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CONFLICTS BETWEEN PROFESSIONAL AND NON-PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL IN INSTITUTIONAL DELINQUENCY TREATMENT

GEORGE H. WEBER*

The author is currently the Director of the Division of Diagnosis and Treatment of the Minnesota Youth Conservation Commission. This division includes the reception-diagnostic centers, institutions and forestry camps for Minnesota's juvenile delinquents. He formerly was associated with the Bert Nash Mental Hygiene Clinic, Lawrence, Kansas and the Boy's Industrial School, Topeka, Kansas. This article was written while the author was at the Bert Nash Mental Hygiene Clinic,—Eptror

In an effort to provide better diagnostic and treatment services for juvenile delinquents committed to their care, many institutions, in recent years, have added people from a number of professions to their staffs. These usually include social workers, teachers in special education, psychologists, psychiatrist and recreational therapists. In institutions, these people are frequently known as the "professional staff". They are employed for the study and treatment of delinquents, and the consultation with and guidance of other staff members.

In this latter function, the professionals may be asked by the administration to advise those workers who supervise and manage the everyday living experiences of the delinquents, such as getting up, going to bed, personal hygiene, eating, playing and working. Within the institutions, these workers are commonly known as the "non-professional staff" (as differentiated from the professional staff)² and usually include cottage parents, vocational and work supervisors, and maintenance workers.

This division of work, with its theoretical consistency and its apparent applicability, would seem to be acceptable to both groups as it is consistent with the currently accepted principles of delinquency treatment, personnel practice and education. It is a plan which should allow the professionals an opportunity to increase their practical knowledge of delinquency and to apply the specific skills of their work to the delinquents and the institution. It is a plan which should also give the non-professionals an opportunity to increase their theoretical knowledge of delinquency and to receive some specialized help with some of their difficult problems.

In actual practice, however, this plan may encounter sharp difficulties in acceptance and functioning. Conflicts may emerge when professionals and non-professionals attempt to bring their specialties together. Value orientations, statuses and roles

^{*} I wish to thank Dr. Melville Dalton for his guidance and suggestions in the prosecution of the research on which this paper is based.—G. H. W.

^{1 &}quot;Treatment", as used in this paper, denotes all the systematic efforts which are carried on within an institutional setting to assist in the rehabilitation of the delinquent. This includes general environmental arrangements, as well as individual and group treatment.

² The titles "professional" and "non-professional" accentuate the differences between the two groups and appear to facilitate conflict rather than cooperation. It is an unfortunate differentation. For an analysis of the difficulties in defining a profession, see M. L. COGAN, *Toward a Definition of Profession*, HARVARD EDUC. REV., 23 (Winter, 1953), pp. 33-50.

and ideas of delinquency causation and treatment, undoubtedly, will differ in each group. Problems are likely to arise from the conceptions that each group have of themselves and each other in each of these different areas.

The material for this paper was secured from two private and three public institutions for delinquents and was gathered over a period of three years. The method of the study was that of participation and observation. The data were gathered by four people, including the writer, who worked in these institutions in either a professional or non-professional job. The institutions varied in the number of delinquents in residence from about thirty to nearly four hundred. The proportion of professionals to non-professionals varied from two percent to thirty-seven percent. With the exception of two institutions, the non-professionals preceded the professionals in the setting.

In all institutions studied, conflicts were in evidence. In some, the conflicts were more intense, continuous and dramatic than others. In all the institutions, some cooperation transpired between the professionals and non-professionals and the author does not wish to imply that all these conflicts occurred to the same degree in every institution or that they were continuous. However, conflicts were a significant aspect of the relationships existing between the professional and the non-professional in all the institutions studied.³

VALUE ORIENTATIONS

The professionals and non-professionals held different values regarding their own and the other's work. The professionals often stressed humanitarianism and service. They thought of themselves as primarily providing a service to the delinquents and they believed that when they went into a particular case or group for study, they should assume full responsibility for it within their specialty. The professionals thought of themselves as cooperative, as sharing and exchanging information and ideas, as respecting the integrity of others and the right of others to express themselves. Keen observations and a reflective and critical approach to problems were held in high regard by them. Formal education and training, as such, were also respected by this group.

The professionals saw the non-professionals as holding two sets of values. One view regarded the non-professionals as being a hard-working, simple group of people, usually generous and kind to the delinquents in their care, and good-intentioned in their relationships and dealings with the other staff members. They saw them as valuing sincerity, friendliness, courage, simplicity and industry. The other view regarded the non-professionals as strict disciplinarians who demanded hard work and obedience from the delinquents. They thought that they were rigid in their viewpoints, antagonistic toward professionals, and reluctant to take any suggestions concerning their work. Here they regarded the non-professionals as valuing formal

³ CARL R. DOERING describes some similar professional and non-professional conflicts in a penal system in Foreword to A REPORT ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF PENOLOGICAL TREATMENT AT NORFOLK PRISON COLONY IN MASSACHUSETTS, edited by CARL R. DOERING, New York, Bureau of Social Hygiene, Inc., 1940. For conflicts between psychologists, psychometrists and social workers on the one hand and the house officers on the other, see particularly pages XI and XII.

and restrained behavior, compliance and authoritarianism. In both of these conceptions, the professionals saw the non-professionals as having very little importance in working with problems concretely and had little regard for a theoretical approach to these problems. A psychiatrist alluded to several of these points when he was discussing a cottage mother's management of a boy:

Mrs. S. wants Bobby punished for his stealing, immediately. She isn't interested in studying it more fully. She says that "if he did it, he should be punished and then he has paid his debt." If anyone expresses any other ideas on it, she feels her position is seriously threatened. If pressed on the matter, she'll take her feelings out on the boy.

On another occasion a psychologist, referring to the uncritical methods of the non-professional, said:

It seems that many of the cottage parents have worked out rather simple schemes for dealing with behavior problems. It apparently makes them more comfortable, even though it may be harmful to the boys. It's difficult to approach them about these things because you are apt to break down whatever relationship you have.

The non-professionals emphasized kindness, firmness, the ability to get along with people, and hard work as necessary qualities for work with delinquents. They viewed the immediate, the concrete, the practical, and action—the "getting something done"—as important. Broad experience and intimacy with the problems of working with delinquents were considered indispensable by them. The non-professionals considered themselves responsible for the general development and welfare of all the boys.

The non-professionals regarded the professionals as generally pseudo-intellectual and theoretical. They also regarded the professionals as valuing material wealth and education. The non-professionals often pointed to the higher salaries given to the professionals for work they believed was "easier". They believed that the professionals valued leisure and comfort for themselves above that of the delinquents and that they tended to be authoritarian in their relationships with others. The apparent leisure and comfort of the professionals was referred to by a cottage parent when she said:

It's fine and easy for you people working up in the administration building to come at eight o'clock, leave at five, and have a half-day off on Saturday, but we cottage parents are with the boys all the time. If we aren't, one of our helpers is.

Another comment by a vocational supervisor illustrates this situation:

We don't feel they (the professionals) understand or appreciate our job. It's easy enough for them to sit up in the main office in a nice soft chair and behind a fancy desk. They only have to deal with one boy at a time and he is putting his best foot forward most of the time when he is up seeing them. He knows they have a lot to do with the paroles.

The non-professionals charged the professionals with confusing "book learning" with workable knowledge, and of ranking such learning above the non-professional's practical experience. They contended this theoretical background and professional

training while important to the professional actually hindered their grasp of the total situation at times.⁴ This was being considered by a maintenance worker when he remarked:

That guy who calls himself a psychologist is so busy studying what he calls psychopathology and working in therapy that he doesn't know the rest of the world the kid lives in. The way he is going about things, it doesn't look like he's going to have much chance to learn about it.

A psychologist, reflecting on this point, commented:

The psychologist trained primarily in the psychology of the individual, the social worker trained mainly for case work, and the psychiatrist trained primarily in the diagnosis and treatment of the individual patient are not prepared to deal with the complex problems which the therapeutic management of groups presents. This is no reflection against them, unless they assume they are specialists in something they obviously are not.

Although many non-professionals saw the professional as emphasizing a theoretical background and professional training for work with delinquents in practice, the non-professionals viewed some as smooth operators without "real know-how", hiding their ineptness and, at times, some hostility behind good manners and the prestige conferred by schooling.⁵ They also saw the professionals as placing power and status over democratic practices. A maintenance worker's comment illuminates the non-professional's view of some aspects of the professionals' relations to others.

These professional people talk about democratic practices and group processes, and that we have just as much to say about things as they do but I haven't seen it operate that way. Not only do they try to tell us what to do, but the case workers and the others are right next to the superintendent's office and they're telling him what to do. They have been off to school and while they haven't learned much, they have learned how to operate. When you give them a tough kid to deal with, they can't tell you what to do that's of much account—saying nothing about taking the kid on themselves."

Conflicts of values between professionals and non-professionals may be further illustrated by an episode in the parole planning for a delinquent. It shows that these conflicts can have a detrimental influence on the adjustment of the delinquents.

Don was a fifteen-year old boy who had been committed to the "Boys' Training School" for petty stealing. His father had died and his mother had deserted him. While he had been severely deprived of parental love and childhood friendships, his maladjustment was not extreme. His development at the school during his year of residence was excellent. His major activities included study in the academic school where he excelled in the sciences, and work in the school infirmary as an orderly.

⁴The specialist's limitations have been described by others: Harold J. Laski, *The Limitations of the Expert*, harpers, 162 (December, 1930), pp. 102-106; Robert K. Merton, *The Machine, The Worker and The Engineer*, science, 105 (January 24, 1947), pp. 79-81; Wilbert E. Moore and Melvin M. Tumin, *Some Social Functions of Ignorance*, American Social. Rev., 14, (December 1949), pp. 788-789.

⁵ This problem raises several questions: 1) Was the professional's education, on which he leaned for support in his work, relevant to and adequate for carrying out his assignments? 2) Were the web of conflicts so complex that the education could not be utilized?

Don had been offered two placement plans. One placement was in the home of a dentist and his wife, who were interested in adopting the boy and giving him educational opportunities to the limit of his capacity and interest. The other placement was in the home of a farm family, who could offer him a good home but could not give him the education or the material advantages of the dentist's home.

After discussing these possibilities with the social worker, Don also talked about it with his science teacher, cottage mother and a nurse. The teacher encouraged him to accept placement with the dentist emphasizing the educational opportunities. The nurse encouraged him to do the same. She emphasized the possible material advantages of the dentist's home, the opportunity of making the right kind of friends, as well as the educational opportunities. The cottage mother, however, thought that he should choose the farm family because it was her opinion that they really wanted him and would love him more than the dentist and his wife. She also expressed the opinion that farm life was good and would present fewer temptations than life in the city.

When Don attempted to reconcile these different points of view with his own ambivalence about any type of placement, he became anxious, tense and restless. He went to see the social worker about his confusion; she accepted his indecision and said it was unfortunate that he had been given so much advice.

After this conference Don talked with some boys who overheard a heated argument between the nurse and his cottage mother. They informed Don that the nurse had flatly informed the cottage mother that her own preference, as well as that of the science teacher, was for his placement in the dentist's home. The boys also told Don several other things: that the nurse insisted that the farm family only wanted to exploit him as a laborer; that the cottage mother had denied this, and pointed out that while he would have to do his share of the work, they had excellent farm machinery and some hired help and that the cottage mother had countered that the dentist only wanted the boy as a show piece to follow in his footsteps.

Don became increasingly uneasy and confused. That night he ran away.

The teacher and nurse, as members of the professional group which valued education, social and economic status, favored the dentist's home for Don. The non-professional, in this case the cottage mother, attached the values of honesty and independence of rural life and favored the farm placement. This conflict in values, with Don caught in the middle, had damaging results for him.

CONCEPTIONS OF STATUS AND ROLE

The professionals thought of themselves as being primarily responsible for the study of delinquents for diagnostic and planning purposes. While they acknowledged the value of the non-professionals' diagnostic observations and opinions for institutional and post-institutional planning, the professionals maintained that this area of responsibility was essentially theirs.

In addition to their diagnostic studies and planning duties, the professionals believed that they should devote a large portion of their time to treatment. For example, they gave suggestions for structuring the delinquent's environment to the non-professionals or offered some form of individual or group treatment to the delinquents. If they aided the delinquent by structuring his environment, the professionals usually worked with other professionals and non-professionals; if they offered some form of treatment, they worked immediately with the individual delinquent or group of delinquents.

The professionals' conception of their work also included assisting the delinquent to bridge the gap between the institution and outside world by proper orientation upon entry, by communication with relatives and officials during his stay, and follow-up studies with parole agencies after he left.

The professionals thought of the non-professionals as primarily guiding and supervising the delinquents. They thought the non-professionals were: 1) too restrictive with the delinquents, 2) did not try to understand the delinquents, and 3) resisted the professional's ideas and recommendations. While the professionals recognized that the non-professionals had some duties in connection with diagnostic studies and program planning, they regarded such duties as minor. The idea that the non-professionals were too restrictive is exemplified by the remark of a social worker.

That's what's the matter with these people, they are too hard on the kids. They want to make them follow a rigid and exact pattern which is their idea of being good. They don't want to hear what we have to say about management of the boys because so often it goes against their whole way of doing their job.

The rejections of the professionals' recommendations by the non-professionals was pin-pointed by a psychiatrist when he said:

I have been working with the D's (cottage parents) for approximately a year. I don't believe they have any intention of modifying their cottage management. I don't believe they ever will. We used to get open resistance from them; now it's passive resistance. For example, the strap was used openly, but now you never see a strap around; however, anyone who has anything to do with their cottage knows it's still being used.

A social worker commented further on this problem:

I sincerely believe that we cannot move any faster in creating a good treatment program for the boys than some of the staff (non-professionals) are willing and able to move. I also believe in helping them to move forward but after awhile, it seems a little foolish to try to help some of these people become good rehabilitative workers.

On the other side of the picture, the non-professionals saw themselves as the backbone of the institution. Their constant intimate relationship with the delinquent was believed to be the major part of the delinquent's institutional program and they felt responsible for the boy's total welfare while in the institution. They believed that their duties in this connection were performed in an interested, definite, firm and consistent manner. A typical attitude was reflected by a cottage parent who said:

We ran this institution well for many years. I'm pretty sure that we did a better job with the boys than is done now with all this high-priced help. We are still doing a good job; if it weren't for us, this place couldn't run.

Whether a staff member is married and/or has reared a family seems to play a role in the staff conflict over the care and treatment of delinquents.⁶ A non-profes-

⁶ In one institution where this was a point of conflict, fifty percent of the professionals were, or had been married, while ninety-seven percent of the non-professionals are, or had been, married. In another institution it was forty-two percent of the professionals and eighty-four percent of the non-professionals.

The age differences also appeared to be important in the conflict between the two groups. In one institution the average age of the professionals was thirty years while that of the non-professionals was forty-one years. In another institution the average age of the professionals was thirty-four and that of the non-professionals was forty-six. Statistically, these are highly significant differences. Together with the other data, they suggest that age differences and experiental disparities in family and parental roles were very important factors in the dissimilar orientations of the two groups toward the delinquents.

sional's comment shows this:

I ought to know something about this. I raised five kids of my own and they are all doing all right. That is more than you can say for some of those young fellows up there in the office who are passing out the word.

On this same point a professional remarked:

The trouble with our cottage parents and vocational supervisors is that they think they can treat these delinquents like they treated their own youngsters. They don't realize that these boys may be quite different. Nor do they recognize that, by thinking of these boys as they thought of their own children, they may get quite personally involved.

Occasionally some non-professionals saw themselves as having even broader duties, and they assumed responsibility for the delinquent's welfare outside the institution. This took the form of unofficial parole planning and, at times, unofficial parole supervision. In one institution, after a cottage mother had unofficially written to the relatives of a boy asking them to come and get him, as he was ready for placement, she said:

Social work is fine, I guess, but there is too much red tape to it, or they make it that way. There's no reason to keep a boy waiting six weeks when he is ready to go and his relatives are ready to take him, just to make a lot of agency referrals. These referrals are for the purpose of studying the home to see whether it is alright or not, but what difference does it make? If it is alright, fine. If it isn't, they can seldom find another place for an "adolescent delinquent", as they say. So the boy is ready and waiting. If he doesn't get some satisfaction about placement, he soon will go downhill fast and all the good we have done for him will go, too.

There are some similarities in the way in which the professionals view their duties and the way in which non-professionals view them. For their part, the non-professionals considered the professional's duties as centering around: (1) the delinquent's admission into the institution; (2) initial diagnostic and planning activities; (3) communication with relatives and outside agencies; (4) considerable counseling on situational problems and limited special treatment work with delinquents; (5) some consultation work with staff members; (6) planning with the administration; (7) planning the parole of the boy and (8) liaison work with the parole authorities after the delinquent leaves the institution.

The non-professionals formally conceded the diagnostic duties to the professionals but they believed that diagnosis has only general implications in shaping a boy's program and probably very little significance for them in their areas of work.

A cottage parent's statement makes this clear:

I like to talk with others about the boys and plan for them because there is always a lot one person misses or fails to do. I do not appreciate having some person push an opinion of a boy's character and intelligence on me that they may have formed in a few hour's time. I've worked with some of these boys a long time and I think I know them, too. I've tried different ways with them (professionals), now I just listen and then go ahead and do it my own way.

The necessity of having the professional's diagnosis was questioned by the non-professionals. The professionals' means of communication was criticized.

A farmer of an institution had this to say:

I work with boys all day long, every day. I know a boy, what he is like and what he's not like, what he can do and can't do. Just the other day, without me saying a thing, a boy told me all about his home and he cried. I can't put it in the language that those people in the administration building can—that is, put it up so that nobody but them can understand it—but I know this boy. That out-fit up at the administration sees a boy for a few hours and they think they know the whole story and then want to tell us in language we can't understand. And besides the kids come back to us all upset about these tests they give 'em.

The non-professionals were reluctant to concede the advisory or consultation role to the professionals. While there was some overt harmony, underlying negative feelings were strong. This underlying resentment was pointed out by a vocational supervisor who said:

I wouldn't mind this long-haired bunch up in the offices who have their education, but when they feel like they have been called on to give it to me too, I don't want it.

The superintendent of one of the institutions of this study who himself was a professional remarked:

The ordinary run-of-the-mill professional clings to his theory too much, and unfortunately, theory is frequently too abstract to be directly applicable to concrete problems. As a result, the cottage parents and others do not have too much confidence or respect for them.

In considering this problem, a social worker talked about professional workers without experience:

People with some professional education bring some valuable knowledge to their job, but they would be better off if they could appreciate themselves a little more realistically. You know, they haven't really learned what is needed to do their job, and all that it implies. Unfortunately, many of them feel compelled to give advice and suggestions. I guess they feel they have to justify their existence on the staff.

The work of the professionals which involved the delinquent's admission into the institution was generally accepted by the nonprofessionals; however, the cottage parents thought that considerable orientation and intake work needed to be done with the delinquents once they reached the cottage. They also accepted the role of the professionals in communicating with relatives and outside agencies, but some difficulties arose in this connection because the cottage parents would give different information to visiting parents than the social workers and other professionals did.

The non-professionals were troubled by the part professionals played in planning the institution's treatment program. They felt left out.

⁷ Status and role conflicts of the professionals are not limited to these institutional settings. Ruth Emerson, writing on *Standards in Medical Social Work*, an article in The Hospital in Modern Society, a symposium edited by A. C. Bochmeyer, New York, 1943, The Commonwealth Fund, p. 346, says, "That there is too great a diversity of opinion among executives as to the nature of the return to the hospital, which should be expected from the activities of the social service department, seems indubitable. To some, the social worker is a glorified, and yet not altogether satisfactory, bill collector. She is sent on miscellaneous errands and asked to perform various institutional tasks

The non-professionals also felt they were by-passed when it came to parole planning and actual placement. They thought their ideas did not receive adequate consideration. They also complained about delays in placing a boy once he was given parole.

Many conflicts occurred over these divergent ideas of statuses and roles.8 Those stemming from the diagnosis and treatment of the boys were also found to be serious.

John had been in the Training School for approximately two weeks. During this period, his time had been largely taken up by his orientation program and diagnostic studies of him by the staff. The cottage parents had been orienting him to institutional and cottage life and had been observing him in a variety of situations. The psychologist had given him several tests. He had been seen by the psychiatrist, physician, dentist and social worker.

At the end of these two weeks, a staff meeting was called and each member who had contact with John came with a report of his findings. A professional chaired the meetings and the other professionals consumed the majority of the period with their discussion and recommendations. This was particularly so with the psychologist and psychiatrist, who became involved in a discussion about the nature and extent of the boy's anxiety and the defenses he had available for its control. The social worker raised the point of the historical development of this anxiety and its significance for programing.

After these lengthy discussions, the conference progressed to the point of concrete program planning. John was brought into the group at this time to participate in the planning. While he previously discussed his desires and wishes regarding his institutional program with his social worker, his inclusion here was an effort to have him share more directly in matters concerning his future. John expressed his interests and wishes to the staff. He said he wanted to be assigned to the tailor shop because he wanted to learn the trade.

John left the group and his cottage mother questioned assigning him to Mrs. F. at the tailor shop because she did not believe John was especially interested in tailoring and she knew that the disciplinary control of the boys in the tailor shop was poor. She said she thought he had been attracted to tailoring by reports from the grapevine that this shop allowed more freedom than some others. She acknowledged John's anxiety but emphasized his aggressive behavior in the cottage and urged that he be considered for a work placement that offered more disciplinary control.

The professionals listened to her, respectfully, but no one responded to her ideas. Rather, they discussed other aspects of John's program.

for which there is no provision in the personnel of the hospital budget. Her position in some institutions is to be classed somewhere between that of the cash girl in a department store and the telephone clerk at the information desk."

Further, in this regard, the professional-non-professional conflicts of this study bear many similarities to the staff-line conflicts of industrial organizations reported by Melville Dalton in Conflicts Between Staff and Line Managerial Officers, AMER. SOCIOL. Rev. 15 (June 1950) pp. 342-351.

In an unreported research by the author on fifty psychiatric aides, similar status and role conflicts were observed between the aides on the one hand and the physicians and particularly the nurses on the other.

⁸ One of the most important components of a healthy and vigorous staff morale is the opportunity the staff has to express their ideas and to contribute suggestions concerning the institutional program, particularly on those matters which involve them. For evidence of the motivational effects of group decision, see Kurt Lewin, *Group Decision and Social Change* in T. M. Newcomb and E. L. Hartley, Eds., Readings in Social Psychology, New York, Henry Holt and Company, 1947, pp. 330–345; D. McGregor, *Conditions for Effective Leadership in the Industrial Situation*, Jour. of Consult. Psychol., VIII, March-April, 1945, pp. 55–63, and Robert Tannenbaum and Fred Massarik, *Participation by Subordinates in the Managerial Decision making Process*, Canad. Jour. of Econ. and Pol. Sci., 16, (August, 1950) pp. 408–418.

John's case was summarized by the chairman, and his assignment to the tailor shop was included without comment. John's staff conference was finished; everyone returned to his place of work.

Several days later, the woman in charge of the tailor shop reported that John had not reported to the shop as assigned and she wondered what had happened. John's absence was investigated. It appeared that the complete rejection of the cottage mother's proposal and the lack of further discussion of it at the staff meeting had made her angry; she had deliberately sent John to another assignment.

When the cottage mother attempted to participate in the planning for John's program she indicated that she conceived of herself as having responsibilities for planning delinquents' programs. The professionals, reserving this role for themselves, rejected the cottage mother's participation. The cottage mother retaliated by ignoring the job assignment for John that the professionals arranged.

THE CONCEPTS OF DELINQUENCY AND DELINQUENCY TREATMENT

Generally, the professionals viewed delinquency as deviant behavior resulting from the interaction of etiological, predispositional factors with situational variants. They saw this behavior as emerging from the interplay of many elements in which the boy's conscious activity was only one of these involved. They believed that institutional treatment stemming from a constructive institutional milieu, as well as individual and group treatment, provides the boys with rehabilitative experiences and would help them modify their behavior.

The professionals were found to hold the delinquent responsible for his behavior, within a certain framework, but they did not morally evaluate it. Rather, they tried to understand the motivations for this behavior and if some appropriate therapeutic measures were available, they would recommend it. If the professionals thought it was indicated, they would participate in the treatment.

To the non-professionals, the professionals seemed inconsistent in their thinking about treatment. The professionals talked about many of the delinquents being activity and action-oriented rather than thoughtful and verbal in their behavior and thus the major way of treating them was to provide a variety of constructive everyday corrective environmental experiences for them. Yet the professionals continued to see boys in office interview situations. When this was explained to the non-professionals on the basis of diagnostic and special treatment work for selected cases, the non-professionals countered with: 1) weren't the factors of comfort, easiness, and simplicity entering the professional's decisions, 2) if their (the non-professionals) environmental treatment was the most effective approach to the delinquents, why the salary, status and other differentials between themselves and the professionals.

Many non-professionals assumed that all similar surface behavior had the same dynamics or meaning. Thus they were confused when the professionals recommended dissimilar attitudes and activities for what the non-professional thought were like delinquents.

The criteria for selecting boys for individual or group therapy seemed confusing to the non-professionals, thus such questions as: "If good for some boys, why not for others? I've got a couple over in my shop that need something. I don't see why they weren't included." With little insight as to what the professionals were attempted.

ting to accomplish, the non-professionals were skeptical, suspicious and at times opposed to therapy.

The majority of the non-professionals had not formalized their thinking about delinquency causation; however, many of them believed that delinquent behavior was historically and situationally determined. They believed that present situations and past experiences played an important part in bringing about delinquent behavior, but that once institutionalized, the delinquent would become penitent, see the error of his ways, and of his own free will choose socially constructive goals despite his present obstacles and past experiences.

To the professionals, the non-professionals appeared inconsistent and ambiguous in their thinking about treatment. The non-professionals talked of past experiences and the current situation as factors in behavior but said that if only the delinquent "would make up his mind, he could do what is right, because after all, he knows right from wrong. If he doesn't know right from wrong, then punish him because a child always learns to leave a hot stove alone after he is burned often enough." At times, they assumed that "if a boy has been mistreated, all you have to do is be nice to him and treat him right, and he will be O. K." In this instance, they viewed treatment as being synonymous with kindness. Some of these inconsistencies are apparent in the case of Jim.

Jim was transferred to the "Boys Training School" from the state orphanage because he was "incorrigible". Following the orientation and study period, the staff met to discuss the results of these findings and to plan for his stay at the school. The professionals generally agreed that the boy was suffering from an insidiously developing schizophrenic condition, that his controls over his intense anxiety and hostility were crumbling and that his contact with reality was weak and intermittent. They viewed his judgment as severely impaired and anticipated bizarre hostile behavior from him. Their general recommendations included an environment of acceptance, security and supportive psychotherapy.

The cottage-father listened to these analyses and proposals. He appeared to have difficulty with the terminology but understood it well enough to disagree in principle. He went on to describe several concrete episodes of Jim's behavior in which Jim had torn some plastic tile from the floor of the hall and had collected all the dirty socks he could find and put them in his locker. He further pointed out that when he had confronted Jim with this "nonsense" that he could stop it if he wanted to, especially if there was some penalty attached to such behavior, Jim agreed. The house-father commented that while the medical diagnosis might be "true" he still regarded Jim's behavior as rising from a wish to be "ornery" and that it could be changed "if people would put their foot down on him".

Some bizarre behavior borders on the normal. To the untrained observer, it is frequently difficult to determine where one stops and the other starts. Although Jim's cottage parent could understand the schizophrenic condition of Jim in theory, he could not recognize or accept it as it occurred in Jim's daily living. Perhaps he had known many boys who did some of the very things Jim had done, and they were relatively normal.

He was intimately aware of Jim's actions, but he did not have a diagnostic frame of reference that he could bring to bear on this behavior and thus was unable to understand Jim's condition as being anything else than simple orneriness.

Some Negative Effects of the Conflicts9

These conflicts had significant detrimental effects on the system of social relationships as a whole as well as on the groups and individual involved¹⁰

In some of the institutions, conflicts between these groups resulted in the system of social relationships becoming so disorganized that constructive interaction among the staff was nearly impossible. For example, some of the institutions required all the professionals and non-professional people working with a particular delinquent to attend his staff meetings; however, many of the non-professionals could not "find time" to attend the meetings even though their work load or schedule of duties had not noticeably increased. In other institutions, the professionals and non-professionals avoided meeting each other informally, as in the cafeteria and the staff recreation rooms.

Both professional and non-professional groups were disturbed by internal frictions. At times, dissensions pitted the vocational teachers and maintenance workers against the cottage parents and the social workers against the psychologists and psychiatrists.

In all of the institutions, a varying number of staff members set up devices to protect themselves and withdrew from some of the normal and expected activities. This, of course, reduced constructive interaction. In one institution the professionals spent much of their time in research although this was not included in the duties of their job. At another institution, the professionals tended to ignore the organizational problems, and discussed instead the theory of their various fields. At several institutions, the professionals carried on exhaustive discussions regarding individual cases of delinquents and the institution's problems, but they rarely advanced beyond diagnosis of a delinquent or criticism of the administration and the non-professionals.

The non-professionals also had a variety of protective devices. Only one cottage parent would work when both were scheduled to work the other would be upstairs resting. They would force particularly difficult boys into recreational activities outside the cottage rather than follow the professional's recommendations for providing activities for them at the cottage where the situation at the time was expected to be less complex.

Staff members, in their efforts to work in these situations and adapt to them, may become maladjusted. Anxiety, feelings of discouragement, aggressive and psychosomatic reactions were not uncommon responses among many of the workers in these institutions.

⁹ This is not to imply that only negative and destructive phenomena are associated with conflict although this is the focus here. For a theoretical discussion of the postive as well as the negative aspects of conflict see, George Simmel, as translated by Albion W. Small, *The Sociology of Conflict*, Amer. Jour. of Sociol., Vol. 9, 1903–1904, pp. 490–525.

¹⁰ As in society, there were those who took difficulties and conflicts in their stride; however, frustration, anxiety and other reactions were widespread. Some of these problems in society are characterized by Karen Horney, The Neurotic Personality of our Time, New York, W. W. Norton and Company, 1937.

Situationally, these reactions appeared related to the staff conflicts as well as to the nature and intensity of the children's behavior.¹¹

Some staff members sought "one sided" solutions outside of the institution by feigning cooperation with the institution's efforts to achieve cooperation. For example, in one institution a group of dissatisfied non-professionals appealed directly to the commissioner of the institution's administration concerning their complaints. In several institutions, a powerful cadre of nonprofessionals worked undercover for a change of administration through special interest groups. They wanted to be rid of the present administration and many of the professionals. This group complained about the professionals "meddling with our discipline". In another institution, the professionals, thinking that the administration failed to support their ideas and recommendations, worked secretly to gain a change in the administration.

Further along this web of subterfuge, the "acting out" of certain staff members worked against the institutions' goals. For example, at several schools, the professionals left work early, commenting, "What's the use of staying? We can't get any cooperation anyway." Yet they always accepted full-time pay. In another institution, a few of the professionals appropriated books from the library rationalizing that "I might as well get something out of this job," and "You couldn't get anyone around here interested in learning about this." A farmer at one institution was highly critical of administrative laxness concerning inter-group conflicts. He declared vehemently that people should be made to "toe the line or get out". Gradually his criticism waned and he would sarcastically remark, "I'm running my own little playhouse now, I expect others to run theirs. That's the only way a guy can get along here." A short time later he was caught stealing some livestock from the school.

As a result of these staff conflicts, the delinquent is frequently damaged rather than helped. Many delinquents came to these institutions from homes with extremely disturbed family situations where their needs for a secure and stable family life were ignored or where the parents were highly inconsistent. As a result, many delinquents developed devious means of satisfying their needs. They very shrewdly evaluated the social situations about them. They detected weaknesses, and they exploited and manipulated the situation for their personal ends. This behavior-attitude had played a strong role in their delinquency in the first place and was one of the behavioral tendencies that the institution tried to modify. Yet this was quite impossible if the delinquent was exposed to an institutional environment where the surroundings were similar to those which had contributed to his unhealthy condition.

John, a delinquent at a Training School, was denied a holiday pass to his home by his cottage parent because he had persistently been intimidating younger boys and, whenever possible, beating them. Aware that there were differences of opinion regarding treatment methods between the social worker and the cottage parent, John went to see the social worker, complaining that he was restricted from his pass unfairly and that the cottage parent was "down on him" and that "he had just been

¹¹ Information was given about these points in a paper entitled, *The Emotional Reactions of People Working with Emotionally Disturbed and Delinquent Children* by RALPH W. COLTHARP and GEORGE H. Weber, presented at the 1951 Mid-Continent Psychiatric Association, Kansas City, Missouri.

¹² For a discussion of this problem on a broader scale, see LAWRENCE S. THOMPSON, NOTES ON BIBLIOKLEPTOMANIA, New York, The New York Public Library, 1944.

playing with the other fellows." The social worker was sympathetic and after the boy left, she discussed it with the chief social worker. He took it to the superintendent who, in turn, asked to see the cottage parent. The cottage parent, threatened by this apparent display of power by the professionals, said that "he thought maybe a pass would be the thing to help him". Later, in talking with his associates, the cottage parent bitterly denounced the professionals.

Many delinquents are shrewd and devious in their actions. John was such a boy. By manipulating some staff members, who fell unwittingly into his trap, he got his pass. The conflict of status and role here between the professionals and non-professionals is evident again; a conflict over treatment methods is also indicated. Jim was aware of these conflicts and cleverly exploited them to his own advantage, and continued his delinquent way of dealing with the world.

Some Recommendations To Relieve These Conflicts

Education is obviously not a cure-all but the professionals might profit from training programs that provided them with a broader frame of reference, and sensitized them to the practical functioning of an organization. If properly administered, such training should help them empathize with a greater variety of people. While the colleges do teach the professionals many things, there is a lot that the institution itself can do to add to this teaching process. In-service training, internships and residences at institutions for delinquents would be of considerable help.¹³

In order for the professional to understand the role of the non-professional, it might be well for him to work as a participant-observer in the various non-professional jobs during the early period of his employment. However, such a procedure would probably be difficult for many professionals to accept. In one of the institutions studied, the administration and the heads of professional departments agreed to provide this type of experience for the newly hired professionals. At first it was intimated to the professionals that one week's close sharing of cottage life would aid greatly in their orientation. Later they were told that such a period of observation and participation was expected, and that as soon as they were ready the process would begin.

Of the nine professionals to whom this opportunity was extended, three began it and only one completed the activity. When those who did not attempt it or failed to complete it were faced with their failure to participate, various excuses were made.

"I was too busy with other activities."

"After all, I'm not studying to be a cottage parent."

"Just how do you conceive of my role here?"

"My wife needed me at home at night."

"I can learn just as much by testing a boy as I can by watching him in a cottage."

¹³ The current program of the Training Branch, Juvenile Delinquency Service, United States Children's Bureau, is important in this respect. Under their leadership special training in the field of corrections is being planned to assist various specialists working in the field of delinquency control. For example, a program has been offered to university teachers and prospective teachers of social work at the University of California, Berkeley, in the summer of 1956. See *Projects and Progress*, CHILDREN, Vol. 3 No. 1, January-February, 1956, p. 37.

This procedure and reasons for the expected participation had been previously explained to them.¹⁴

Concomitant with the experience of being a participant-observer in a variety of non-professional jobs the professional should meet with the non-professional of each job to learn of the activities and problems of the job from the standpoint of the non-professional. In such arrangements the professional would, of course, profit from constructive departmental and administrative leadership.

The total institution should be made aware of a new staff member's arrival in advance along with the position he is to fill and the role he is expected to play. Upon arrival he should be introduced to the other staff members, including non-professionals. Many times the new staff member needs some early reassurance, support and friendly guidance in his efforts to work himself into the institution. In several of the organizations, efforts were made in this direction but in the others, very little was done. Such procedures are as necessary for the non-professional as they are for the professional.¹⁵

The non-professionals need systematic frames of reference to use in shaping their experiences and first-hand familiarity with delinquents into an organized repertoire of knowledge and skills which provide them with new vantage points from which to view and work with the delinquents. This might be provided by in-service training.¹⁶

The non-professionals may need to take part in regularly scheduled classes in connection with their work. The classes should be small and carried on by conference and discussion, rather than by lecture. The subject matter of these classes should be focused on the personality of the delinquents and the behavior of groups in an institutional setting. Also, the nonprofessional worker should become familiar with

¹⁴ The theoretical bases for the importance of being able to take the role of the other in interpersonal relations is set forth in George H. Mead, Mind, Self and Society, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1934, pp. 360-376. For the practical application of this idea to training in industry see Alex Bavelas, *Role Playing and Management Training*, Sociatry, 1:2: 183-190, June 1947. The work that has been done to improve the relationships between supervisors and workers in industry is suggestive in regard to improving the relationships between the professionals and non-professionals in institutions for delinquents. N. R. F. Maier, Principles of Human Relations, New York, John Wiley and Sons, 1952, describes how supervisors are taught to consider problems from the worker's point of view, to look at the various possible motives underlying the worker's behavior, to encourage the worker's self expression and to develop solutions to problems with the work group. The effects of employee participation in decision making on production, in industry are presented by Lester Coch and J. R. P. French, Jr. Overcoming Resistance to Change, Human Relations, 1948 I, pp. 512-532.

15 The importance of incorporating the new worker into an organization is described by Delbert C. Miller and William H. Form, in Industrial Sociology, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1951, pp. 676-697 and Edwin E. Ghiselli and Clarence W. Brown in Personnel & Industrial Psychology, New York, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1955, pp. 378-410, and Margaret L. Newcomb. Eleanor Gay and Barry L. Levin, A Training Program for Social Work Students in a Psychiatric Clinic, Social Case Work, Vol. XXXIV, No. 5, May 1953, pp. 204-211.

¹⁶ In respect to the general problems of training non-professionals for training schools see Susanne Schulze and Morris Fritz Mayer, *Training for House-parents and Kindred Personnel in Institutions for Juvenile Delinquents*, pp. 44–71, in Training Personnel for Work with Juvenile Delinquents, Children's Bureau Publication No. 348, 1954. The work of Bernard H. Hall, et al, *Psychiatric Aide Education*, New York, Grune and Stratton, 1952, is significant in a related field with similar problems.

some of the terminology and theoretical background that professional people use in approaching the problem of delinquency. This does not mean that the non-professional must be trained as a theorist but that he must have some understanding of this as it relates to his job.

The institutions need to refine and intensify their recruitment, selection and orientation procedures for both the professionals and non-professionals. In many cases this means that in addition to sponsoring various programs to increase the efficiency of these procedures, the institutions must also raise wages and improve working conditions.¹⁷

Within the institutions, the administration as well as the professional and non-professional staff must always strive to keep the various channels of communication functioning. Administrative-department head conferences and departmental, along with interdepartmental, meetings can facilitate this. Various institutional service committees, e.g., staff recreation and library committees, might prove effective vehicles. An institutional planning board made up of equal numbers of professionals and non-professionals could help in planning the over-all policies of the school and might have some value in decreasing the number and intensity of conflicts between the two groups.¹⁸

In addition to these attempts to structure situations that would be conducive to harmonious staff relationships, the institution must provide regular procedures through which conflicts can be managed. Different conflicts would require different types of action. Sometimes administrative action would be clearly indicated, as in the case in pay and hours, or unsatisfactory working conditions. In many cases, however, it would appear that the people with conflicts need an opportunity to meet, discuss and try to "work through" their differences and problems, either individually or in groups, with an experienced, capable institutional worker who has a broad grasp of the situation.¹⁹

It should be remembered, however, that the routine employment of in-service training, conferences, or committee meetings will not insure the resolution or prevention of conflicts. None of these are a "package approach" to all situations.

¹⁷ This is particularly true for the non-professional. For the house-parent's problems in this connection see Morris F. Mayer. *The House-parents and the Group Living Process*, pp. 97-117 in Susanne Schulze, Ed., Creative Group Living in a Children's Institution, New York, Association Press, 1951.

¹⁸ The position of one side cannot possibly be clearly understood by those on the other side unless frequent communication occurs. For a vivid illustration of this truism see Alexander H. Leighton, The Governing of Men, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1946. For the importance of communication for effective integration of any group see Fritz J. Roethlisberger, Management and Morale, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1941, pp. 62–63.

¹⁹ Should the spontaneous, informal day to day efforts of the staff to resolve their conflicts prove ineffective administrators would undoubtedly find procedures of voluntary conciliation more acceptable to the members of the professional and non-professional groups than compulsory measures. In the area of labor and management it is interesting to note that most members of the Minnesota "fact-finding" commissions favored voluntary as opposed to compulsory arbitration in regard to labor relations problems. The "fact-finding" commissions are appointed under the Minnesota Law to place certain limitations on strikes, see JACK STIEBER, Minnesota Labor Relations Acts—An Opinion Survey, HARVARD BUSINESS REV., 27, 1949, pp. 665-667.

Rather, they provide several ways to work toward these ends. It takes a sympathetic and interested administration and some desire on the part of employees to improve staff relationships. Excellent leadership on the part of these working directly with the conflicts is required if any of these means are to be realized at their fullest potential.²⁰ Hostilities, anxieties, suspicions, resistances and negativisms are involved in any of these approaches if they are employed intensively.²¹

In one institution, a cottage mother expressed her hostility toward a teacher by criticising her teaching methods. Actually, the teacher's methods were good but the cottage mother was jealous of the friendly feelings and loyalty that the boys from her cottage were expressing to the teacher. This problem grew until each worker was openly criticising the other. The psychologist was asked by the superintendent to work this out with them. In that institution, he assumed this role at times.²²

The psychologist talked with each individual for approximately an hour on two different occasions about these problems. After these talks, it appeared that a meeting including both workers could help in the resolution of this matter. Each agreed that such a meeting might be helpful. The meeting took place at a mutually convenient time and place. It progressed well until the school teacher pointed out one too many critical things about the cottage mother's attitude to her boys. In spite of the psychologist's efforts to help the cottage mother express her thoughts and feelings regarding this problem. She left the meeting in a defensive rage.

In retrospect, a number of critical considerations can be raised. Was the joint meeting premature? Had the psychologist moved too quickly in his effort to have the two people talk over their mutual problem? Should he have tempered the teacher's remarks? Instead of encouraging the cottage mother to express her feelings, should the psychologist have used different techniques in coping with the cottage mother's reaction? For example, should he have supported her in this crisis? Or should he have focused the discussion more on facts than on the thoughts and feelings of the cottage mother and teacher?

The psychologist then saw the cottage mother the following morning. At first she was defensive and self-righteous. Following this, she began to express some guilt about her "walking out". The psychologist listened and accepted her expressions and then purposely focused the discussion on the more immediate problem. After another meeting with the cottage mother and the teacher individually in which each vented considerable hostility toward the other, a joint meeting was tried again.

²⁰ For discussions of leadership see Chester I. Barnard, The Functions of the Executive, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1938, George C. Homans, The Human Group, New York, Harcourt Brace and Company, 1950, pp. 415–440 and Leon H. Richman, Sound Administration: The Key That Unlocks, pp. 18–34 in Susanne Schulze, Ed., Creative Group Living in a Children's Institution, New York, Association Press, 1951.

²¹ Though outside of the framework of this discussion it should be recognized that many times the problem of conflict between professionals and non-professionals in institutions serving delinquents cannot be resolved by dealing only with the groups or individuals who experience the problems. In addition, determinants of conflict outside of the institution such as economic or political conditions must be included in this problem solving process. Harold L. Sheppard, in an article, Approaches to Conflict in American Industrial Sociology, presented at the Congress of International Sociological Association, Liege, Belgium, 1953, stresses this point in respect to industrial conflict.

²² For the general rationale underlying this psychologist's approach to the workers, see NATHANIEL CANTOR, EMPLOYEE COUNSELING, New York, McGraw-Hill, 1945, pp. 73–131, CARL R. ROGERS, CLIENT-CENTERED THERAPY, New York, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1951, pp. 19–64, and ELLIOTT JAQUES, Ed., Social Therapy, Jour. of Soc. Issues, Vol. III, No. 2, 1947.

This meeting was a success in the sense that they were able to express their ideas and feelings and could accept those of the other in working out their mutual responsibilities and relationships to the boys.

The overt and readily apparent aspects of any institutional problems have their deeper counterparts in the personal problems of the staff members. Often the institutional problems of anxiety, jealousy, hostility and competitive feelings stem in part from the personal and individual feelings of the staff members and are aggravated by them. The institutions for delinquents, because of their social structure and delinquent population, were fertile battlegrounds upon which the individuals brought their personal tendencies into play. Thus, this problem has both the individual as well as the institutional aspects.²³

A case in point is that of Mr. M., who was a rigid, caustic, and driving trades instructor. He was often officious about administrative unfairness. Also, he was ambivalent in his attitudes towards people in positions of leadership and authority. Mr. M., did his best work and seemed most comfortable when he was given encouragement and support by his supervisor. Under optimum institutional conditions, the approach was enough to offset his tendencies to be overly critical of people in superior positions.

Shortly after Dr. H., joined the staff of this institution as a psychologist, he attended a meeting of department heads. Mr. M's supervisor was one of those in attendance. Techniques of supervision were considered by the group during this meeting. Mr. M's supervisor asked Dr. H., what caused people to be "hard-headed". Without questioning the supervisor further, Dr. H., replied, "Sometimes people do that to defend themselves against their real feelings." The supervisor accepted this without question and then proceeded to discuss another subject. Several days after this department head's meeting Mr. M., became irritable, critical and incompromising with his boys. His supervisor, in talking with Mr. M., commented that Mr. M's attitude must be caused by something else—perhaps anger toward the boys of this class.

This interpretation made Mr. M., angry and he replied sarcastically that it sounded like a psychological idea. At lunch and after school that day he was very outspoken against all of the professionals as he talked with others. Some of what he had to say had its contagious effect and was carried to the school's administration. Following this, the superintendent talked with Dr. H., and the supervisor to learn more about the situation and how to correct it. Mr. M., learned of this meeting and suspicioned that plans were being made against him. As a result he became more defensive and exceedingly critical of others.

The general procedure used to attack these problems will influence the techniques used by the individuals who cope with a particular problem. However, the skill and knowledge of the person who works with the problems will probably be the dominant factors in determining the choice of procedures.

However, whatever the procedure or technique may be, the groups and individuals must be helped to recognize and face some of the more important conflicts. They must be shown how to explore those conflicts and learn about their causes including their own contributions to them, and they must work these problems through to a better level of understanding and work relationships.

²³ See in this connection the special symposia, AMER. JOUR. OF SOC., XLII, May 1937 and XLV, November, 1939, Sigmund Freud, Group Psychology and The Analysis of the Ego, London, The Hograth Press, and The Institute of Psychoanalysis, 1948 and Fritz Redl, Group Psychological Elements in Discipline Problems, AMER. JOUR. OF ORTHOPSYCHIATRY, XIII, 1943, pp. 77-81.