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THE CHANGING ROLE OF THE MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK IN THE JEWISH FEDERATION SYSTEM

By

Bailey Kay London

Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Jewish Communal Service in cooperation with the School of Social Work at the University of Southern California

Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion

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HEBREW UNION COLLEGE - JEWISH INSTITUE OF RELIGION
LOS ANGELES SCHOOL

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THE CHANGING ROLE OF THE MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK IN THE JEWISH FEDERATION SYSTEM

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Chapter One

Introduction

The Jewish Federation system has been in existence in communities across North America for many years. Serving as the institutional center responsible for the continuity of Jewish life, the Federation system responds to the unique needs of the Jewish community and encompasses more dynamics of organized Jewish life than any other agency has ever attempted to reach. Over the past decades the staff structure seen in the local Jewish Federations has seen a shift educational background. Once primarily staffed by candidates with a Master in Social Work and a Master of Arts or Certificate of Jewish Communal Service, the Federation system has experienced a paradigm shift in the degrees held by its human resources.

Just as the Federation system has experienced a shift, so too has the curriculum of the graduate level Social Work schools. Most professionals who have an MSW that chose to work in the Jewish Federation studied the macro perspective of Social Work. Over the past thirty years there has been a distinct change in the curriculum provided at Universities for students studying macro practice. Once focused primarily on group work and reflective reasoning, the macro Social Work student now studies management, leadership, and organizational subjects to enhance their knowledge and skill level in order to best provide the graduate with an education to be prepared for the work force.

Purpose of the Study

The recent emergence of the shift in educational backgrounds seen in the staff structure within the Jewish Federation system has become a source of professional discourse in the organized Jewish community. While Jewish organizations have grown and changed along side the rest of non-profit organizations in the United States the demands on professionals has changed as well. This study, an analysis of the shift, seeks to:

1. Examine the actuality of the shift observed in the staff structure of the Jewish Federation system to determine if it is a clear trend that is changing within the system.
2. Determine the effects of this shift and whether the Federation system will continue to diversify the educational background of human resources.
3. Investigate role of the MSW within the Jewish Federation system and the place that the professional with a Master of Social Work degree will have secured in the future of the Jewish Federation.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

History of the Field of Macro Social Work

Social worker, community organizer, planner, administrator, executive, therapist, counselor, intake worker, fundraiser; the list goes on for position titles that those with a Master of Social Work may hold. The MSW degree allows its recipients to enter a career with endless opportunities and flexibility. The degree exists to uphold the values of social work and provide society with trained, competent individuals who can create change for the well being of the community. "The primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty" (NASW, 1996). People with an MSW are drawn to careers in which their professional efforts make the world a better place (Eiser, 2005; Gibelman, 2004 & Hodge, 2004).

The social work profession had its early beginnings in the 1880s. At that time, social workers were typically women; primarily single and without families. Women of that era who married tended to quickly start a family and devote their lives to raising that family. Women who chose to enter the field of social work remained single because they accepted social norms, which declared them unable to balance both family life and career. Unlike other professions in which women chose to work rather than raise a family, Social Work this was more easily accepted by society because of the nurturing and mother-like qualities that social worker's seemed to possess. This career was a good

'substitute' for family life (Austin, 2000). The engendering of this field at an early stage has had lasting effects on the modern image of the person with the Master of Social Work.

In an effort to make the field of social work a true profession, a group of medical social workers and visiting teachers formed a national organized group in 1919, which then became a membership association of social workers called the American Association of Social Workers (NASW), in 1921 (Austin, 2000). Schools that provided social work education organized to form a national identity and eventually adopted standards of accreditation to avoid being absorbed by other departments in social science departments at their universities. This organization was not created to form an "elite" group, but rather to establish an identity separate and unique from others in existence. This was done in the hopes of gaining respect from (typically) men in other prominent fields such as "doctors, lawyers, professors, and judges" (2000). Social work programs at colleges and universities maintained a severe gender bias (female) throughout the first half of the century. This is due largely to the fact that Social Workers were used as support to other professions such as law, medicine, and government services and women were stereotyped as being able to only support the work of their male counterparts. Men did not begin to have a significant presence in Social Work educational programs until the creation of the public social work sector when social workers were being trained with an emphasis placed on administrative skills as well as clinical skills because there was a strong need for organization, leadership, and entrepreneurial expertise (2000).

In the 1930s the public social work sector was created as a response to the public assistance programs that were being established on both the federal and state level,

particularly under the Social Security Act of 1935. This led to a dramatically higher demand for professionals with social work education and increased employment opportunities around the country. This formulation of structured policies and the influence of governmental partnerships brought more men to the field of social work. This included men who were refugees from Europe, particularly those with a strong background in psychology. The 1950s brought a restructuring of the organization of social workers across the country. The establishment of the Council of Social Work Education (CSWE) (1952) and the National Association of Social Workers (1956) provided a framework and structure for the growing profession. The second half of the century saw a development of concentrations in the educational requirements of social work programs in response to the changing shape of social service provision and laws in America.

Training and Education

In the late 1800s, the Charity Organization Society movement in the United States saw the work of existing philanthropic groups as unsatisfactory in their approach to their work with the poor. The groups functioned with very little organization and existed as simple almsgiving groups with neglectful investigation into the beneficiaries of the services. This movement began to assign "friendly visitors" to needy families. Friendly visitors were not just people with good intentions, but they required special knowledge, skills, and techniques (Leighninger, 2000). The first public discussion of the need for a training system for those people interested in providing social and community services was presented by Anna L. Dawes in her speech at the International Congress of Charities

and Correction at the Chicago World's Fair in 1893 as a result of her frustrations over finding a qualified, knowledgeable director of charities in her home town. She stated, "what is needed, it seems to me, is some course of study where an intelligent young person can...be taught the alphabet of charitable science" (Dawes, 1893). A few years later, Mary E. Richmond spoke about the need of a training school in applied philanthropy and social services (Leighninger, 2000). Social work continued to evolve as an academic profession, starting with small training centers and becoming undergraduate college programs in the early 1900s (Leighninger, 2000).

Currently, the Council on Social Work Education is a national association with over 3,000 individual members as well as an institutional membership of agencies throughout the United States, and educational social work programs on the graduate and undergraduate level. CSWE is recognized as the sole accrediting source for professional social work programs (CSWE, 2006). In its most recent handbook, CSWE has set forth the following goals that all social work education programs must achieve:

- Providing curricula and teaching practices at the forefront of the new and changing knowledge base of social work and related disciplines,
- Providing curricula that build on a liberal arts perspective to promote breadth of knowledge, critical thinking, and communication skills.
- Developing knowledge.
- Developing and applying instructional and practice-relevant technology.
- Maintaining reciprocal relationships with social work practitioners, groups, organizations, and communities.

- Promoting continual professional development of students, faculty, and practitioners.
- Promoting interprofessional and interdisciplinary collaboration.
- Preparing social workers to engage in prevention activities that promote well-being.
- Preparing social workers to practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
- Preparing social workers to evaluate the processes and effectiveness of practice.
- Preparing social workers to practice without discrimination, with respect, and with knowledge and skills related to clients.
- Preparing social workers to alleviate poverty, oppression, and other forms of social injustice.
- Preparing social workers to recognize the global context of social work practice.
- Preparing social workers to formulate and influence social policies and social work services in diverse political contexts. (CSWE, 2006).

CSWE has also set forth rigorous objectives that graduates of the accredited Schools of Social Work must meet upon the time of the completion of their program. These objectives specifically outline the requirements that graduate programs must set forth in their first, foundational year curriculum, and states that "the master's curriculum prepares graduates for advanced social work practice in an area of a concentration. Using a conceptual framework to identify advanced knowledge and skills, programs build an advanced curriculum from the foundation content" (CSWE, 2006). Graduate programs must follow the accreditation guidelines in the foundation year curriculum, but then have

the freedom to create their own concentration curriculum following themes presented in the foundation level courses. For this reason, schools across the country have standardized foundational curriculum, but different concentration objectives. Some schools may specialize in micro/clinical practice, while others may focus on macro/administrative work. Most schools provide a variety of concentration options (CSWE, 2006).

Since 1893, the educational system for the academic training of professionals in the field of Social Work has developed into an organized system of schooling. Universities are implementing multi-systemic techniques of training in order to guarantee the successful preparation of those entering the field.

> "The professional school not only serves those who enter it, by giving them a grounding in the principles, methods, and history of social work; it serves also by a selective process the agencies who engage social workers. There are those who are especially fitted for social work. It is a part of the task of the professional school to discover such persons and to persuade them to enter it. There are others who, whatever their gifts and fitness for other occupations, are not fitted for social work. It is a part of the professional school to help them at an early stage to discover their limitations and thus to save a waste of their own time and resources, and to save the social agencies a needless disappointment." (Devine, 1916)

Through the development of a modern, flexible curriculum, graduate level education in social work is continuing the vision of the forbearers of the field by training top rate professionals. By utilizing class time, fieldwork, and experiential and technological techniques, students are leaving school prepared to work (CSWE, 2004).

Evolution of the MSW Curriculum

One of the first experiences of change in the educational system of Social Work training was at the merger of the fields that studied the troubles of society and

'Philanthropy.' "Students who have had...courses dealing with the causes of poverty or with social politics or similar subjects may have learned why social work is being done. The courses in the school of philanthropy teach how it is done or how it ought to be done" (Abbott, 1915). In 1915, Edith Abbott was running Hull House, a settlement house in Chicago, and was committed to the education of specialized individuals to work towards responding to the needs in society. As one of the leaders in the development of the field of Social Work, she saw a clear need for students to grasp why the field needed to exist, and then what kind of training was needed to respond to it (Leighninger, 2000).

The Council on Social Work Education has a department of Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS), which reviews the standards of accreditation for social work programs every seven years while also maintaining the process of accreditation. This system is designed to ensure that the professional training of students of Social Work is aligned with changes in the profession. The accreditation process makes sure that the programs push students towards achieving leadership and excellence in the field. Currently, the purpose statement reads, "The purposes of social work education are to prepare competent and effective professionals, to develop social work knowledge, and to provide leadership in the development of service delivery systems" (CSWE, 2001). The previous statement read, "The purpose of professional social work education is to enable students to integrate the knowledge, values, and skills of the social work profession into competent practice" (CSWE, 1992). This change reflects the awareness of the curriculum and purpose that those who develop accreditation standards in CSWE, with the encouragement that students graduating with an MSW will have the

opportunity to participate in career paths outside of direct practice and will influence policy making, management, and other macro work (Wagner, 2001).

Public Perception of MSWs

Putting a definition on who a social worker is can be very difficult, particularly because most social workers in the field hold a bachelor's degree and most NASW members hold a master's degree. In there are many areas of practice in which MSWs do not label themselves as "social workers" but rather more as community organizers or administrators (Hodge, 2004). The wide array of variables present within the field of Social Work makes one label incredibly difficult to assign. Social Workers provide services in a variety of venues and have developed a professional range that is so broad that it cannot be explained in just one sentence. Schools of Social Work around the country all provide different concentrations and place emphasis within different areas of professional development. Professionals with an MSW have a wide range of choices for career paths upon the completion of their course work. While those with an MSW understand the expanse of opportunities available to them, the public perception of their degree does not correlate with the actuality of whom an MSW represents.

Recently, television has been portraying social workers in a stereotypical way that is not particularly beneficial to the image of the field. With its incredibly strong influence on public perceptions, television and other media sources have been proven to impact the way that people think and feel about issues and positions (Zaller, 1992). While having a presence on television may be a good sign that there is a public awareness of the social work profession, the negative portrayal does not enhance the public opinion.

On television, the education, background, and credentials of a social worker are rarely mentioned, and social workers are seen as government workers who provide assessments for legal reasons, remove children from their parents, or provide clinical services (Gibelman, 2004). In one example, the "Norm Show," Norm plays a social servant who is employed involuntarily as a punishment for tax fraud. He shows the community that social work skills are easily replaced by someone without training, and all it needs is someone who can pretend to be compassionate and emphatic to those less fortunate ("Members say 'Norm Show' mocks real ethical norms," 1999).

Often times, professionals with a Master of Social Work are stereotyped as emotional, 'touchy-feely,' clinical workers (Gibelman, 2004). A professional within the social work field cannot be easily labeled because of the varying degree type, concentration, and dual degree partner. The personal and experiential background of the person with an MSW also greatly influences their career path. People tend to use membership of NASW as a guide to understanding the field, but that is not always dependable. "Although a certain amount of information is known about individuals who are members of NASW, this 151,000 member organization only constitutes roughly 32 percent of the 484,000 individuals classified as social workers by the US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics in 1994 (Hodge, 2004). Additionally, this does not include the thousands of people holding MSWs that would not or do not call themselves a "social worker" when asked. The concept of being 'touchy-feely' is a personality quality for some individuals who may chose to go into the field of social work, but it is not a prerequisite to becoming a professional with a social work career.

The stereotype of the professional with a MSW as purely clinical is largely due to the origins of the field as previously discussed. Additionally, national Social Work organizations experienced a difficult transition in the 1950s when the Social Work identity was blurred. As the field grew in its professional reputation, the Council on Social Work Education reemphasized the need

> "To standardize the quality of education while still hoping to find room for innovation. It also succeeded in 1955 in merging a number of specialized social worker organizations into a single national association in order to concentrate resources and have more influence in public policy making and in resource allocation. One unintended consequence was the slow erosion of professional specialization in group work and community organization.... social workers were valued as employees but not as shapers of policy" (Morris, 2004).

At this point, MSWs were seen exclusively as direct service providers and not as managers.

Macro Social Work: Education and Professional Opportunities

In the 1920s and 1930s social workers responded to the devastation of the great Depression. With need present across the range of American demographics, people were desperately seeking out help, and basic-need provisions were not enough to cover all of the demands.

> "Out of the first reaction to a national crisis (the Depression), social workers found it necessary to rethink social work's practice and structure, while retaining its commitment to both help the individual and improve society. In the end, the private social agency survived, but with shrunken influence in community life and with a casework staff primarily committed to understanding individual and family behaviors and how to help individuals cope with crises in their personal lives. Public administration became the pioneer in the search for a new way to create a more secure foundation for all. Organization on this scale required not only new techniques- many of which had been developing in management, political science, and economics- but also very different sources of

> support. Social work was no longer dependent on philanthropically minded well-to-do citizens" (Morris, 2004).

The Social Work profession needed to begin thinking critically on how to survive without grassroots based leadership making decisions as a unified field.

Between 1945 and 1975, the field broadened and "clients became customers or consumers more than petitioners" (Morris, 2004). This was a successful shift for the profession because it saw expansion, and the public perception of those within the profession was drastically improving. The public was beginning to understand what the field set forth to do, and the fact that people in the field held a myriad of roles and responsibilities. "The profession flourished in these years, measured by increase in university education, by the number of graduates, by the number of certified social workers, and by the dispersion of social workers to many new kinds of service agencies" and positions in those agencies (Morris, 2004).

Moving into the second century of its existence, the profession of Social Work will be marked by an evolution in the way in which the profession is perceived and enacted. "There will continue to be highly visible examples of social workers in public leadership positions, social policy analysis, social policy advocacy, community development, and for-profit entrepreneurship" (Austin, 2004). The field continues to move forward in the way that it understands and actualizes its role in the professional world while shifting between the governmental, non-profit, and for-profit sectors. Throughout the next few decades there will be even more change experienced as the needs of society change.

> "If social workers are to have a place at the drafting tables rather than the triage rooms, we will have to (1) incorporate in our decision making and practice far more in depth study of economic realities that until now we

> have left to interpretation by others, and (2) develop new levels of sophistication in presenting our knowledge to a media-saturated and distrustful public. To be credible, that knowledge must evidence theoretical and experiential validity, backed by research that is relevant to the lives and quandaries of the real people being asked to fund and respond to it" (Hopps, 2004).

The Jewish Federation and the MSW

Social Work and philanthropy are difficult to separate from one another. Philanthropists seek to support the programs that professionals with an MSW seek to supply. Together, the two fields intersect to create the product that they are both seeking to provide. Since the inception of the formalization of social work training, philanthropy has been on the forefront of the provision of academic training. "The spontaneity of nature's provision for the needs of life characterizes and accounts for the rise of the specialized educational efforts to train for philanthropic and social service...On both its practical and academic side this development has been wholly natural, if not inevitable, at just this stage of the evolution of philanthropy" (Taylor, 1905). The Jewish Federation came into being as an agency in which the development of philanthropy and social was strongly emphasized. Its hallmark has been the pursuit of charitable giving in order to allocate funds to provide services to those in need.

The Jewish Federation Movement

The history of the Jewish Federation movement varies among each local Federation construct. The first organized Jewish settlement in the United States was in New Amsterdam (New York) in 1654. For the next 250 years, Jews continued to settle in the United States and the communities established "synagogues, burial societies, credit

union, and Hebrew Relief Societies in dozens of cities before there was a single federation" (Feldstein, 1996). The first Federation was founded in Boston in 1895, followed closely by a Federation in Cincinnati, and then more Federations were developed in cities around the country wherever there were enough Jews to make it sustainable (1996).

The Federation system is understood as a uniquely American invention, and as Donald Feldstein describes in his article for the Journal of Jewish Communal Service in 1996, it is deeply rooted in the Biblical tradition, is similar to the model of the Kehilla, or communal organization so commonly seen in Europe throughout history. The Federation's role is unique in history however, and encompasses more capacity than any other organized Jewish system to date. Utilizing several resources, Feldstein compiled a list of nineteen characteristics or values of the Jewish Federation. They include:

- Joint Fundraising, Allocations, and Central Budgeting
- Community Planning
- Central Services
- Agency Benefits
- Autonomy
- Inclusion
- Governance
- Leadership
- Council of Federations and Other National Agencies including United Jewish Appeal (*since the time this was published, a merger occurred, creating the United Jewish Communities)

- Changes in Services
- Public Social Policy
- Unity
- Social Justice; Ethical Values
- Concept of Community
- Creativity and Excellence
- Maximum Feasible Participation
- More Than Survival
- Sanctity of Life and the Dignity of Each Person

(Feldstein, 1996)

United Jewish Communities (UJC) is the umbrella organization that serves the Jewish Federations of North America. By providing consultation, resources, seminars, conferences, trainings, international programs, and other services, the UJC is a unifying component for the organized Jewish community, worldwide. The relationship with Israel and other countries around the world is highly facilitated by the work of the UJC, with the contributions and involvement of local Federations as well. Today, Federations are seen as a central address for organized local Jewish communal life. They are centers of knowledge, fundraising, organization, resources, communication, and community. The role of the Federation in its individual communities varies depending on the size of both the Federation's resources and the community itself, typically, however, the Jewish Federation is always representative of the communal agencies it supports. Serving largely as a fundraising entity, the Jewish Federation is the philanthropic center for Jewish social services, educational and community programming. Money is raised

through direct solicitations of a wide variety, including face-to-face, e-philanthropy, and other methods. Efforts to engage the entire community in this annual fundraising effort is pursued through different programs and events organized by the local Federation. Federations then reinvest the dollars raised into local, national, and international ventures. Each community has a network of beneficiary agencies ranging from synagogues and schools to Jewish Family Services and vocational training and more. National programs are funded primarily through UJC, to which each Federation allocates a percentage of their annual campaign.

The Jewish Federation also serves as an agency for philanthropists to get involved in and engage with Jewish meaning in their philanthropic acts. Recent trends show that the lay leaders that are engaged in Federation's mission are seeking meaning in their involvement, rather than only being honored. This shift is seen in the perception that the Federation has on community members in their 20s, 30s, and 40s whom the agencies would like to engage as leadership. Rather than posing the idea of being told what can be done, this generation wants to be asked what they are interested in, and how the Federation can help them do that in their community (Goldman, 1999).

Trends in Recruitment

The United Jewish Communities (UJC) is the umbrella agency serving 155 Federations and 400 independent Jewish communities throughout North America (UJC, 2007). Serving as the link between one of the strongest networks of service providers on the continent, UJC looks out for the strength of the greater Jewish community by ensuring the commitment to Jewish continuity, social action, and Israel and political

advocacy provided by Jewish Federations. While the UJC is its own philanthropic and programmatic agency, it serves the Federations by providing resources, consultation services, and other opportunities in an effort to strengthen their local efforts. One of the ways in which UJC helps to strengthen Federations is by contributing to their efforts to find quality staff. UJC offers professional development programs that Federations may send staff to attend, and also works on the recruitment of talented candidates for positions within the system. One such project is called the Federation Executive Recruitment Education Program (FEREP). The FEREP program is currently part of the Mandel Center for Leadership Excellence, which maintains the strategic objective of "respond(ing) to professional leadership challenges in Jewish federation by accelerating efforts to identify, recruit, cultivate, educate and retain professional leadership" (UJC, 2007). The Mandel Center continues the process of retaining professional leadership beyond the FEREP program by implementing professional summits and seminars to continue the educational process well into the career of those identified as strong professional leaders.

The FEREP fellowship seeks out students beginning their graduate work in policy, social work, business administration, Jewish communal service and public administration at one of these prestigious universities:

Brandeis University

Columbia University/Jewish Theological Seminary

New York University's Program in Nonprofit Management and Judaic Studies

University of Judaism

University of Maryland/Baltimore Hebrew University

University of Michigan

University of Pennsylvania/Gratz College

University of Southern California/ Hebrew Union College

Yeshiva University

By limiting the degrees and universities available to scholars they are sending a message that this is the recommended educational background for Federation professionals. Throughout the course of academic studies, FEREP fellows are invited to join in on monthly professional development focused conference calls and attend the UJC's General Assembly conference each year that they are in school. Upon graduation, FEREP fellows are required to start their career with a Federation, committing either two years or three years depending on the size of the grant that they received annually while in school. As a fellow, FEREPs become part of a network of colleagues who have received the FEREP scholarship, and may use this connection as a network of resources throughout their careers. The grants are given to candidates displaying strong leadership and professional skills with the hope that they will be encouraged to maintain employment and succeed to levels of high status in the Federation system, eventually holding executive positions.

Staffing Patterns Within Jewish Federations

Staffing models differ between each individual Federation across the country. All Federations have a Campaign, requiring staff members with strong fundraising skills, and a Planning and Allocations staff that determines the needs and priorities of the community. Some Federations have education departments that have staff members with

backgrounds in education and community organizing work with the greater community ensuring strong youth and adult education programs throughout the beneficiary agencies. Sometimes, Federations may have a Jewish Community Relations Council, which responds to government and policy related issues and serves as a liaison to the larger community. These positions, all under the same agency, all require a diverse range of skills, knowledge, and experience. Staff members must come from different backgrounds in order to create a responsible and effective staff team.

These necessary skills and backgrounds bring up questions of: who are these staff people? And where do they come from? Are the consistently found qualities of the staff members that make up the Jewish Federation and other Jewish agencies? Jewish professionals are leaders in the community. They have accepted the commitment to guide the community as professionals, empowering and engaging lay leadership and participants in their programs. They share a history of Jews committed to tikkun olam, healing the world, and a commitment to improving the lives of Jews and the greater community as well. However, Jewish professionals of the 21st century have challenges that were never before dealt with, and therefore are taking new approaches to guiding the community (Goldman, 1999 & Pomerance, September 2006).

Leaders As Corporate Savior

Strong leaders all have something in common-charisma. From a business perspective, charisma is the "commanding presence of a particular individual (that) evokes... a desire to follow" (Khurana, 2002). Qualities such as being quick witted, logical, persuasive, confident, and strong are often used to describe a model leader, but

also define charisma. Charismatic personalities have an interesting effect on those around them. "In most cases, of course, people do not try to understand why they find some individuals more charismatic than others; they feel the need only to ascertain their reactions to these individuals" (174). While qualities of charisma are apparent in a typical interview setting, there is always more to an individual and their leadership skills and style. In fact, some leaders do not immediately present the charisma that they possess, and this poses a problem for them upon initial interview experiences.

"Leading figures are the product of the conditions and reflect the possibilities of their society, although they certainly contribute to the never-ceasing shaping of these conditions and possibilities" (Friesel, 2000). The corporate savior, or spellbinder, or charismatic leader all have the same basic qualities. Somewhere along their professional and educational path, they were trained with certain conditions and mannerisms that their specific personality and personal characteristics worked well with. The combination of natural gift and learned traits creates the ideal candidate for leadership (Harris, 2006; Jung, 2006; Ritchie, 2006 & White, 1988).

Is Federation Looking for a Corporate Savior?

The Federation system is undoubtedly looking for strong leaders to step in and fill the professional roles in their agencies. They are currently facing stiff competition with a world full of other philanthropies set out to meet human service needs, and as a result need to be run by strong charismatic leaders in order to succeed in its mission. Staff is often hired for characteristics such as "steely resolve, managerial and fundraising expertise" (Pomerance, October 2006). They're looking for individuals who "possess

leadership ability, excellent oral, written and organizational skills, and demonstrate a strong commitment to the creative survival of the Jewish community and to a better society for all people" (Monsky, 1998). The Federation and UJC is putting an incredible amount of effort into attracting younger professionals as well as developing new professionals into stronger leaders in their system. Programs throughout the UJC have been developed for recruitment and professional development in the hopes that the career will be seen as desirable with many opportunities for growth and development (Berkofsy, 2006 & Pomerance, September 2006). The following qualities were listed as a catalogue of traits that should emerge in interviews for the Federation Executive Recruitment Education Program:

Traits of Character

- A good listener
- A passionate visionary
- Productive under stress
- A sense of balance
- Integrity/fairness/honest in dealing with individuals and decisions
- Risk-taker
- Heightened sense of self

Social Qualities

- A compelling communicator
- Interpersonal sensitivities/skills

Organizational abilities/skills

- Managerial skills

- Financial savvy
- Master of process

Intellectual abilities

- Smart
- Effective strategic planner

Bodies of knowledge/understanding

- Judaism
- Knowledge of contemporary Jewish realities and issues
- The culture of Federations and of Jewish communal life
- Financial savvy

(Pekarsky, 2003)

This spectrum of characteristics clearly depicts an expectation of high standards and hopes for the professional leadership of the Federations. Often times, emphasis is put on projecting a vision of the future and using personal abilities and innate qualities to establish consensus and lead both professional and lay leadership together into the future (Kolker, 2004).

Chapter Three

Theoretical Background

Theoretical background helps to frame the reason that the research is being conducted. Serving as an organizational model, it "provides a consistency of effort by suggesting a standard approach or perspective derived from some well articulated and comprehensive social or behavioral science theory" (Royse, 2006). The proceeding theories explain models applicable to staffing in the Jewish Federation and the necessity of a diversity of backgrounds in the staff make up. The first theory, systems theory explains the structure presented when an organization comes together. The second theory, explains the different models of intelligence that are accepted in organizational theory. The third theory is the competing values framework, which explains depicts the potential for an individual to succeed in different levels of management according to the skills and qualities that they possess.

Systems Theory

The staff of the Jewish Federation makes up a macro social system that can be analyzed through systems theory. Systems have boundaries, both defined and implied, and the individuals within a system have specific roles that effect the overall homeostasis, or state of balance, of the system. "A system is a set of elements that are orderly and interrelated to make a functional whole" (Zastrow, 2004). The system serves a specific role when interplaying with components outside of the system and is also made up of subsystems that each plays their own unique role (2004).

Systems theory places a lot of emphasis on the relationship, which is "the mutual emotional exchange; dynamic interaction; and affective, cognitive, and behavioral connection between two or more persons or systems" (Zastrow, 2004). The interaction between multiple systems is key in a relationship, and it requires different elements for success. One component of a relationship is the input, or the energy, information, and communication flow received from other systems. On the other side of this is output, which is what happens to input after it has been processed by a system (2004).

In the case of Jewish Federation human resources, the educational backgrounds of the professionals may be seen as inputs and their contributions to the organization may be seen as the outputs, with the individual staff member being the system itself. At this point in the history of the organization, it is worthwhile to analyze if the system's inputs are worth the outputs. Important emphasis should be placed on whether or not the outputs can be achieved more efficiently and effectively by using a different structure of inputs.

Types of Intelligence

To be a successful leader in the organizational setting, a certain amount of intelligence is required. Yet, intelligence is a concept that has recently been reevaluated, and theorists have expanded the types of accepted intelligences. Book learning or technical expertise is no longer the only accepted qualifier when determining intelligence. Someone with an extremely low grade point average in school may go on to succeed in leadership or management positions throughout their career. Research shows a

disconnect that is evident between the traditionally understood forms of academic performance and the likelihood of people to excel in their professional field.

In 1995, Daniel Goleman published a book called *Emotional Intelligence*, which outlined a new way of determining intelligence and success in the work and social sectors of life. *Working with Emotional Intelligence* followed in 1998, which applies the concepts from the previous book to the workforce. Goleman defined five basic emotional and social competencies that define this type of intelligence. He explained that self-awareness is having an understanding of one's feelings and using that knowledge to make decisions and having a realistic assessment of personal abilities and a strong sense of self-confidence. Self-regulation is the ability to handle emotions so that they support productivity rather than interfere with responsibilities such as being able to delay gratification to pursue goals, and being able to recover from emotional distress. Motivation is understood as use of preferences to guide one towards goals, taking initiative to improve, and to persevere in the face of setbacks. Empathy is the ability to sense what others are feeling and consider those perspectives while building rapport and attunement with a diverse range of people. Social skills involve being able to handle emotions in relationships well and the ability to read social situations and networks; interacting smoothly; and using these skills to persuade and lead, negotiate and settle disputes, for cooperation and teamwork (Goleman, 1998).

Justin Menkes suggested that different types of intelligence are needed to be successful in the workforce. His theory of *Executive Intelligence* analyzes the qualities that strong executives possess. "Executive Intelligence is a distinct set of aptitudes that determine one's success in the three central contexts of work: the accomplishment of

tasks, working with and through other people, and assessing or adapting oneself" (Menkes, 2005). Strong leaders possess high executive intelligence, which essentially determines why they are so successful. At the foundation of this theory is critical thinking. Without possessing the ability to think critically a person will be unable to succeed in executive positions (2005).

Theories of different types of intelligence are challenging, though not impossible, to assess in individuals. While "it has long been accepted that there are cognitive skills that predict academic intelligence, it has mistakenly been assumed that no such skills exist that determine business intelligence" (Menkes, 2005). A person may be evaluated on their ability to succeed in the three areas that make up the set of aptitudes in executive work. In order to be noticed as a 'star' professional, an individual must be highly capable in all three of these contexts that are previously described (2005).

Karl Albrecht has also developed a unique analysis of intelligence focusing on the social interactions a person is capable of expressing. His theory, Social Intelligence, looks at the way in which people interrelate with greater society. Social intelligence consists of insight and behavior and requires a certain level of consciousness of the way an individual processes the way they act and think in social settings (Albrecht, 2006). The working definition of social intelligence is "the ability to get along well with others and to get them to cooperate with you," but this is not to be paralleled with 'people skills', it is a much more comprehensive approach to daily interactions in both the social and professional settings (2006).

Albrecht writes of two different types of behaviors- toxic and nourishing. A toxic behavior is one that inhibits a positive interaction, and causes other people to avoid the

individual inflicting toxic behavior. A nourishing behavior is one that encourages social interaction, and causes other people to desire a closeness and continuing interaction with the individual exhibiting the behavior. In order to better understand the idea of Social Intelligence, Albrecht developed a "comprehensive model for describing, assessing, and developing Social Intelligence at a personal level" (2006). There are five categories of competence that are used as a point of analysis in the theory of Social Intelligence. The first, situational awareness, is the ability to read situation and interpret the behavior of other people. The second, presence, involves verbal and nonverbal patterns, appearance, posture, voice, and other signals that a person creates when in contact with others. The third category is authenticity. Authenticity is the signals that others use to judge a person as honest, open, ethical, trustworthy, or the opposite of any of these qualities. The fourth category, clarity, is the ability to explain oneself, articulate ideas, data, and our views, and the ability to engage others to cooperate. The fifth category of competence is empathy. Empathy is "a shared feeling *between* two people" or a state of connectedness with someone else (2006). These five dimensions form a diagnostic tool for understanding an individual's level of Social Intelligence. All of these qualities, and the qualities described in other theories of intelligence key components in an individual's potential to succeed professionally.

These three theories of emotional, executive, and social intelligence all focus on personality traits that are keys to the leadership of organizations. On a daily basis, leaders of systems come face to face with their own emotions, reactions, and perspectives while also managing others, and facing social interactions. In order to lead effectively they must be emotionally equipped to deal with the interactions that they will face. The

work of Goleman, Menkes, and Albrecht combined serves as comprehensive tools for assessing the ability of an individual to succeed in these roles (Albrecht, 2006; Goleman, 1998 & Menkes, 2005).

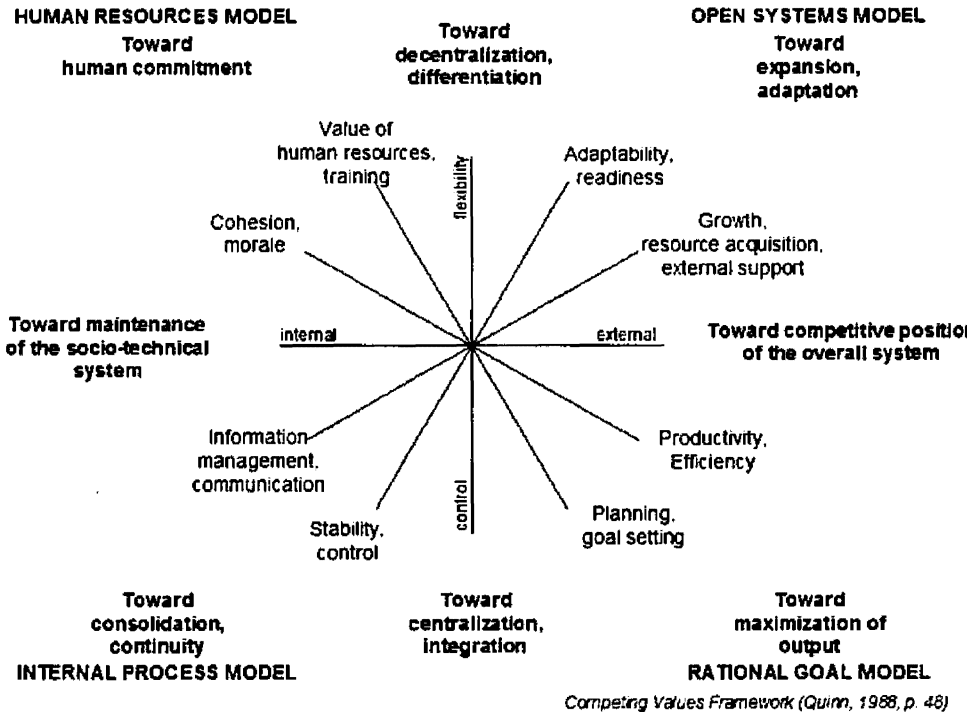
Competing Values Framework

The Competing Values Framework suggests that managers at all levels have to provide the agency that they work for with a variety of skills, which change and adapt depending upon the level of management at which they are positioned. The level of management that a person holds determines the skills that they will need. Katz (1974) categorizes management skills as technical, interpersonal and human relations, and decision-making and conceptual skills. Entry-level positions are weighted more heavily towards technical skills, while upper management roles such as Executive Directors or CEOs require more conceptual and decision making skills. He asserts that interpersonal and human relations skills are important at all levels of management.

Competing Values Framework was created as a result of interviewing experts who were responsible for the construction of organizational effectiveness in their fields. The researchers looked at eliminating redundancies to compile a system that can assess organizational effectiveness and design.

> "The criteria of organizational effectiveness can be sorted according to three axes or value dimensions. The first value dimension is related to organizational focus, from an internal, micro emphasis on the well-being and development of people in the organization to an external, macro emphasis on the well-being and development of the organization itself. The second value dimension is related to organizational structure, from an emphasis on stability to an emphasis on flexibility. The third value dimension is related to organizational means and ends, from an emphasis on important processes (e.g., planning and goal setting) to an emphasis on final outcomes (e.g., productivity)" (Quinn, 1988).

This is what Quinn & Rohrbaugh's framework looks like in terms of values and organizational tendencies:



Competing Values Framework (Quinn, 1988, p. 48)

In this period of time when organizational life is characterized by shifts in priorities, resources, and demands, it seems that the only constant in management is change (Edwards, Austin, & Altpeter, 2004). Social Work curriculum use the Competing Values Framework in the training of students interesting in the field of community organizing, planning, and administration to uncover the strengths and weaknesses in students so that they can learn about positions that their skills would be most beneficial in once they begin their careers. This framework emphasizes change and growth and provides the opportunity for students to look at areas in which they would like to grow and ways in which they can do so. Ideally, a top-level manager would sit on the outlying

borders of the chart, showing that they have strength and balance in all of the competing values. The stronger and more balanced a person lies on the chart, the more flexible and adaptable to change they will be. The skills on the chart can be in conflict with each other. A strong leader and manager must be able to be flexible between the competing values (2004).

The strength and balance of a person's skills are dependent upon their education, background, and experiences (Edwards, Austin, & Altpeter, 2004). It is not assumed that social workers trained in direct, clinical practice will succeed in managerial positions. For this reason, graduate level social work programs often tracks in general concentrations, which relate to different career aspirations. This ensures that students will have the training appropriate for the expectation of different settings within the field. Managerial skills are taught in macro concentrations. In programs that utilize the Competing Values Framework, students gauge their skills and then work towards balancing their strengths around the chart. Other managerial skill assessments are often used as well.

Utilizing Systems Theory, Intelligence theories, and the Competing Values Framework assists in the process of framing the analysis of the current state of staff structure in the Jewish Federation and the way in which value is placed on the individuals employed by the Federation system. By looking at the system in which the individual is a key piece, an analysis can be made of the effectiveness of their role and outputs. The different types of intelligences assists in the way in which an individual in perceived as intelligence, and helps to explicate the value of having a diverse group of people working on a staff team. The Competing Values Framework helps frame management skills with position levels and the way in which professional's personal qualities correspond with their work. By utilizing these theories as a background for the research presented in this thesis, and better understanding of the complexities of the results can be made.

Chapter Four

Thesis Methodology

Hypotheses

In light of the information found through the review of literature, two main areas have been identified as meriting further exploration. The first is the perception of the professional with an MSW within the Jewish Federation by those who 1) are training students who are earning an MSW and 2) working alongside or supervising MSWs in the Jewish Federation. The second area of exploration is the perceived effectiveness of MSWs working in the Jewish Federation. This concept looks at whether interview subjects believe that MSWs are a valuable asset to the field. To structure the process of learning about these areas, three hypotheses were formulated:

1. The Federation system, like other non-profit philanthropic organizations, is responding to the growing competition for the community's philanthropic support by transitioning its staff from those with social work backgrounds to those with business and administrative backgrounds. In turn, Social Work schools are transitioning their academic programs to better prepare students for the competitive job market in the non-profit field.

The term "business and administrative backgrounds" is intentionally used to include those with MBAs, MPAs, prior experience in the for-profit sector, and other degrees related to business and administration. This was decided as a result of the interchangeable use of these components in literature when discussing the leadership of nonprofit agencies.

2. The most preferred staff model for Jewish Federations across the country is to have a hybrid staff composition with a myriad of educational and experiential backgrounds on the staff team.

The hybrid model consists of staff coming that have a variety of professional and educational backgrounds. In the Jewish Federation in particular, the most effective hybrid of staff would be consisting of those professionals coming from both non-profit and for-profit experience, having been involved with different aspects of organized Jewish life, and from different academic fields as well. Currently, the most prevalent graduate degrees held by employees of the Jewish Federation in management positions include Master of Social Work, Master of Public Administration, and Master of Business Administration.

3. Candidates coming out of undergraduate college programs and interested in pursuing a career in the Jewish Federation will be encouraged by professionals currently in the field to earn a MBA over other degrees applicable to the field before applying for positions.

This hypothesis is based on the trends observed by the researcher in the recruitment process of the Federation Executive Recruitment Education Program (FEREP), which recruits both graduating college students and professionals early in their career prior to entering graduate school. Recruiters encourage potential program participants with identified leadership skills to continue their graduate education in a field most applicable to the Jewish Federation. Due to the observed trend in the decline in MSW students within the FEREP program and the increase of MPA and MBA students

seen in the program, this hypothesis was created in order to test the conscious choices that professionals are making.

Interviews

The research for this thesis was conducted in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the changing perceptions of the role of the MSW in the Jewish Federation. Interviews were used as the primary method of research as they "are particularly useful for getting the story behind a participant's experiences. The interviewer can pursue in-depth information around the topic" (McNamara, 1999). Throughout the interview process, a combination of the Informal/Conversational Interview and the General Interview Guide approaches were utilized. The Informal/Conversational Interview has "no predetermined questions, in order to remain as open and adaptable as possible to the interviewee's nature and priorities; during the interview, the interviewer 'goes with the flow'" (Kvale, 1996). This method was used when the interviewee appeared apprehensive about answering specific questions. The researcher was able to guide the conversation, but the interviewee preferred to discuss their perception of issues relevant to the information provided prior to the interview in the letters exchanged requesting permission to be interviewed. The General Interview Principles (see appendix one) "is intended to ensure that the same general areas of information are collected from each interviewee; this provides more focus than the conversational approach, but still allows a degree of freedom and adaptability in getting the information" (1996). A collection of questions was established prior to the interviewing process. Each interviewee was either asked to respond to the questions or

was engaged in conversation on the theme of the questions that the researcher had designed.

Due to limitations in time and travel, many interviews were conducted by telephone. Like personal interviews, "telephone interviews allow for some personal contact between the interviewer and the respondent" by providing the opportunity to engage in dialogue (McNamara, 1999). A limitation set forth by the nature of telephone interviews is that they "need to be relatively short because of the nature of phone calls to create a feeling of imposition" in addition to the lack of ability for the interviewer to gauge body language and other nonverbal forms of communication (1999).

Interviewers need to remain aware of their own biases upon conducting the interview. Bias, a particular tendency or inclination, especially one that prevents unprejudiced consideration of a question inhibits research from being completely unflawed (Kvale, 1996). Natural bias is unavoidable, but it is necessary for the interviewer to be conscious of their unique biases in order to better control the way it will affect their results. Often times, bias inadvertently become present and must be addressed in the limitations of the study. The biases of this particular study are discussed in the following section.

Limitations of the Study

A study of this type presents several possible limitations. First, and potentially the largest limitation, is that the researcher is directly involved in the issues addressed by the research question. As a FEREP fellow studying in the University of Southern California School of Social Work and Hebrew Union College School of Jewish

Communal Service, the researcher will be beginning her career in the Jewish Federation upon graduation. Throughout the interview and research process, biases were attempted to be withheld, but out of ethical concerns, the interviewees were all aware of the academic program in which the interviewer was studying and the career path in which she is beginning. This knowledge may have skewed the level of candor with which the interviewees expressed themselves. Interview subjects occasionally started their response with a statement along the lines of "Please do not take offence to this, but..." expressing their willingness to be open and honest on a topic that they clearly feared might offend the researcher.

Another limitation of this study is that the interviewer asked participants to respond to decisions made by a collective group of leadership within the Jewish Federation; that they may or may not have been a part of. The questions were asking for their impressions and perceptions of decisions being made. Their answers were limited to their own personal opinions, rather than an objective reporting of the decision making process.

Chapter Five

Findings and Discussion

Interviews for this study were conducted between November 2006 and March 2007. Half of the interviews were conducted in person, the other half by telephone. In addition to research conducted through interviews, some of the findings presented in this thesis were accumulated through personal conversations with key informants, and are being presented here with their permission. The interviews and discussions examined the individuals' perspectives on the topic of educational background of Federation employees and the shift seen over the past 20 years in staff structure and education. The questions prompted subjects to reflect on their own experience in the field or as educators preparing future professionals. Interview subjects varied from university professors, UJC recruiters, and Federation Professionals.

Trends in the FEREP Program

In the 1970s and 1980s, FEREP recipients were primarily students studying to earn a Master of Social Work degree, partnered with a certificate or Master of Arts in Jewish Communal Service. Now, some thirty years later, of the fourteen current FEREP fellows, two are studying to earn their MSW, one of which is from a school that is shutting down its Jewish Communal Service certificate program at the culmination of this year. The other FEREPs are enrolled in programs of Public Administration, Business Administration, with Jewish Communal Service, Jewish Professional Leadership, or Judaic Studies, representing a sample of the ideals that UJC places on educational backgrounds. The UJC committee responsible for seeking out and offering the grants to

FEREP scholarship candidates are making decisions based on what they see as a best fit for the future of Federation staffing. By encouraging and accepting more candidates who are studying business and public administration (with a complimentary degree in Jewish Communal Service, Jewish Studies, or Jewish Professional Leadership) they are making a statement that this is the transition they see occurring in the Federation. Of course, one must avoid generalized assumptions, and the fact that there are still two MSW students present in the current class of FEREP fellows expresses the sense of importance that is still held for MSWs in the Federation system.

When interviewing staff of the Mandel Center for Leadership Excellence, the department that runs the FEREP program, questions of the future of FEREP candidates were raised. They explained, "We are looking at the future of the Federation and the academic programs that will best prepare students for their careers as Federation executives." By limiting the schools and degrees available to be earned by FEREP fellows, the program is determining the trend of degrees that are most commonly accepted by Federation hiring bodies. This means that the Mandel Center is making a statement with the mix of degrees represented in the current class of FEREP fellows, including the fact that there are only two, out of fourteen, students currently studying for an MSW. One subject interviewed acknowledged

> "There is an intentional shift being seen in the way that we recruit those interested in pursuing a career in the Federation. Social workers are less likely to be trained in the skills of executive development, but that's not to say that they are not capable of proving themselves as professionals too. It takes a certain personality to work successfully in the Federation, and that's what we're really looking for. It just happens to be that those personalities are more likely to be drawn to business type programs at school."

It seems as though FEREP and leadership recruiters are more concerned with the individual's characteristics and the leadership, organization, and critical thinking skills that they bring along with their education. The candidates selected were chosen because of who they are as individuals and the potential they displayed before entering graduate school. Their education will only enhance their individual qualities that will prepare them for a profession in the Federation. The preference cannot be ignored though. 86% of the FEREP class is earning a Master of Public Administration degree or a Master of Business Administration degree in conjunction with a Masters degree focused on Jewish Communal Service, Jewish Professional Leadership, or Jewish Studies. There is a clear shift in focus of study for those being recruited to be the future Federation and UJC executives.

Transitions in the School of Social Work

In interviews conducted with the University of Southern California School of Social Work staff in the department of Community Organizing, Planning, and Administration, two professors were able to discuss their perspective and understanding of the shift they have seen in Jewish professionals and the educational choices that they have made over the past twenty years. The professors both described the evolution of the concentration programs at the University of Southern California as a background to their perspective on why the Jewish Federation may be shifting away from seeking out job candidates with a background in Social Work. They shared their observations, critiques, and projections of the trends they have noticed in students enrolled in the dual program with Hebrew Union College in Los Angeles. Having been involved with the USC School

of Social Work for more than twenty years they were able to serve as external observers to this trend, and share the social work perspective on this shift that the profession has experienced.

They explained that there has always been a curriculum that provides an opportunity to learn about macro practice. Macro practice "refers to systems larger than small groups. A macro orientation involves focusing on the social, political, and economic conditions and policies that affect people's overall access to resources and quality of life" (Zastrow, 2004). One professor explained that twenty years ago, macro practice was taught in a format that emphasized group process, reflective analysis, and management. Students concentrating in this type of curriculum were trained to "manage the systems of organizations and to look at the bigger picture of the community that they were serving." This is in contrast to the micro focused clinical social workers that they were in school with. "This was a difficult curriculum to effectively provide to students because there was not a lot of time allotted for management and executive-type training. Students were learning more to work with group process and develop leadership skills while focusing on "fields of practice management techniques." What are now clinical/micro concentrations were complimented with a management/macro curriculum set.

When asked to explain the enrollment history of dual students with the Hebrew Union College Jewish Communal Service program within the School of Social Work at USC, the professors both explained a noticeable transformation in concentration choices. One professor reported that when he first began working at the University of Southern California he noticed that dual students had a myriad of different interests. Many of the

social work students who were also studying Jewish Communal Service were choosing concentrations in micro focused work including mental health, health, gerontology, and families and children. Others were focused on macro work, choosing what eventually became the Community Organizing, Planning, and Administration (COPA) concentration, although it once focused on more of a group processes content rather than community organization. At this time, management courses were attached to each clinical concentration. If a student knew that they wanted to run an agency, they needed to select the specific type of service delivery that they would be interested in learning how to manage. They would take the clinical focused classes but attach a management focus to their field of interest.

Educators began to notice that this was not as effective as it should be, students were not prepared to serve as executives in a way that would be competitive with graduates of other degrees. Considering the MSW's innate investment in social services, the Council of Social Work Education (the organization responsible for accreditation and standardization in Social Work education) saw the opportunity to encourage schools to change their curriculum to better train managers, community organizers, planners, and administrators so that social service agencies would be run by well trained professionals who were invested in the success of the organization while understanding the needs of the clients being served. As the field of social work evolved, so did the curriculum of the USC school of Social Work, and COPA became a formal option for studies focused on the management and executive level.

A professor at the USC School of Social Work explained that with the group process model and having management attached to different "fields of practice" they

noticed a steady decline in macro students from the dual program with Hebrew Union College. He explained, "We were not providing a strong enough management background and training. Students were not as drawn to macro practice because it was not clearly defined. We were not producing the best professionals to be running organizations." With the creation of COPA and the formalizing of curriculum, students are now offered an in depth training and academic experience on ways to organize communities and manage and administer organizations. "Now we see a much higher success rate of enrollment and professional enrollment upon graduation from our macro program. The problem now is that it is not seen the same across the country. We need to work on getting a standardized name and understanding of what MSWs as macro practitioners are trained to do as professionals." He explained that just as the community needs change, so does the curriculum of the MSW program. "Students are now succeeding in a variety of executive positions. Their education and training is preparing them for the competitive job market they face at the time of graduation."

The Shift in the Jewish Federation

There has clearly been a shift in the educational background of the staffing at Jewish Federations over the last ten years. Gone are the days of Jewish professionals coming from a purely social work perspective. Now the community has sought out and embraced a more diverse group of professionals, coming from both the for-profit and non-profit sectors, and merging experiences and interests in the professional setting. Federation professionals were asked to comment on this shift, and whether or not they believed it to be an intentional transition or an organic trend. Interestingly enough the

answers were quite different from one another, expressing different levels of awareness, concern, and general interest.

Nine of the ten interviewed subjects agreed that the shift in educational background of Federation staff is an intentional, strategic effort to strengthen the Federation system and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the agency. One person responded, "Of course this is a conscious move. The Federation is literally competing with thousands of Jewish *and* non-Jewish non-profits. They're looking at what is working elsewhere and modeling it in their own offices." This pressure to compete with other non-profits for the donor's trust and essentially, their gift, seems to be on the minds of many Federation professionals. "Anyone looking out for the good of the Federation in terms of fundraising; would realize that change needs to take place in order to grow and improve. The statistics are showing us that the younger generation is not engaged in organized Jewish life the way that their grandparents and parents were, and new ways of soliciting need to be implemented in order to accommodate this change."

One subject remarked that there is a risk involved with any drastic change. "MSWs have a history of working in this field. Their training has adapted with the community in other areas, and it continues to do so in terms of philanthropic work as well. There is no problem with other degrees also preparing someone for a career in the Federation, but it should not be 'replacing' the MSW." To completely annihilate an entry point into the profession would be to disregard the history of success as well as the learning done from mistakes. "While we can look back and see where mistakes have been made, they also help us to build towards a stronger future. If we remove the profession that brought us to where we are now, how will we be able to reflect on what

happened?" By bringing in new perspectives and maintaining the experience of the past, this professional sees the Federation growing at a healthy rate of success.

Another common opinion of this shift was that of skepticism of the lasting effect of this shift. Like most agencies, the Jewish Federation has seen its share of trends, changes, and shifts. Some have lasted permanently, others were there one day and gone the next, while others have created small change, but faded away. In general, every person interviewed had his or her own skeptic views of what would come of this shift. They all felt that there really was no way to predict what would happen with the staffing structure in the future of the agency, or what effect this shift will have on the effectiveness and efficiency of the fundraising that the philanthropic community is so focused on. Short of being able to predict the future, interview subjects weighed in their opinions of what will come and what they expect to see in terms of preference of educational background in the future. One subject commented,

> "There is no way to know what is to come of this shift. Maybe higher-ups decided that MSWs needed to be phased out because there were problems occurring and with such a heavily weighted MSW staff, they were the easiest scapegoats. Who knows, maybe the community just changed and staff educational backgrounds needed to change with it. I'm sure we'll find out in five or ten years."

Another interview subject explained,

> "We try to adapt and change to what statistics and the success of others tells us, but really we just need to pay attention to what works for *us* and be willing to be flexible with that. Social work curriculum seems to be just as flexible in terms of training students to be prepared for the field they are entering, so I do not see a 'phasing out' model as one that would achieve immediate success. Each person contributes a piece of their education, a piece of their experience, and a piece of luck to the workplace. An extreme change away from something that has worked before probably won't fail, but it won't be a cure-all answer either."

Without being able to look back on how this change will affect the efforts of the Jewish Federation, it was difficult for professionals to gauge an opinion on whether this is good or bad. In fact, one person explained that more important than looking at the potential phasing out of MSWs was the potential that the Jewish educational component of a candidate was losing value. This clearly presents an apprehension in what the staffing structure will be in the near future.

Professionals are expressing a high level of concern regarding competition with other philanthropic agencies and looking towards the most efficient and effective means of coming out in front. "MSWs provide a valuable resource within the Federation system, but they are not big business focused. I credit this shift to the fact that the Federation needs to be run more like a business, and the fact of the matter is that MSWs were not taking us there. Business skills are required from bringing the Federation to the forefront in philanthropic interest."

The Benefit of MSWs in the Federation System

The field of social work has always been focused on the myriad of responsibilities that are involved in the provision of social services. From the beginning of the formation of the field, professional social workers took on different roles based on the needs of the organization, and were expected to serve as the administrators and managers of their agencies as well as the providers of direct service. While people holding a MSW often staffed the Jewish Federation, often times their backgrounds were in group process, with some training in management as well. Now, entire concentrations are dedicated to the preparation of MSWs to manage and lead large nonprofit organizations, but there is a

clear disconnect between the training of MSWs and the public opinion of what an MSW is capable of and trained to do. This is not to say that MSWs are not validated at all in the Jewish Federation movement, but the stereotype discussed in the literature review of this paper, is clearly present in the opinions professionals in the Federation. Interviewed subjects primarily admitted that their colleagues with a Master in Social Work degree were fully capable of completing their jobs and responsibilities with skill and success, but tended to express the opinion that their educational background was not the clear source of their ability, rather their experience and unique personality traits that can be attributed to their achievement. There was a sense that a second degree in Jewish Communal Service, Jewish Professional Leadership, or Jewish Studies further prepared MSWs for their Federation career.

In interviews with professionals in positions of recruitment and hiring within the UJC and Federation, the opinions and knowledge of the work of an MSW varied greatly. One person remarked that aside from desiring a graduate level education in a relevant field, what that degree is carries very little weight. They continued by explaining that the reason the interview process is typically so intense, involving more than an interview, but more of a community immersion experience is because they are concerned with the natural abilities that the candidate is equipped with and want to get to know the person to make sure there is a "fit with the community." They said that in the past it was very important that the applicant have a degree with a focus on some sort of social service type field, particularly social work. "The social work degree used to train people how to work with large groups. Really, though, the MSW was important in planning because social workers can look at the community and gauge what kind of programmatic needs are

present." Now, the sense is that it is important that MSWs are still present in the Federation staff because of their reflective reasoning and processing skills.

> "We need MSWs on our staff to facilitate the process of being analytical and making sure we never neglect our mission of serving the Jewish *people*. People who have an MSW are more likely to be able to maintain the sense of purpose in why the Federation exists, and helps focus on what the Federation should be doing to move forward. MSWs have the 'people skills' necessary for cultivation of new donors and nurturing the relationships with lay leadership already engaged in what we do."

While this opinion validates the concept that those professionals with an MSW should be seen as capable of working in the Federation it contributes to the stereotype presented in literature on the topic. A person holding an MSW is seen to be someone full of compassion and empathy. They are stereotyped to be a profession that looks to solve the social concerns of the community, and are mostly programmatic in nature in terms of their response to the needs of the community. One UJC professional explained, "MSWs are good at looking at spending money ad making sure it's spent wisely. Federations involve money coming in *and* money going out, so there is clearly a good fit for MSWs with the planning side of Federation work."

The Value of a Master of Arts in Jewish Communal Service

One of the greatest values of hiring a graduate of a program of Jewish Communal Service, Jewish Professional Leadership, or a related degree is the innate dedication and commitment to the field, community, and profession. As an individual seeking out a career in the field of Jewish Communal Service, the candidate is projecting their commitment to becoming specialized in that specific profession. Recruitment staff in the

UJC and Human Resources staff in the Federation understand that this commitment is displayed by the interest in pursuing a degree in the field.

> "Choosing to commit years of education to the Jewish professional field is an incredible statement on the part of the student. They are showing their dedication and genuine interest in working specifically in the Jewish field and are learning how to be experts in the nonprofit Jewish world. This really paves the way for success in the Jewish community because it gives the candidate the extra knowledge of the organized Jewish community. Essentially, it is an area that people without the educational background take years to grasp while they are already working, so it is wonderful to have someone with that understanding from the beginning of their work in the Federation."

Another key point of interest that the professionals being interviewed brought up was the way that the field of Jewish Communal Service merges the educational components of multiple academic fields including social work, business, planning, policy, and communications. Having key professionals come in as instructors and professors in the Jewish communal service brings in a myriad of experiences, expertise knowledge, and specific specialties that are then passed on to the students. This allows students to learn about a broad spectrum of academic genres that are all beneficial in the professional Jewish setting. One professional explained, "as an alum of the program (HUC School of Jewish Communal Service) I felt nervous, but of course prepared to start my career. I remember in the interviews that I went through that first summer out of school, I wanted so badly to be able to be the best candidate. The more that I interviewed, the more that I realized that my Jewish Communal Service education was an invaluable piece of what prepared me to be a good professional."

While students often chose another degree to pair with their Master of Arts in Jewish Communal Service (or other similar degrees from other schools) the MAJCS

programs brings in pieces from the different fields that each student is studying, while at the same time bring in the Jewish historical and cultural component. "Being encouraged to earn another degree while enrolled in the MAJCS program was also a huge asset to my educational experience," one interviewee disclosed. "I was becoming specialized in social work, and then coming to Jewish Communal Service classes where my classmates were coming from a different perspective. The dialogue that was created on issues relevant to the Jewish community would not have existed if we were not all learning from different perspectives in our other degree programs." This opportunity to engage in learning with people from other backgrounds is invaluable in the sense of sharing information and building professional networks and the ability to create communal discourse against varying areas of specialization.

Federation professionals who earned their degrees in dual programs, one being a Jewish Communal focused degree, also appreciate the professional development that was offered in a Jewish setting. When entering the Jewish communal profession there is a lot of "in group" knowledge that must be obtained. Understanding the communal structure, the system of agencies, and the way that organizations serve the greater community is a topic that one must be taught, or experienced. Jargon and organizational culture are difficult to adapt to. Often times there is a long period of transition when a professional comes from another field or business sector. By studying the curriculum in Jewish Communal Service, Jewish Professional Leadership, or Jewish Studies masters programs, students are engaged in the process of learning about the history and development of the Jewish community, focusing primarily on American Jewish history, which is the community in which the majority of students will work. This provides a foundation for

understanding why agencies, organizations, and Jewish people are in the current state that professionals will find them upon entering the field.

Professional development also extends to the network that is created for students during their time of study. Like other fields of study, Jewish Communal Service and Jewish Professional Leadership pulls from experts in the field that have been involved in the evolution of the profession to teach classes. The expertise of those professionals coming to teach provides students with the opportunity to learn from their experiences and take their recommendations with them when they start their own career. Often times, professors continue their work in the community simultaneously to their involvement in the University or College. One person interviewed explained that she "really valued learning from professionals because it was a wonderful opportunity to not only learn from what they have seen throughout their career, but it prepared me for the expectations of the community for when I started working. Then, when I got my first job I was able to call professionals throughout the community whenever I had any questions. It was a wonderful resource to have a network of respected, hard to access professionals that I could call for professional guidance."

While there are a myriad of reasons why the Jewish Communal Service degree is of great vale, this is often hard to validate to professionals coming from outside of the Jewish community. When speaking with a recruiter from the UJC, the issue of supplementary education was brought up. Most programs of Jewish Communal Service or Jewish Professional Leadership encourage pursuing a second degree while enrolled in the program. They explained that the Jewish Federation system requires that professionals match the expectations of donors and lay leadership. These people are

typically coming from the for-profit sector of business and expect their philanthropic interests to be run with the efficiency and effectiveness of the business that they are running themselves. While the Federation is a philanthropic non-profit "it needs to be run like a big business." In order to do this, the Federation is experiencing a shift in hiring of educational backgrounds; assuming that those candidates with a business, financial, accounting, or administration background will more aptly address the concerns of the donors.

Hybrid Model

In general, subjects of the interviews were fairly aligned in their understanding of the shift in educational background of staff in the Jewish Federations across the continent. All of them agreed that change is taking place, and all but one believe that it is an intentional, thought out strategic shift. With the words "efficiency and effectiveness" continually being mentioned throughout all of the interviews, it is clear that this is a focus in the Federation movement. Not only do Federations need to be aware of their own efficiency and effectiveness, but for profit businesses are looking at these concerns as well. All of the interviews conducted during this study expressed unique views on the state of Federation staffing, where it should go, what it should look like, changes that should be made, and what trends were going to stay. Each perspective gave a new twist to one common idea: diversity.

The Federation will thrive at its best when there is a hybrid model in place. This model will emphasize valuing different backgrounds and educational degrees because of the positive components that they each bring to the agency. At the same time, the

Federation will struggle to identify a way that these backgrounds can merge to be the more productive use of diversity to be efficient and effective together, as one.

In fact, one interview subject suggested that there are not enough complimentary programs being offered in conjunction with the degree in Jewish Communal Service to prepare students for work in the Jewish Federation. "I encourage people to get an MBA unless people are specifically going into a clinical or (in the case of those wanting for Federation) organizational perspective." This implies that in order to succeed in the campaign department of a Federation, a staff member should have a MBA. But then the subject explained, "financial savvy realities and management realities are two critical necessities in this field. People are not getting a MA in Jewish Communal Service and financial or accounting degrees. The options are very limited."

Another interview subject explained their perspective on maintaining people with MSWs as part of the Federation staff structure. "MSWs are integral to the functioning of the Jewish Federation because of the experience that they gain through their education. The communication and emphatic skills developed in MSW programs are invaluable in a field that is so focused on lay professional relationships, critical thinking and reflective reasoning and communication." The subject continued to explain that at the same time "other educational degrees are of incredible value in the Federation as well. Philanthropies have to fight for the attention and commitment of their donors and need to be run like a business. Professionals with an MBA, MPA, or accounting and financial backgrounds provide that for-profit perspective that helps non-profits run efficiently."

Chapter Six

Recommendations

Several issues emerged from the findings of this study that are of value to the field of professional work in the Jewish Federation system. The recommendations presented in this section are a result of these issues and a collaboration of the presented ideas and concepts found throughout the research process. Following are three recommendations which respond to the issues presented in the findings of the research and may provide an opportunity for growth within the field of work in the Jewish Federation system.

1. With the diversity of the range of qualities that are desired in candidates for positions in the Jewish Federation system, it is clear that a hybrid model of educational backgrounds would provide more of those qualities to the work place. It is therefore recommended that local Jewish Federation offices and United Jewish Communities encourage a staff made up of a variety of educational backgrounds. By maintaining a sense of open requirements in the types of degrees recommended to be pursued by potential employees, the Federation system will continue to experience a constant reinvention and secure the input of new and innovative ideas. By encouraging a variety of professionals holding different degrees to seek employment in the Jewish Federation system, there will be a constant revival of human resources. The more broad the educational backgrounds represented on the staff is, the more possibility there will be for collaboration of different perspectives.

2. With the lack of standardization found in the accreditation for the second year or concentration year of Social Work graduate programs there is a discrepancy between

the skills and knowledge acquired by students earning a Master of Social Work at different Universities. It is recommended that CSWE create a standardized requirement for the second year and concentration year curriculum for Universities training MSWs. This will ensure that students choosing to go into macro work, focusing on community organizing, planning, administration, and management will all achieve specific educational goals and standards. If this recommendation was to be enacted, an effort to publicize and educate the community on this standardization should be made in order to communicate the qualifications of professionals graduating with an MSW. Additionally, it is recommended that the name of the concentration be standardized as well in order to create a universal language that will be accepted by those who hold the degree, those who train for the degree, and those looking to hire professionals with the degree. This recommended standardization would improve the awareness and professional reputation of the degree.

3. The field of Jewish Communal Service is constantly changing, and while the diversity of educational backgrounds will provide professionals in the Jewish Federation system to learn new skills and concepts from their colleagues, it is also recommended that the Jewish Federation system provides ongoing opportunities for professional development. Though already in effect, the seminars and conferences offered to professionals working in a local Jewish Federation or United Jewish Communities are limited to those professionals whom are given the benefit of funding and time off to attend. With the provision of professional development opportunities, professionals will be able to enhance their knowledge and skill base and, in return, enhance their performance in the field.

This study has shown that the staff structure in the Jewish Federation system is not only experiencing a shift, but will continue to change throughout the next few years. As the field of philanthropic fundraising continues to grow in its competitive nature, and other sectors continue to strengthen, higher expectations will be put on the staff of the local Federations. The disconnect presented by the research between the curriculum of the Master of Social Work education and the perception of the qualifications of the professional with a MSW clearly depicts a problem in the future of the success of the professional in their career with the Jewish Federation.

With the continuing strength of professionals with the MSW in the Federation system, and the growth and adaptation of the Social Work curriculum on a graduate level, it is doubtful that the MSW will ever truly leave its place in the Jewish Federation. The future of the staffing structure is unclear, trends will continue to be experienced, and human resources will adapt according to the needs of the community. What remains clear is that change in the Federation is a necessary response to the interests of the community, donors, and recipients of services and this change is not stagnant. The system will continue to grow and adapt, just as the curriculum for educational programs continues to do so as well. As the field of Jewish Communal Service also continues to adapt itself in response to the community, the staff Jewish Federation system must continue to keep the needs of those to whom they are committed high on their list of priorities, and maintain a staff capable of meeting their needs.

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Appendix 1

Interviewing Principles

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Most employment decisions are based on interviewing the applicant. But most interviews don't provide us with sufficient information to make an informed decision. As a consequence, most hiring decisions are based on who the interviewers like best. This is akin to deciding to get married on the first date. To conduct more effective interviews, follow these principles:

1. Ask questions which allow the candidate to do at least 70% of the talking. For the most part, avoid questions that can be answered "yes" or "no." The best questions are ones in which the candidates recount their past experience.
2. Phrase your questions so that the desired or "right" answer is not apparent to the applicant.
3. Ask only one question about one subject at a time.
4. Ask the easy questions first so as to make the applicant feel comfortable.
5. All questions should be directly related to finding out about the applicant's ability to do the job, not about his or her personal life.
6. Spend the entire time writing, recording the candidate's answers and any assumptions you are making.
7. Interviews are generally a poor place to test the candidate's skills, other than the skill of being interviewed. Some interpersonal skills can be tested, however, through the use of role-playing with the applicant.
8. While you are writing, nod occasionally to let the applicant know you are listening.
9. If the applicant doesn't respond right away to a question, wait. Give them time, while you add to your notes.
10. Follow up: ask the person to tell you more, to give more details.
11. Ask the candidate to describe their past behavior in the kind of situations they will encounter on the job.
12. Alternate between easy, non-threatening questions and more difficult, pointed ones.
13. After you have asked the candidate all your questions, allow them time to ask you any questions they have about the job.
14. Close the interview by asking the candidate if there is anything they regret saying, any answer they'd like to change, or anything they'd like to add to their previous statements.
15. Spend at least thirty minutes reviewing your notes after the interview and identifying any key qualities that you feel you have not adequately tested. These become objectives for subsequent interviews or for assessment experiences.