastically for the IASSW were a tight little international group. I don't think that was true, but we must have given that impression. And you can see from my frequent references to certain people that we were close. Jan de Jongh and Eileen Younghusband and Herman Stein and Robin Huws Jones all happened to be the Presidents of the IASSW during my tenure as Secretary. We were friends as well as colleagues and did spend a lot of time together

There may have been a perception that we were too Western-oriented. Again, I don't think that

was the case. In fact, I think we were rather good, as I have perhaps indicated, in making an almost exclusive European organization into a broadly international one. We did more than most Western educators I know in encouraging indigenous curriculum development. I think the schools with which we worked in non-western societies would agree. But one can't be defensive about these things. You have to do your best and you can never please everybody.

JB: *With respect to colleagues around the world who are members of the social professions, what are the issues that you think are likely to deserve, if not demand, increasing amounts of their time, thought, and energy in the immediate years ahead?*

KK: This is a time of great crisis for the people we serve and for the profession. In the social professions — whatever they are called — we face a strong backward movement. We see it even in Scandinavia. I've just come back from Stockholm. Of course, they are still way ahead as a welfare state. But there too, they are rethinking their "safety nets." It is a question of the bottom line. They can no longer do all that has been done before, They have to restructure. We have to restructure in this country. Canada is questioning what they can afford. One could go on and on in the same vein for one country after another. And where does social work fit in all this restructuring?

Before we get too pessimistic, let us remember there is one place where social work is a bright and shining discovery. In the countries of Eastern Europe, programs of social work education are flourishing. I'll never forget a letter I received from one of the Hungarians who attended an IASSW seminar in this country and then became qualified as a social worker in Australia. He wrote: "Social work is wonderful!" He was so full of enthusiasm with this new way of helping people. He is now one of the leaders in social work education in Hungary.

So what about our future? We have to start looking at ourselves, examining what we teach. This is a different world from the one in which many of us have functioned as practitioners and educators. The Great Depression and the New Deal gave us our first big chance to make a difference. You found social workers in leadership roles in all the public services. Then we were out front in the war against poverty in the period of the Great Society. It was the same on the international front. After World War II when the UN began promoting social welfare services and sending advisors to all the new nations, the results were seen in their constitutions Some sort of social welfare provision was always included because that was what one needed to do to be a decent country. You had to look after people Some of the developing nations are now going backwards, just like so many of the countries in the industrialized world. Yet, we have that upsurge of interest and support of social work in the new democratic nations - going in another direction. Isn't that interesting?

I understand the reasons why so many social workers have forsaken the public social services and found a safer and more comfortable life in therapeutic and private practice. I'm sorry to see it happen. We have lots of introspection in our field but it has been related more to ourselves than to the purpose of social work in society and the world. We are not here to serve ourselves or our narrow special interests. We are here to serve our own society and others in the global village in a particular way.

What should we make of all this in social work? Where do we go from here? I think we must do a lot more thinking about community, not in the sense of community organization, but rather community renewal. We need to work with others in developing the forces and the resources in the community that will help us recoup and get back the feeling that ours is a compassionate, not a vindictive society. My hero, John Gardner, is working on this in a movement called Alliance for National Renewal which is gathering significant support across the country. We don't know yet whether the Republicans will succeed in putting back on the states all responsibility for the poor, but if they do we will need to do what we can to make it as constructive as possible for the people we serve. But let's hope we don't have to face that dilemma.

We do need, however, to get into a period of self -examination and relate it to the new economic and political structure. If the Democrats get back

into power, we can save much of what we value in the social field. I would still hope, however, that we would look critically at what needs to be done differently. A new century is almost upon us and new ways of dealing with social problems are needed. I don't have answers but I do think that whatever we do in social work has to be more community, internationally, and globally oriented. And this would certainly have implications for social work education.

JB: *The IASSW, the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW), the ICSW, and the Inter-University Consortium for International Social Development IUCISDS have organized their international conferences around themes of social development and socioeconomic development for a number of years now.*

KK: Well, yes, social development is not ours alone, of course. Social development involves other disciplines as well as social work. One of the new ways of doing things would be to become more interdisciplinary in social work education. We have become too insular and I worry a lot about private practice and how that affects the curriculum. If private practice is the major purpose and end result of our professional preparation, I am not sure that we are doing the job that social work was created to do. We were born out of a need to help everyone have a reasonably decent standard of living, a decent life with dignity. Remember what dear Franklin Roosevelt proclaimed. No one should be ill-fed or ill-housed. (Oh, the wonderful things he said and did.) Look at the nation today and the world around us. So many people are hungry and homeless. I know we are working on such issues but it isn't as obvious as it should be that social workers are the front-line troops in battling the reasons for so much misery.

I understand the reasons why so many social workers have forsaken the public social services and found a safer and more comfortable life in therapeutic and private practice. I'm sorry to see it happen. We have lots of introspection in our field but it has been related more to ourselves than to the purpose of social work in society and the world. We are not here to serve ourselves or our narrow special interests. We are here to serve our own society and others in the global village in a particular way.

When I talk about finding new ways, there is a caveat. What happened in Latin America is a lesson of sorts. They looked at what they were doing and didn't like it — it was too much like the US. and didn't fit. In Brazil, they did a very nice job of restructuring their programs. They called it "reconceptualization." Then, some Marxists from Germany with deep pockets entered the scene and underwrote a movement from reconceptualization into what might be called "manning the barricades." I visited Chile soon after the new wave and found posters everywhere in the schools of social work proclaiming that "if you are not with the oppressed you are an oppressor." In Uruguay, there was even a suggestion that students in field work should learn how to use guns in order to be ready for revolutionary action. Now, the pendulum has swung back and the schools, while still deeply involved in changing what they call the "social reality," have found a better balance. This is one of the interesting questions to think about in working with the Eastern European countries. What sort of balance will they find in their new situation?

One of the good things that came out of the all this radical activity was the idea of conscientization— Paulo Freire's work was very important in finding new ways of working with poor people in the community and helping them to empower themselves more effectively. Conscientization became quite well-known, not only in Latin America but in other parts of the world as

well.

JB: *Again back to you, as an active supporter and advocate for several national and international social welfare-related organizations, what are some of your current activities?*

KK: I'm still very much involved with the international work of the Council on Social Work Education and, also, with the IASSW. They both had the bad judgment to make me an honorary life member of their respective boards of directors. That means I attend all the meetings. So, I expect to totter in at the age of 98 and in *a* quavering voice say, "Now, this is how we used to do it in the olden days. We tried that and it didn't work." So far, everyone has been very kind and patient, I participate in the IASSW Congresses. At each one since my first retirement, I have said: "This is it. This is the last one." Then, I keep turning up, mostly because I have heard that this old friend or that old friend will be making a speech or it is a country or city I love and want to see again. I should say it is because of my great interest in the subject matter, but I'm afraid that now it is more an interest in meeting old friends from other countries and, to some extent, learning a little about what is going on. Perhaps I shouldn't admit to my frivolous motives, but it's the truth. But I do help out in any way I can, now that the IASSW is once again managed by the officers and volunteers. The Secretariat in Vienna had to be closed because of financial difficulties. Fortunately, Ralph Garber, the current President, and the other officers are doing a splendid job in putting the IASSW back on the track.

At the Council, I am pretty active with the Commission on International Social Work Education. I also handle all their equivalency determination inquiries and that is a fairly big job. We seem to have had an influx of foreign-trained social workers, particularly from India, Germany, and the United Kingdom. Many other countries are also represented. Their educational backgrounds have to be reviewed by the Council and equated to our BSW or MSW or rejected altogether. I have help from educators across the country who are knowledgeable about social work education here at home and in one or another country as well. It's a tough job and I often feel I may be making the wrong call. It is not that I think a social worker is a social worker is a social worker no matter where or what. Rather, I know how remarkably capable and competent many foreign-trained social workers are because I have worked with them. They come from many different educational systems and there is no way we can make exact comparisons. I am often conflicted. In the end, however, certain standards must be maintained.

JB: *I understand there is not only a currency to your activities but also an interest in preserving the historical record.*

KK: Yes, I sometimes think my major role these days is serving as the institutional memory for both the Council and the IASSW. For some time I have been working on a history of the first 20 years of the Council. It is a dull history. The purpose is to pin down and document the facts with little reference to all the interesting people who were associated with the Council. Perhaps that is why I can't seem to stay with it. Well over 50 percent is finished and I must do the rest before I am finished.

The other historical record is the IASSW archive at the University of Minnesota. That is where we have what is probably the major social welfare collection in the country. I sent all the IASSW material from 1929 to 1978 to Minnesota when I retired and the Secretariat moved to Vienna, Austria. With the Vienna office closed, the material from Austria has been shipped to Minnesota. It arrived in scores of cartons and David Klaassen, the Curator, must have thought, "Good Heavens, what am I going to do with all this stuff and how does it ever get integrated with what we already have." Whether he said that or not, I don't know, but he was very relieved when I offered to help, I have been there twice, spending a week each time, sorting it out. It is now in good enough shape that they can integrate it with the previous lot. What a fascinating archive it is. I wish I were years younger so that I could write a history of the IASSW. I hope some ambitious young scholar will do just that-

JB: *Among your many interests, I recall that at the time of the International Conference on Social Welfare in Calgary, you took part of one day to visit a site of dinosaur bones. Another day, you were off to the Canadian*

Rockies to explore glaciers. Then, Don Beless has reminded me of your interests in gardening, books, the arts (including culinary arts), and high diving. Do you have a philosophy of life that involves you in so many diverse activities?

KK: Yes, oh yes, you must live life to the full, absolutely. What's the use of living unless you enjoy everything that is available to you. I have been so *lucky* in everything. I have a wonderful immediate family, an equally wonderful extended family including very special Godchildren. We are all very close and see each other often. I've never had a job, except one, that I didn't love. And, then, I've met so many great people, in every continent. And on top of that I have seen some wonderful things. You can imagine that in traveling around the world my eyes have been constantly dazzled by its wonders. I've managed always to mix a little pleasure with business. Or should I say that I have mixed business with pleasure.

Now, you mentioned Calgary. Did I attend any meetings? Yes, I did, but I also had to see those superb mountains and that magnificent dinosaur museum. So, yes, you have to have a certain joy in living. Otherwise, it would be too ordinary.

I took to cooking early in my married life. I couldn't cook anything when I got married and Ken's friends at Oxford knew that. One of them gave me just the right cookbook as a wedding present. It was called *Recipes of All Nations* by Countess Morphy, evidently a much-traveled woman. It was just right because it wasn't too precise and left room to add a little of this or that. You had to measure some things, but you could experiment and that made it interesting, more like a creative art than a chore. Ken liked to cook, too, and every night we tried a recipe from a different country. There were hilarious failures and notable successes. That is how I learned to cook and in my later travels, I picked up lots of recipes. So, that is how I came to cook in different languages and it was fun.

Gardening I have just discovered since moving to this retirement community. I have always lived in apartments or places where it was not possible to have a garden. One of my Godchildren is a master gardener and she is a good teacher. I still very often mistake a weed for a flower or vice-versa, but I am improving. Thanks to Andrea, my Godchild, the garden is beautiful.

As to my athletic ability, that isn't even worth mentioning. I happened to be very fond of swimming and diving in my young days. I was particularly fond of diving. It was such a great feeling to fly up and out in the air on a swan dive and go in to the water nice and clean. That was lovely. I was pretty good at it, especially *the swan* dive. I wasn't as good at the others, but I tried them all. When we were in Spain, there was a national competition. Only three women turned up for the diving event and all three of us were foreigners. That was hardly a competition. I was the winner because of my swan dive. My picture appeared in the paper in Madrid so,I can prove that it happened. Otherwise, I wouldn't believe it myself. It is really nothing to boast about.

JB: *And your interest in books and reading?*

KK: That started very early. My mother and relatives in Scotland used to say, "The poor child is going to ruin her eyesight. She always has her eyes in a book." They could have been right as we had no electricity and it was either candies or a kerosene lamp. As I said, I started early. I read every night . In fact, I can't go to sleep without reading. Biographies and current histories are my favorites except when I travel. Then I want good mystery stories. With novels, I get stuck on certain authors and have to read everything they have ever written. I have just finished rereading all of Jane Austen and I am sure I enjoyed her more now than before.

JB: *Visiting with you this weekend, I see you have an active social life as well.*

KK: Yes, I get teased as the Pearl Mesta of social work. I like to get to know people outside of conference rooms. As Secretary of the IASSW , I served as their non-governmental representative at the UN and UNICEF. Asking people home for a drink and dinner made it possible to explore all sorts of things that helped to make cooperative work easier. Also, I liked to have Board members at the Council get to know each other, especially when there were new members. So, the first night of a Board meeting, I would have them come to my house for cocktails. It may have made a difference. I don't know, but

anyway I liked doing it. And any time international friends came to New York, there had to be a party. That made it easier for them to meet colleagues and other friends of mine.

Another social activity of sorts that was great fun was putting on skits at the Council's Annual Program Meetings. Herman Stein and I collaborated on that. The first one was probably the best one. An interview with Leo Perlis was featured in the *New York Times.* He was with the CIO and on the Council Board as a citizen representative. In those days, we had lay Board members as well as members from other disciplines. I wish that were true now. He thought highly of social work education and was quoted as saying, "Bartenders see more people in trouble than anyone else. They ought to be trained in social work." Recruitment was a priority at that time so in our skit we sent a bevy of eminent deans in full academic regalia to a bar to research whether the bartender was a good bet for social work. It was amazing how many deans had good singing voices. You would probably know the names of most of them. I remember that Wayne Vasey was the bartender. We also had barflies — people like Katherine Oettinger, Chief of the Children's Bureau, and other social bigwigs from Washington — pouring out their troubles and getting help from the bartender., The deans decided to take a chance on admitting the bartender but he needed a scholarship. Milton Wittman, who was distributing NIMH grants rather generously at that time, was called in to do the necessary. He was a wonderful ham and had a great voice, The songs made fun of issues we were working on at the time, such as the generic program. It was satire but mild, and social work always emerged triumphant. Every year, we put on a new skit and involved as many deans and others as we could. There were some really star performances. We stopped writing skits when everyone became so tied up with protests and social work had lost its sense of humor. All the skits are in the social welfare archives at the University of Minnesota.

لا لابرار كل شى ثر

"TO THE PURE ALL THINGS ARE PURE"

(Puris omnia pura)

—Arab Proverb

JB: *You did a lot of serious writing as well on social work and social work education. Fifteen of your articles and addresses were published under the title* Reflections on Social Work Education. *This Interview Is appearing in a journal entitled* Reflections. *I would be remiss if I did not ask, as one of my final questions, whether there are any current reflections you care to share?*

KK: When we think of social work historically, we can see that it has had its ups and downs. There have been times when we have been highly valued and times when we have not been highly valued. I fear we have entered a period when we are not highly valued. It is very important that we continue to value ourselves, what we know and what we do, and try to overcome the obstacles in our way. I do wonder why it is that we don't have more influence, particularly when it comes to discussions on welfare reform. Is it because so many of us are Democrats who probably would have little influence with the Republicans? However, there must be a few Republicans in our field who know something.

I can't help thinking about the time when social work did make a difference. Under Roosevelt, and, later, the public social services were often run and were certainly well-staffed by social workers. During the War and afterwards, when UNRRA and then the United Nations and UNICEF came along, social workers were everywhere. They were the ones who headed social missions, rescued children, helped refugees and others whose lives had been shattered by the War. Maybe we come into our own only if there is a great tragedy or enormous dislocation. I hope it doesn't take disasters to give us a place in the sun. But it does seem to me we are not used as much as we once were and should be now. Of course, the social and political climate is not in our favor. Also, I am sure I don't know as much as I should about all the ways in which we are being used to the hilt. Perhaps I suffer from that annoying ailment of old folks who are always claiming that it was better in the good old days!

JB: *Perhaps you are right that the social*

work profession, much like adolescents, has the attribute of responding best to a crisis. If there is a flood disaster or some other emergency, adolescent youth often respond very effectively if given the opportunity. But they aren't ordinarily prized by the larger community for what they can do. Could it be that social work is still in its adolescence?

KK: Except that we are a little old to be adolescent. I think we went through that stage in the late thirties and in the forties when we began to see where we fit into all the programs coming out of New Deal legislation. One of the problems we have had all along and still have is this dichotomy between social change and individual change. I think we need the capability of carrying both functions. The need is to make room for both. That need is seen in other countries as well where the question arises, "Which is to be paramount?"

Again and again, we hear criticism of the American influence on social work and social work education as professional imperialism. This bothers me. Not all, but most of the people who go on about this don't know what they are talking about. First, let's talk about American casework, the usual whipping boy. Casework made a significant difference after World War II. Social work in many European countries was quite bureaucratically organized. Social workers were agents, all right, but agents of the government or the church or of some particular group such as a trade union. They were rather paternalistic, doing things for people or to them. Then, American casework came along and European educators fell upon it with whole-hearted enthusiasm. They took it over because they wanted it. They saw that understanding and working with people in dynamic terms was a more democratic way of helping and a better kind of social work. There was much collegial exchange. It would be hard to find an imperialistic motivation on the part of the Americans or subservience on the part of the Europeans.

Later, when social casework became the favored methodology in programs established in Asia and Africa, a problem did arise. The many differences in social systems, in cultural factors, and in personal relationships were probably not taken into account as well as they should have been. Americans serving as consultants were blamed as professional imperialists. But a large part of the problem was the perception by so many countries and individuals in the immediate postwar period that everything American was wonderful, If what the US. had was the best in social work education, that was what new countries wanted. Why settle for less? The fellows brought to the US. on UN. scholarships sat at the feet of Gordon Hamilton and Cora Kasius and learned a lot. When they went home, they carried with them what they had learned, perhaps too often as gospel. And in their teaching they wanted to share what they had learned. There weren't any seasoned social work elders to help them translate the new learning into what was best for their situation. American consultants were also the products of their professional preparation, Some of them may not have seen beyond their own course outlines when they were assigned to teach in another country. There is something in the criticism, but why call it imperialism? There may have been a few Americans who went as dedicated missionaries to make the world safe for American casework. I did not run across them and I don't think that was what happened.

We need to be a little more knowledgeable and a little more understanding not only about what actually happened, but about the context in which the teaching and learning took place. I take a much more lenient view than some of my good friends and colleagues about some of the less fortunate results of overseas missions. Also, I don't like the idea of blaming people or blaming countries. We should be more careful in our judgments on international matters.

Another thing that bothers me a bit is extreme nationalism and provincialism also, sometimes, regionalism. I want international solidarity. Of course, we must build on the local, national, and regional, but too often social workers get stuck on their own narrow vision of the world. They think it is enough to worry about what happens in this country and don't care too much about what happens in other countries and regions. I see a lot of that in the US. I suppose it is understandable, considering the severity of the problems we face at home. Yet, I keep hoping for more give and take, so that we can appreciate the whole while working in our particular part of the world or on our special interest. I don't suppose we will ever manage to act as equal hu-

man beings everywhere, with no country being better than another and no superpower. But we can get together as an international profession in a variety of ways. With all the cultural differences, we have many goals in common throughout the world. We may have different conceptions of the role of social work, but you can't get away from the fact that there are common human needs and common human and social problems. That is why I cherish international solidarity so that we can work together on our common goals and learn from our differences. That happens at the IASSW International Congresses. I have seen many a conversion as participants from different countries get to know one another. They decide that their world is not the only world and there are other worlds worth exploring.

International experiences also produce new ideas. Some form of social development, in which you have such a strong interest, is one such idea. This started way back in the fifties. First it was known as community development. Then it was rural development. Then, it became developmental social welfare. The UN and UNISEF were probably the most instrumental in getting the idea of social development into social work. It has been talked about and written up in reports and now it is being explored in scholarly publications, but we still haven't quite discovered how to make it clearer as one of the objectives of social work education.

This brings us again to interdisciplinary collaboration as social development will never be ours alone. We may be missing the boat a bit by not having more to do with other disciplines working in this area. There are some colleagues who are active on this. David Cox of Australia, for example, is one of them. Your own Inter-University Consortium for International Social Development is a chief proponent of this approach as well. The IASSW has just published a new directory of some 1500 programs called social work or "social something." Now, we have to find or discover what is social work and what are the "social somethings." Social development is in there somewhere as there is definitely a resurgence of interest in it as a field of practice for social workers.

JB: *Finally, with regard to this resurgence, is there anything more you wish to say about social development as a concept, a goal, a process and approach to social work?*

KK: I can give you an example. If you have not read *Daughter of Persia* by Sattereh Farman-Farmaian, you must do so. She is going to give the Dame Eileen Younghusband Lecture on "Social Work as Social Development" at our next International Congress this coming July in Hong Kong. She was marked for execution in Iran because of her western ideas and aristocratic background. Her life was spared when the Mullah, who was second in command to Komenei, said: "You can't kill this woman. She has done too much for the poor of Iran, but she will have to leave the country," She now lives in the US.

What she started as social work in Iran was a form of social development. She didn't call it that. In fact, she had to invent a name in Persian for social work. She started social work education from scratch. She recruited both men and women as students. One of the first things she did was personally take them out into the field to show them the problems and the situations they would meet as social workers. They then figured out how best to deal with what they had seen. There is an amazing story of how they got the mayor to go to a terrible municipal facility where the inmates were literally mired in feces — and how they got all that changed, doing a lot of the cleaning up work themselves.

Satte, as she is called, early on established community welfare centers to provide services to women. There were literacy classes, day care for children, and training in all sorts of skills to help them live better. She found a way of getting the men involved. She saw that birth control was urgently needed and started an underground service. But she wanted to start regular clinics, She exposed the Shah's wife in the same way she exposed her students to the conditions that needed to be changed. The Queen was appalled by the effect of constant child-bearing on poverty-stricken women and their babies. She wanted something done about it so Satte said to her, "Go home and tell your husband that this country needs family planning." She did and the Shah gave permission for the establishment of family planning clinics. That led to the organization of a Family Planning Association to establish clinics throughout Iran. Satte also directed it as well as the School. There may be some elements of social development that are not found in

this story, but, in my view, her combination of social reform and social work adds up to social development, it is a fabulous book. It ought to be in the library of every school of social work and used by faculty and students.

JB: *Do you have any final words for us?*

KK: Perhaps we could end this interesting experience with a few words about what it is like to live here at Collington which is a life care community. It was quite a change to move from the middle of Manhattan to what seemed like the middle of nowhere on the edge of Washington DC. As I watched my friends struggle with failing health in their retirement years, I decided to look into life care communities. This one had everything I was looking for. The location is ideal as I have always liked Washington. We are a few minutes by car from the Metro and at the same station as the Metro I can catch an Amtrak train to New York. Everything is new and, as you can see, it is very attractive. You also have discovered that we have gourmet food.

Best of all are the people who have come here. I sometimes think it is the next to the last resting place for many of the old New Dealers, who ran the government for so many years. Next in numbers are probably foreign service officers, including a handful of ambassadors. Then, there are the academics, professionals of all varieties, and an assortment from the military services. There are rather more couples than one usually finds in a place like this. And most everyone seems to have lived or visited in countries all around the world. I once said there is enough brain power and talent here to run a small country. That brain power and talent are put to use in ways that make life here not only interesting but challenging. And, most important, health care is available to the end should I need it. I am glad I made the move from the middle of Manhattan to the middle of nowhere. □

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