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Goals Project. Harvard seminar, 1996.

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American Jewish Archives website.

From: Dan Pekarsky <pekarsky@mail.soemadison.wisc.edu>
Reply-To: pekarsky@mail.soemadison.wisc.edu
To: 73321.1217@compuserve.com, 73321.1221@compuserve.com,
74671.3370@compuserve.com, ALANHOF@vms.huji.ac.il
Date: Fri, 26 Jan 1996 15:39:00 -600
Subject: Summer Seminar

It's now Friday afternoon, and, unfortunately, I have yet to hear back from Jerusalem concerning the availability of Fox/Marom in August. Meantime, though, Ellen Goldring tells me that there's was some talk about possibly contracting the Professors Seminar; if this

were to happen, it would make it possible to have the Goals Seminar in Jerusalem in July. IF THIS IS INDEED UNDER SERIOUS CONSIDERATION,

PLEASE LET ME KNOW. Among other things, it will be awkward for me if

we get Seymour and Marom to agree to August and then tell them that,

after all, it's going to be in July. Thanks.

Shabbat Shalom to all.

DP



Goals

From: Dan Pekarsky <pekarsky@mail.soemadison.wisc.edu>
Reply-To: pekarsky@mail.soemadison.wisc.edu
To: ALANHOF@vms.huji.ac.il
CC: 73321.1217@compuserve.com, 73321.1221@compuserve.com,
74671.3370@compuserve.com
Date: Thu, 25 Jan 1996 10:22:00 -600
Subject: Summer Seminar

Following our conversation last Thursday, I spoke with Seymour (on Friday) concerning the possible August date for a Goals Summer Seminar. He said he'd speak with Marom about it on Sunday - but apparently they're Sunday meeting was postponed until Tuesday. On Tuesday evening (Marom's time), he still didn't know -- it may be that the meeting with Seymour was again postponed. He said he would

phone or email me with information concerning his and Seymour's availability in August in the States. So far I've heard nothing.

In any event, I am hopeful that on eb. 8 at night or on February 9, the day after our conversation with Rosenak, we can spend some time doing two things:

- 1) Finalizing a list to invite to the Summer Seminar.
- 2) Finalizing a date -- if that hasn't yet been done.
- 3) Discussing the Goals Project agenda beyond 1996.

Please let me know what times might work.

D.



FROM: Alan, 73321,1220
TO: Gail Dorph, 73321,1217
CC: Debra abcPerrin, 76322,2406
DATE: 1/31/96 7:48 AM

Re: harvard seminar

GAIL,

I AM SURE YOU KNOW THAT I REGRETABLELY WILL NOT BE THERE.

SEE MY COMMENT BELOW.

A

DSP: GOALS PROJECT FILE

PRINCIPALS SEMINAR FILE

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Gail Dorph, 73321,1217
TO: INTERNET:MAROM@vms.huji., INTERNET:MAROM@vms.huji.ac.il
CC: Alan, 73321,1220
INTERNET:GOLDRIEB@ctrvax, INTERNET:GOLDRIEB@ctrvax.Vanderbilt.Edu
danny pekarsky, INTERNET:danpek@macc.wisc.edu
DATE: 1/30/96 4:24 PM

RE: harvard seminar

as you remember, we are planning a seminar for principals at Harvard march 17 - 21. we have "scheduled" goals related sessions for monday, tuesday, wednesday am from 9:00 - 10:30. in addition, we are planning small group work at the end of each day that will pull together the "goals presentation" in the morning with the other topics that will be addressed during the day. our sunday evening session will also deal with goals. I am faxing you a copy of the brochure. at this point, I want to know if you can join us for some or part of this seminar. wednesday, twersky is teaching. I am hoping he will teach his Educated Jew Paper in some form if that is OK. I WILL BE AMAZED IF THIS SENTENCE GOES WITHOUT COMMENT FROM MAROM EITHER MAROM-PEKARSKY, MAROM-FOX-PEKARSKY, MAROM-GZD. - WAS THAT YOUR INTENTION. EVEN IF THERE IS NO COMMENT YOU SHOULD PROBABLY FIND A PLACE IN THE WRITTEN PROGRAM TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE EDUCATED JEW PROJECT OF THE MANDEL INSTITUTE AND IF THE GOALS PROJECT IS MENTIONED, THE FACT THAT ITI IS A JOINT PROJECT OF THE MI AND THE CIJE SHOULD BE MENTIONED..

let's talk. pekarsky said he will be talking with you. he and ellen and i have talked about the "goals related sessions" so he can fill you in more.

From: "Dan Pekarsky" <pekarsky@mail.soemadison.wisc.edu>
Reply-To: pekarsky@mail.soemadison.wisc.edu
To: ALANHOF@vms.huji.ac.il, ALANHOF@vms.huji.ac.il
Date: Sun, 04 Feb 1996 21:28:00 -600
Subject: Principals Seminar -Forwarded

Forwarded Mail received from: Dan Pekarsky

Attachment: ENCLOSURE

Goals



From: "Dan Pekarsky" <pekarsky@mail.soemadison.wisc.edu>
Reply-To: pekarsky@mail.soemadison.wisc.edu
To: 73321.1217@compuserve.com, 73321.1221@compuserve.com,
74671.3370@compuserve.com, 73321.1217@compuserve.com,
73321.1221@compuserve.com, 74671.3370@compuserve.com
CC: ALANHOF@vms.huji.ac.il, ALANHOF@vms.huji.ac.il,
Pekarsky@mail.soemadison.wisc.edu
Date: Sun, 04 Feb 1996 18:24:00 -600
Subject: Thursday's agenda

I am looking forward to our Thursday meeting and have spent some time talking with Barry concerning its elements; I have also had a conversation with Daniel Marom in which he discussed his thoughts concerning what might be useful to discuss with Mike R. The day has three major compoments:

a) Meeting with Mike Rosenak concerning activities that have been scheduled for him while he is in the United States (i.e., Atlanta and the Community Mobilization session);

b) Meeting with Mike Rosenak around his ideas concerning "community goals" for Jewish education - an opportunity to deepen our understanding of his ideas and to use them as a springboard for continuing reflection concerning this important matter;

c) Internal discussion, without Mike's presence, of two major Goals Project matters -- i. the summer seminar (timing and participants); and ii. the Goals Project agenda beyond 1996.

The day will allow opportunities for us to grow by reflecting on questions and thoughts Mike might have concerning the Goals Project's basic assumptions; but given the fulness of our agenda and our limited time, I would not build this into the formal agenda.

I will be available from 9 a.m. on -- but based on my conversation with Barry, I'm not sure at what time we'll be able to start. I'm free until 6 pm -- but have to be at Lenox Hill by 6:30 for an appointment with my cardiologist. I'm also available Friday morning and am hoping to meet with whoever is available then.

Based on the foregoing, here is the agenda I would propose.

WITH MIKE ROSENAK

1. Discussion with Mike Rosenak concerning the problem of "community goals" (discussion to be built on his paper).
2. Discussion with Mike concerning the Community Mobilization Meeting that has been arranged for next week.
3. Discussion with Mike concerning the projected session with the Atlanta High School group.

WITHOUT MIKE ROSENAK

4. The Summer Goals Seminar -- towards closure on dates and

invitees.

5. Beyond 1996: open-ended discussion of the long-term Goals Project agenda.

I am imagining that we'll meet with Mike until about 2:30 or 3 and will then have about 3 hours for items #4 and 5.

Let me know if you think this is a reasonable way to proceed.



FROM: Alan, 73321,1220
TO: Debra abcPerrin, 76322,2406
DATE: 2/7/96 6:32 AM

Re: Summer Seminar -Reply -Reply

GOALS FILE

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: "Dan Pekarsky", INTERNET:pekarsky@mail.soemadison.wisc.edu
TO: Alan, 73321,1220
DATE: 2/5/96 5:07 PM

RE: Summer Seminar -Reply -Reply

Sender: pekarsky@mail.soemadison.wisc.edu
Received: from audumla.students.wisc.edu (students.wisc.edu [144.92.104.66]) by
arl-img-1.compuserve.com (8.6.10/5.950515)
id KAA15737; Mon, 5 Feb 1996 10:02:24 -0500
Received: from mail.soemadison.wisc.edu by audumla.students.wisc.edu;
id JAA22759; 8.6.9W/42; Mon, 5 Feb 1996 09:02:23 -0600
From: "Dan Pekarsky" <pekarsky@mail.soemadison.wisc.edu>
Reply-To: pekarsky@mail.soemadison.wisc.edu
To: 73321.1220@compuserve.com
Date: Sun, 04 Feb 1996 21:26:00 -600
Subject: Summer Seminar -Reply -Reply
X-Gateway: iGate, (WP Office) vers 4.04m - 1032
MIME-Version: 1.0
Message-Id: <31157091.CF87.0EED.000@mail.soemadison.wisc.edu>
Content-Type: TEXT/PLAIN; Charset=US-ASCII
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7BIT

I am hopeful that the New York office will succeed in arranging a phone conversation between us before I go off to New York. My plan is to be at CIJE through noon on Friday - and then go off to Aschheim for Shabbat.

I had a long conversation with Marom concerning the CIJE-Mandel Institute loop, and I think we should - and can - do significantly better, and I'm going to do what I can to assure this. SF is supposed to reach me tomorrow to set up a time to talk or meet. I hope something comes of this.

I hope all is well with you.

DP

FROM: Alan, 73321,1220
TO: Debra abcPerrin, 76322,2406
DATE: 2/10/96 2:11 PM

Re: Re: harvard seminar

GOALS FILE

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Gail Dorph, 73321,1217
TO: Alan, 73321,1220
ellen goldring, INTERNET:goldrieb@ctrvax.vanderbilt.edu
danny pekarsky, INTERNET:danpek@mac.wisc.edu
DATE: 2/7/96 9:07 PM

RE: Re: harvard seminar

Gail! I would be happy to participate in a telecon next week about the Harvard principals seminar. Best time is Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday morning your time. Let me know when, and I'll be here at the Institute to take it. Perhaps to save some wasted time, however, someone might fill me in on the following three questions: who is participating? what are the goals of the seminar? how does the goals piece fit into those goals? With answers to those questions I can be responsible in preparing Twersky, and in deliberating with Danny about what might be appropriate. A side question - Danny told me that a person who suggests vision from the business consultant angle is participating in the seminar. I understand that that is part of the deal of working with Harvard. However, if it is true, we need to handle the question of how we can critique "process-centered" approaches to vision which do not address the realities and demands of content. It is the heart of our case for the goals project. As for Ray's participation, I will check it again and if he is not wrong, I highly suggest that he be invited to present Agnon with me. The only danger, of course, is SF's claim that Ray is not representative of what principals are and it might be inappropriate to emphasize his style if so. Ray seems to feel he is more representative than what SF thinks. But again, I do not want to make decisions before we talk about the goals of the goals piece.

As for the general claim about leaving me out, or Danny for that matter, since he was not clear on many of the issues either. You misread me if you think it is a matter of ego or elbows. I don't deny that there are natural sensitivities about CIJE-MI partnership that should be addressed both ways, but the main point is that I don't know how to make an effective goals project contribution to non-goals-project activities without being in on that discussion before the addition of the goals component gets decided upon. If I came all the way to Glidden house just to learn about TEI so as to be able to learn enough to contribute to such a conversation, how much more I need to be brought in on the picture in relationship to Harvard, about which I know very little.

In any case, as it turns out, with a tremendous amount of angst, I have made it possible for me to participate at Harvard, and to the degree that we find that that participation is necessary and useful, I am available. Let's get to the discussion and make it work.

FROM: Alan, 73321,1220
TO: Debra abcPerrin, 76322,2406
DATE: 2/11/96 10:40 AM

Re: harvard

copy:

goals file

principals file

print out for me.

a.

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Gail Dorph, 73321,1217
TO: INTERNET:MAROM@vms.huji., INTERNET:MAROM@vms.huji.ac.il
CC: Alan, 73321,1220
INTERNET:GOLDRIEB@ctrvax, INTERNET:GOLDRIEB@ctrvax.Vanderbilt.Edu
danny pekarsky, INTERNET:danpek@macc.wisc.edu
DATE: 2/8/96 5:24 PM
RE: harvard

Danny,

In response to your last email, I am sending you the purposes that Ellen and I wrote up for the Harvard folks in the course of planning that we did together. I also want to fax you the draft of the schedule that we are using currently. when you see pekarsky's name/Judaica, it stands for a session on goals.

Assumptions:

Educational leaders in Jewish institutions are facing new and different challenges. They should articulate goals for Jewish education rooted in Jewish content that inspire a compelling vision to guide their schools. To develop a sense of community around common values and goals, leaders must gain the support and involvement of teachers, parents, rabbis, and lay leadership.

The Goals of the Institute are:

The institute is designed to help leaders in Jewish educational institutions build a sense of community around a strong vision for Jewish education.

Specifically, participants will:

*study classical jewish texts that can inform and enrich their thinking and their work.

- *explore the role of Jewish content in articulating a vision for their institution
- *examine the complex relationships between lay boards and educational leaders
- *develop skills to enhance teachers' professional development
- *engage in strategic planning activities that can help achieve an institution's mission

Participants will learn:

- A)The importance of Jewish content in establishing a vision for Jewish education
- B)The role of adult development in teacher supervision
- C)Activities for building a collaborative community with teachers
- D)Skills for working with lay boards
- E)The role of the leader in strategic planning initiatives to articulate and implement a shared vision

As you can see, the Harvard experience is a professional development seminar for principals not a goals seminar in the way in which I think you're thinking about it. Thus, goals is only a piece of this seminar. It's not the whole of it, in the way in which it was the whole seminar in Israel. It's an example of the goals project permeating itself into ongoing CIJE work, in the way in which we talked about such events in Israel.

There will be mixed assumptions to which people will be exposed but from my perspective that's good. In the world in which these people live, the process orientation of the presenters is important in terms of what they will learn about process but also in terms of their gaining a sense that our take and the take of others is different. This even happened last year in a smaller way when Roland Barth did a session on creating a shared vision juxtaposed with a session that Barry gave on goals.

I've checked with danny and ellen about the times you suggested and tuesday, february 13 at 10:00 EST will work for all of us. let me know where you will be and I will set up the call.

DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL

Dear Goals Project Staff:

The following is a summary of various deliberations between ourselves and with Seymour on the goals project meeting-seminar in late July this summer. This is a conception of the seminar, not a final plan. At this time, we would like your reactions and suggestions so that we can move towards the final plan. We will be speaking with each of you in order to get your input, but we also welcome your e-mailing us your responses as soon as possible.

1. The aim of this meeting-seminar is to expand capacity for the goals project. That is, we want to take a group of people who we believe are already sensitive to aspects of vision in education and engage them in our particular discourse and planning on this topic so that they might be able to serve in various capacities as resources to the goals project itself. The seminar will have succeeded if members of this group can be drafted for particular assignments in developing the "kitchen," undertaking action research or pilot projects, participating in goals related-CIJE activities with lay leaders, principals, teacher educators, etc., and in planning goals initiatives with various agents, institutions, and constituencies of Jewish education in North America.

2. The July seminar-meeting is not the beginning of our efforts to engage the new outside participants. We have already developed and have begun to implement a "personal curriculum" for each participant so that by the time they arrive in Israel for the July seminar-meeting, they will be well into the discussion about goals and vision in Jewish education - including with reference to a particular area in which they might seek out expertise. In each case this has involved/will involve:

a) Extracting an explicit commitment to continued work on the goals project, whether through consultation, writing, participation in planning meetings, or implementation activities - beginning with the July seminar-meeting itself.

b) Reading and discussing with us a set of "core materials" which include Fox's "Towards a General Theory of Jewish Education" and the Greenberg corpus of materials on the "educated Jew" (including Marom's introduction and summary paper on the implications of Greenberg's paper for educational practice). The aim here is for the participants to understand carefully our definition of vision, both in terms of its practical import and its working on many levels. By the seminar, we hope to have clarified and discussed the categories/concepts outlined in appendix #1 with each participant.

c) An introduction to the goals project as a whole and a particular aspect of goals development (eg. working with lay leaders, training principals). This may include a phone meeting with a staff person involved in the CIJE's general work in that area. By the seminar, we hope to have clarified and discussed categories/concepts related to the goals project in general, and in relation to the particular area of expertise which we foresee for each participant. These are outlined in appendix #2.

d) New and/or special papers which emerge as being relevant to the particular interests of the participant and which we think are important background to the July meeting-seminar. These include Danny Pekarsky's written summary of his presentation on vision as he has given it in various settings as well as Seymour and Issy Scheffler's "opening chapter" for the publication for the publication on the "Educated Jew."

In addition to the above, it is important to take into account that we hope to continue working with each individual on his/her particular area of specialization during the fall. In addition, we hope to convene the larger group again in the United States some time in the late fall. At the fall meeting, we hope to continue further exploring topics introduced in the summer, as well as new topics which emerge in the interim, in the same format that is established in this seminar.

3. In light of the above, the goal of the July meeting-seminar is:

- a) to create something of a common language across the group and between staff and the group;
- b) to deepen everyone's understanding and experience of vision;
- c) to generate and illustrate goals project discourse on more focused topics,
- d) internal to the goals project staff - to assess the potential of each participant for the goals project and to consider next steps;

4. The July meeting-seminar goes from Friday, July the 19th till Friday, July the 26th, with a break on Wednesday evening till Thursday evening for Tisha B'av. Meetings will be held from approximately 9:00 to 6:00 every day, with the exception of Monday evening.

In order to achieve the said goals for this meeting-seminar, we envision the following program for our meeting-seminar week. After general introductions, the goal of which will be to check that participants and staff begin with some common assumptions, categories and principles, the week will be built on two major components. The first component will be the study of ideas of Jewish education, so as to begin to amass an appropriate knowledge base for goals development. The thrust of this component will be from philosophy to practice. The second component will be deliberation on areas of goals development, informed by various presentations on the intersection of vision and practice in these areas. The thrust of this component will be from practice to philosophy. Time will be given at the beginning of each day and at the end of the meeting-seminar week in order to pull threads together, but we also want to encourage this interplay between the two components within each section. The following is an actual breakdown of this program into loose time frames.

Friday, July 19th: Introduction: led by Danny Pekarsky. This includes a general introductions including intrductions of individuals, an overview of the week, a brief staff summary on our project's definition of vision. Following this, each participant will be asked to introduce himself and his/her summary of and his/her take on vision in light of their prior individualized curriculum of study. The purpose of this will be for the staff to get a sense of where the participants are at in terms of their understanding of and response to vision as defined by the goals project and to respond accordingly. This includes a strong sense of why philosophy is a necessary and unavoidable focus for effective educational practice. Consequently, at the end, staff will be given an opportunity to respond in order to set common basis for discourse on vision. Our hope is that a glossary of common terms will be emerge.

Sunday, July 21st:

Morning Session:

- a) Summary, recapitulation and closing discussion of introductory component.
- b) From Philosophy to Education - Led by Seymour Fox: Close study of Greenberg's paper, preparation for meeting with Professor Greenberg..The goal here will be to demonstrate how deeply and systematically one needs to go into philosophical ideas in order to deduce their contribution to education. It is precisely with reference to a paper which the participants already have read and discussed that we want to create this experience. By the end of this session, the participants should have a better understanding of what it means to move from philosophy to philosophy of education and should be able to differentiated between philosophical ideas which have something to contribute to the field of education and unsystematic/incoherent reflections which speak to education but do not provide enough in order to serve as a guide for practice. Also, the session should produce questions for the meeting with Greenberg.

Afternoon Session:

- d) Small group meetings on "building community support," "working with institutions," "working with personnel." Each group meeting will be led by a goals project staff member/s, whose role it will be to:
 - i) Present a conception of how vision intersects with the particular area of development in question on the theoretical level;
 - ii) Present a conception of how vision might intersect with the particular area of development in question on the level of the CIJE's goals project;
 - iii) Invite others to present specific inputs into the discussion;

iv) Lead a first round of deliberations on all of the above throughout the small group meetings.

For breakdown of staff and participants into groups and illustrations and suggestions for group leaders, see appendix #3.

Monday, July 22nd:

Preliminary: Recapitulation and discussion.

Morning Session:

a) Small group meetings continued.

Afternoon Session: From Philosophy to Practice: Led by Seymour Fox.

a) The group will meet with Moshe Greenberg in order to discuss his paper. The meeting will begin with some of Greenberg's answers to queries which arose the day before. The purpose of the meeting is to further clarify aspects of his paper, both in and of itself and as it relates to educational practice. This should be a discussion which begins in the middle and ends in the middle.

b) The group will undertake an exercise in "translating" Greenberg's conception to practice. This exercise will focus on a particular text and the question will be how it would be taught to a particular age group in a particular setting according to Greenberg's conception. One possibility would be to link up here with Tisha B'av (eg. teaching Megillat Eichä).

Tuesday, July 23rd:

Preliminary: Recapitulation and discussion.

Morning Session: From Philosophy to Practice - Led by Seymour Fox. This session will be aimed at discussing ideas of education with reference to the non-denominational or "community" educational setting in North America on the basis of meetings with Professors Brinker and Professor Rosenak. We will be asking each to address particular questions which come out of the concerns of this group including that of developing a conception of community based Jewish education which is not parve. At the end, there will be some time without the scholars for appraisal of the session by the group.

Afternoon Session:

a) Small Group meetings continued.

Evening: Dinner at Alan Hoffmann's home (Chalavi).

Wednesday, July 24th:

Preliminary: Recapitulation and discussion.

Morning: Annette Hochstein and Shmuel Ben Alal will present CAPE.

Afternoon: The whole day will be devoted to intensive sessions in plenum with presentations and discussions of two of the small group meetings.

Evening: Participants will be offered various settings for the reading of Megillat Eichah.

Thursday, July 25th: (evening) - internal staff meeting to assess meeting-seminar, participants, next steps - including Friday concluding activities.

Friday, July 26th: Continuation of Thursday plenum mode for third small group; Seymour Fox summary of Philosophy to Education; Danny Pekarsky led concluding discussion around written summary of the whole week; queries "delayed for later," discussions of next steps, etc.

Each staff person will be assigned a single participant, so as to both assist in bridging the various pieces of the seminar and making sure that the participant is taken care of during the evenings, Tisha B'av, Shabbat, etc.

Again, we look forward to discussing this conception with you and would encourage you to respond as soon as possible on e-mail.

Danny Marom and Danny Pekarsky

APPENDIX #1 CORE CATEGORIES/CONCEPTS ON VISION FOR DISCUSSION WITH EACH PARTICIPANT ON THE BASIS OF CORE READINGS:

INTRODUCTION TO VISION - DANNY PEKARSKY DISCUSSION WITH PARTICIPANTS IN LIGHT OF SF PAPER "TOWARDS A GENERAL THEORY OF JEWISH EDUCATION":

- 1) Distinction between vision defined substantively, existentially, strategically, communally, institutionally, etc.
- 2) Mission statement vs. the whistle metaphor (blow a whistle and say freeze and ask everyone in the school, camp, etc. how that which they are doing at that particular moment is meant to contribute to the attainment of the vision)
- 3) Practical arguments for vision: with respect to decisionmaking, planning, implementation, evaluation.
- 4) The impracticality of exclusive emphasis on means.
- 5) "The intellectual bankruptcy" of not saying no to specific ends.
- 6) The means-ends continuum.
- 7) The role of society in establishing vision for education (or, by way of comparison, the limitedness of educational vision which does not take into account the vision of those who mandate education in addition to considerations of subject matter, pedagogy, and learning theory).
- 8) The failure of the American education reforms in light of avoidance of vision.
- 9) The lack of development with respect to vision in Jewish education over the last decades - with specific reference to the example of continuity (see SF-Scheffler Commission paper).
- 10) The example of the Waldorf schools.

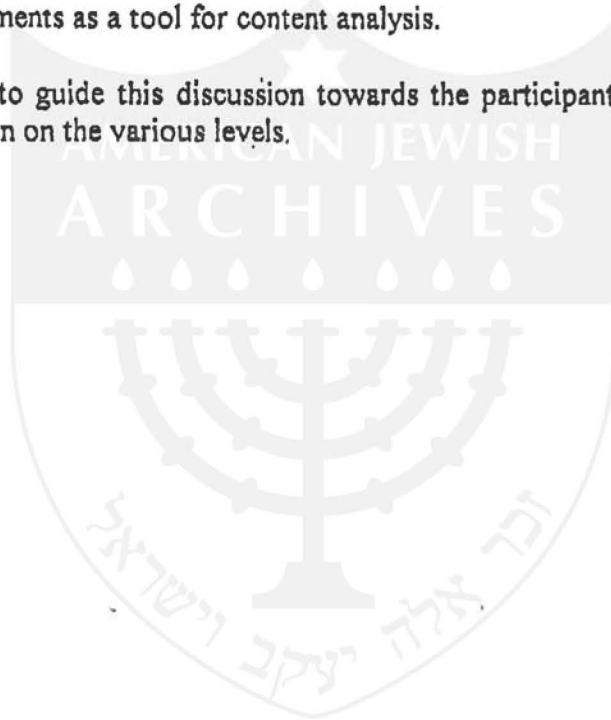
It may be useful to guide this discussion towards the question of which of these arguments is the best way to "seed the culture".

ILLUSTRATION OF VISION - DANIEL MAROM DISCUSSION WITH EACH OF THE PARTICIPANTS IN LIGHT OF GREENBERG MATERIALS

- 1) The Educated Jew project: history, rationale, methodology, participants, nature of publication.

- 2) Elements of content suggested, defined, explored and delimited: philosophy, philosophy of education, translation, implementation, and evaluation.
- 3) Each of the above elements illustrated with reference to Greenberg materials.
- 4) Clarifications and queries from the reader's perspective.
- 5) Challenges to Greenberg from other scholars in the educated Jew project.
- 6) The realities of Jewish education in light of this illustration of vision.
- 7) The possible uses and abuses of the Greenberg materials.
- 8) The above elements as a tool for content analysis.

It may be useful to guide this discussion towards the participants' suggesting their own examples for vision on the various levels.



APPENDIX #2: CATEGORIES AND CONCEPTS ON THE GOALS PROJECT
 (Also to be communicated in the context of pre-seminar discussions with participants)

A) GENERAL:

- 1) Background on the CIJE and the Mandel Institute and the partnership between them and with Harvard's Philosophy of Education Research Center.
- 2) General Aim: Engaging various constituents in the Jewish educational community in development of Jewish education through vision.
- 3) Strategies:
 - a) "Seeding the Culture" - examples and responses.
 - b) "Pilot Projects" - eg. Agnon School
 - c) Developing the Kitchen: the need for the Kitchen in light of our understanding of a coach's job; the Kitchen defined (based on Danny Pekarsky's document for our last meeting, which broke down the Kitchen to "Visions at Work," "Journeying Towards Vision" and "Meta Issues").
 - d) Introducing vision in other CIJE activities, eg. TEI, Principal's Center, Wexner Graduate Conference, etc.
- 4) The possibility of a team of coaches versus a national center for vision.
- 5) The challenge of expanding capacity and how it relates to our seminar.

B) SPECIFIC ASSIGNMENTS TENTATIVELY ENVISIONED FOR EACH PARTICIPANT AND SUGGESTED TOPICS, READINGS, MEETINGS: Note: these are very preliminary comments. There is a need to work out a more detailed curriculum for each participant, as we get to know them in the course of the pre-seminar discussions.

- a) **Devorah Steinmetz** - Steinmetz has received a grant to undertake a new teacher training project for the Drisha institute at Beit Rabban School. Her academic background is in literature and Jewish studies. Her doctorate is a literary study in the Bible. Assignment: teacher training and/or work on the kitchen. She should be commissioned to write up her presentation on vision to the Wexner Graduates (based on Lampert-Ball conception of teaching mathematics). She should be invited to express the difference between our definition of vision and that which she used in that presentation. She should be invited to present her ideas on how to introduce vision into her teacher training project. She should meet with Gail in order to discuss implications of vision for training. Possibility of her working on kitchen should be explored in light of her responses to the Greenberg materials. If she is interested, she should be considered for preparing materials on "Visions at Work" and should therefore read this document.

b) **Amy Gerstein** - Gerstein's experience is with the Sizer Coalition of Essential Schools project and her doctorate is on alternative approaches to change. Assignment: Consultant to the CIJE and to individuals working with institutions on developing strategies for working with institutions and/or work on kitchen. She should be commissioned to undertake Scheffler's suggestion that we formulate our approach with reference to a conspectus of change approaches. This will prepare her for both roles. She should read and discuss SF article on Ramah, Daniel Marom's pieces on Agnon, and Linda Thal's case study on the goals of Hebrew in Reform congregational education. She should have a phone meeting with Annette Hochstein to discuss vision in light of current change theories in general education.

c) **Michael Paley and Daniel Lehman** - Both have experience working with lay leaders, Paley at Wexner, and Lehman with Clal and both are working in setting up new "community" high schools. Assignment: lay leaders and vision and/or developing a new institution (they both have expressed interest in the latter with respect to their own institutions; a possible cross section may be working with lay leaders in setting a vision for a new school). Each should be engaged in both discussions until we make a decision as to which area we/they want to pursue more. The challenge of vision and leaders should be explained to Paley on the basis of a joint evaluation of the Wexner Graduates retreat (the point being that it did not take the discussion to the point of actually empowering lay leaders to work with vision) and to Lehman on a distinction between what he did with CLAL and the lay leaders at Beit Tefilah (based on his own document on this project) and what we are suggesting. As for starting a new "community school," both should be given Marom's Agnon pieces and discuss them in a way which will surface the difference between developing vision with an existing "community" school versus developing vision for a new "community" school. Each should be invited to share written documents relating to the vision of their new school. Both should be encouraged to articulate and analyze principles and issues relating to the role of vision in the development of their new institutions. Also, Both should meet with Alan and/or Nessa to discuss challenges of working with lay leaders on vision.

d) **Linda Thal** - goals initiatives in the world of Reform education (she has already undertaken a successful goals like initiative in the teaching of Hebrew at a Reform congregational school and has written it up as a case study (see pages 185 - 227 of I. Aron, S. Lee, and S. Rossel (eds.) "A Congregation of Learners: Transforming the Synagogue into a Learning Community"). At present, she is also going to do a Ph.d in the area of vision in the context of the Reform Movement. Assignment: Planning consultant for developing vision, with possible special special emphasis on the Reform Movement. She should be given Marom's documents on Agnon and Lehman's document on CLAL-Beit Tefilah and invited to explore differences in the implicit definitions of vision in each. She should be invited to present, first orally, but then in writing, an analysis of the current state of Reform education in light of vision. She should meet with Barry Holtz to compare notes on vision vis a vis Reform and Conservative movements.

e) **Alvan Kaunfer** - He has launched and directed various educational institutions, some tied to synagogues and others not. He also has a Ph.d. in Jewish Thought. Kaunfer should be considered for the assignment of working with institutions or the kitchen or both. Also, the possibility of his working on kitchen should be explored. In discussing working with institutions, he should be encouraged to read Linda Thal and Daniel Lehman documents in order to refine his understanding of how we define working with institutions. Also, he should read Danny Pekarsky's document on the Kitchen, "Visions at Work." He should meet with Barry in order to discuss the CIJE kitchen and its uses.

f) **Danny Gordis** - A professor of Jewish Thought, he is currently the dean of the Rabbinical school of the University of Judaism on the west coast and is involved developing a new program of studies for the training of Rabbis. Gordis should be encouraged to explore possible roles for Rabbis in developing and implementing vision locally and/or starting up a new institution. This discussion might begin on the basis of his reading the Marom-Agnon, Thal and Lehman documents in order to refine his understanding of how we define working with institutions. Gordis should work towards a written formulation of his emerging ideas. He should have a phone meeting with Seymour to discuss ideas about possible roles for Rabbis in developing vision.



APPENDIX #3: SMALL GROUPS: SUGGESTIONS AS TO TOPICS, STAFF LEADERS, PARTICIPANTS, SPECIAL ASSIGNMENTS, ETC.

1) BUILDING COMMUNITY SUPPORT:

STAFF LEADERS: ANNETTE HOCHSTEIN or SEYMOUR FOX AND ALAN HOFFMANN:

PARTICIPANTS: DANIEL LEHMAN, MICHAEL PALEY, NESSA RAPPOPORT.

POSSIBLE PRESENTATIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

FOX: PRINCIPLES FOR BRIDGING THE LANGUAGE OF LAY LEADERS AND THE LANGUAGE OF VISION - THE PAPER WITH SCHEFFLER ON JEWISH CONTINUITY.

HOCHSTEIN: POLICY AND VISION

RAPPOPORT: CHALLENGES IN BUILDING COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR VISION IN LEAD AND ADJUNCT COMMUNITIES

PALEY: CHALLENGES TO WORKING WITH LAY LEADERS ON VISION AS DRAWN FROM THE WEXNER EXPERIENCE.

2) WORKING WITH INSTITUTIONS:

STAFF LEADERS: DANIEL MAROM AND DANNY PEKARSKY

PARTICIPANTS: AMY GERSTEIN, ALVAN KAUNFER, LINDA THAL, ELI HOLTZER.

MAROM: PRINCIPLES AND PROBLEMS IN THE AGNON SCHOOL GOALS PROJECT.

GERSTEIN: TOWARDS A METHODOLOGY OF CHANGE BASED ON VISION: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN LIGHT OF THE UNIQUE ASPECTS OF CHANGE BASED ON VISION VERSUS STATE-OF-THE-ART.

THAL: ANALYSIS OF THE REFORM MOVEMENT FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF VISION

3) WORKING WITH PERSONNEL:

STAFF LEADER: GAIL DORPH AND SEYMOUR FOX:

PARTICIPANTS: JOSH ELKIN; ELLEN GOLDRING, BARRY HOLTZ, DANNY GORDIS, DEBORAH STEINMETZ.

SPECIAL ASSIGNMENTS:

DORPH AND HOLTZ: IMPLICATIONS OF VISION FOR TRAINING OF TEACHER TRAINERS.

GOLDRING: IMPLICATIONS OF VISION FOR TRAINING OF PRINCIPALS;

GORDIS: IMPLICATIONS OF VISION FOR DEFINITION AND TRAINING OF CONSERVATIVE RABBIS.

FOX: THE ROLE OF JEWISH THOUGHT IN THE TRAINING OF JEWISH EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

NISAN: AN IDENTITY MODEL FOR THE TRAINING OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERS

MAROM: VISIONAL DISCOURSE AND IN-SERVICE TEACHER TRAINING - LESSONS FROM THE AGNON PILOT PROJECT.

Chair
Morton Mandel

Vice Chairs
Billie Gold
Ann Kaufman
Matthew Maryles
Maynard Wishner

Honorary Chair
Max Fisher

Board
David Arnov
Daniel Bader
Mandell Berman
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John Colman
Maurice Corson
Susan Crown
Jay Davis
Irwin Field
Charles Goodman
Alfred Gottschalk
Neil Greenbaum
David Hirschhorn
Gershon Kekst
Henry Koschitzky
Mark Lainer
Norman Lamm
Marvin Lender
Norman Lipoff
Seymour Martin Lipset
Florence Melton
Melvin Merians
Lester Pollack
Charles Ratner
Esther Leah Ritz
William Schatten
Richard Scheuer
Ismar Schorsch
David Teutsch
Isadore Twersky
Bennett Yanowitz

Executive Director
Alan Hoffmann

July 9, 1996

Dear Goals Seminar Participants:

Enclosed is a draft of a paper that articulates some of the basic assumptions that guide the Goals Project. This paper draws heavily on the paper by Seymour Fox that you have already received and other articles that he has written over the years (see footnote 1 for some examples). Please try to read this essay in preparation for our first session.

We would also like to request that you send us a short (roughly four sentence) bio that we can include in the binder that will be given to participants at the beginning of the seminar. If you are in the United States, please fax it to Sarah Feinberg c/o CIJE in New York (212-532-2646). If you are in Israel, please fax it to me c/o the Mandel Institute in Jerusalem (02-567-1416).

Daniel Marom or I will try to be in touch with each of you by phone prior to the seminar to deal with any last minute concerns. In the meantime, all the best.

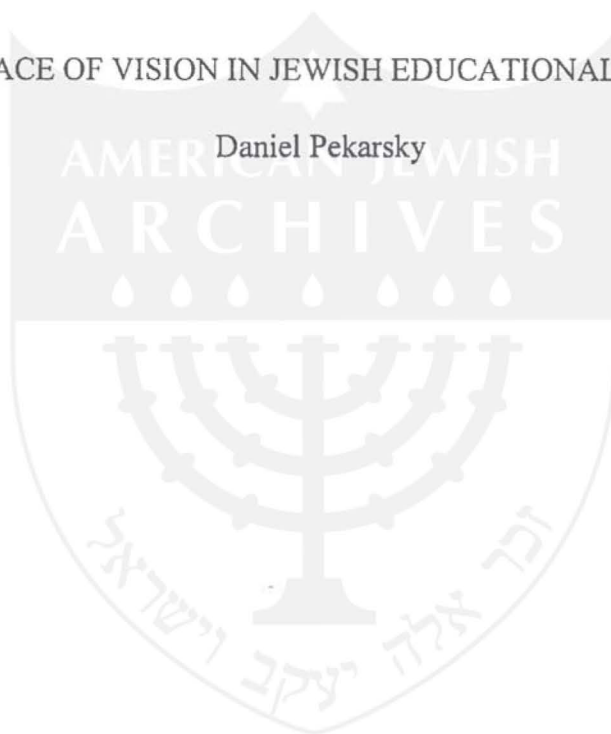
Sincerely,


Daniel Pekar

THE PLACE OF VISION IN JEWISH EDUCATIONAL REFORM

Daniel Pekarsky

AMERICAN JEWISH
ARCHIVES



**WORKING DRAFT
NOT FOR CIRCULATION**

INTRODUCTION

Educators and supporters of education are often impatient with larger philosophical questions. Preoccupied with pressing problems that already require more than the limited time and energy they have available, it may well feel to them like a distraction to give thought to basic questions concerning the larger purposes that the educational process is meant to serve. This view, however, is mistaken. Attention to such questions is not a frill but an urgent imperative. There is little of more practical value than the possession of an inspiring vision that can inform the educational process. This is the basic thesis that will be developed in this paper.¹

In their influential book *THE SHOPPING MALL HIGH SCHOOL*, Arthur Powell et. al. develop a devastating critique of the American high school. At the heart of this critique is the suggestion that, as an institution, the high school has been suffering from what might be called "a failure of nerve". It has been singularly unable or unwilling to declare for any particular conception of what the process of education should be fundamentally about, with the result that what happens is not shaped by any coherent set of organizing principles which will give the enterprise a sense of direction. In their own words:

¹This paper has been influenced by ideas articulated over the last decade by Seymour Fox. Some were presented in his course on Jewish Education at the Jerusalem Fellows' Program, as well as in various talks and papers within the framework of the Mandel Institute's "Educated Jew" project. Others emerged in my deliberations with him and his associate, Daniel Marom. See, for example, Seymour Fox: "The Educated Jew: A Guiding Principle for Jewish Education," (1991); Seymour Fox and Israel Scheffler: "Jewish Education and Jewish Continuity: Prospects and Limitations" (in press); and Daniel Marom: "Developing Visions for Education: Rationale, Content and Comments on Methodology" (1994). These ideas will also appear in a forthcoming Mandel Institute book on alternative conceptions of Jewish education: "Visions of Learning: Variant Conceptions of an Ideal Jewish Education" (forthcoming).

There is one last, unhappy reason that educators have not pointed to certain misdirections in the current crop of reforms: one cannot point to an incorrect direction without some sense of the correct one. But American school people have been singularly unable to think of an educational purpose they should not embrace...Secondary educators have tried to solve the problem of competing purposes by accepting all of them, and by building an institution that would accommodate the result.

Unfortunately, the flip side of the belief that all directions are correct is the belief that no direction is incorrect -- which is a sort of intellectual bankruptcy. Those who work in secondary education have little sense of an agenda for studies. There is only a long list of subjects to be studied...But there is no answer to the query, Why these and not others? Approaching things this way has made it easy to avoid arguments and decisions about purpose, both of which can be troublesome -- especially in our divided and contentious society.

Powell et. al. conclude:

High schools are unlikely to make marked improvement...until there is a much clearer sense of what is most important to teach and learn, and why, and how it can best be done.²

²Powell, A.G., Farrar, E., and Cohen D. K., THE SHOPPING MALL HIGH SCHOOL, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1985, pp. 305-306.

The analysis of the high school found in THE SHOPPING MALL HIGH SCHOOL applies very aptly to large numbers of Jewish educating institutions. Like the high schools described by Powell et. al., these institutions drift along, unguided by any compelling sense of purpose.³ To the extent that there are guiding ideals, they tend to be so vague as to give very little direction and to call forth little enthusiasm. What these slogan-like ideals do succeed in doing - and this is no mean achievement - is to give a multiplicity of individuals, representing very different beliefs, the illusion that "We are one!", that they can all participate in the same social and educational community. But the price paid for the failure to affirm a larger purpose that goes beyond vague rhetoric is that the enterprise of educating is rendered significantly less effective than it might be if educational institutions were animated by powerful visions of the kinds human beings and/or community that need to be cultivated.

As just suggested, by "vision" I am referring to an image or conception of the kind of human being and/or community that the educational process is to bring into being. "Visions" in this sense represent what might be called "existential visions" in that they identify what Jewish existence at its best in its social and/or individual dimensions looks like. Existential visions are to be found not only implicit in the social life of Jewish communities throughout the ages but also in writings of such diverse thinkers as Ahad Ha-Am, Martin Buber, Maimonides, Joseph B. Soloveitchik, and so on. Notice that an existential vision can be more or less filled-in: it might consist of a thick, ordered constellation of attitudes, skills, understandings, and dispositions; or it

³For a lucid discussion of this point, see Seymour Fox, "Towards a General Theory of Jewish Education," in David Sidorsky (Ed.), THE FUTURE OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMUNITY, Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1973, pp. 260-271.

might be limited to a particular attitude or way of approaching the world (and the skills and understandings that make this possible). There is no need to assume, then, that a vision is coextensive with a way of life.

"Existential vision" in the sense just articulated is to be distinguished from an "institutional vision" -- an image or conception of what an educational institution at its best should look like. When we speak of an educating institution as "a caring community" or as "a community organized around serious study of basic texts", we are identifying an "institutional vision" that identifies the fundamental organizing principles of institutional life. Though having an institutional vision is no doubt important, the worthwhileness of any institutional vision ultimately depends on its being anchored in an adequate existential vision. The reason for this is as simple as the old adage that "form follows function:" educational arrangements must be judged by their capacity to lead students towards those individual and social states of being - those constellations of attitude, knowledge, skill, and disposition - that are the *raison d'être* of the enterprise. An adequate institutional vision is one that shows promise of optimizing progress towards the existential vision that undergirds the entire enterprise.⁴

THE BENEFITS OF VISION

Jewish education can be enriched by guiding existential visions (which I shall henceforth

⁴Noteworthy in this connection is Fred Newmann's "Linking Restructuring to Authentic Student Achievement," PHI DELTA KAPPAN, February 1991, Volume 72, Number 6, pp. 458-463. Here Newmann argues that attempts to restructure educational institutions without careful attention to the purposes that these institutions are intended to serve are seriously ill-conceived; for it is precisely these purposes that need to guide the direction of restructuring efforts. See especially p. 459.

simply refer to as "visions") in at least three ways. The first pertains to the special predicament of American Jews at the end of the 20th century. The other two reflect general educational considerations that have a more universal application and do not assume this problematic predicament.

There is a need to introduce contemporary Jews to powerful visions of Jewish existence. During many historical periods, day-to-day experience in the family and the community sufficed to acquaint children with and to initiate them into meaningful forms of Jewish existence that enabled them to navigate their way through the world as Jews. During such periods, formal educating institutions could content themselves with supplementing this powerful informal education by passing on to the young particular skills and bodies of knowledge; it was not necessary for these institutions to take on the responsibility of presenting and initiating the young into richly meaningful forms of Jewish existence.

But our own age is very different. It is an era in which the young are no longer reared in environments saturated with Jewish rhythms, beliefs, and customs; and one can no longer count on informal socialization to assure the young's emergence as adults with a strong understanding of themselves as Jews. Indeed, many of them grow up with scant understanding of things Jewish, and certainly with little sense of the ways in which a life organized around Jewishly grounded understandings, activities, and values can answer some of their most fundamental needs as human beings. For human beings raised under such circumstances, human beings who are surrounded with a variety of images of the good life emanating from a multitude of quarters, remaining Jewish is no longer a destiny but a choice. And it is a choice the young are unlikely to make unless they meet up with spiritually, morally, and existentially compelling images of

Jewish existence.⁵ It is a major job of educating institutions to put before the Jews of our generation these kinds of images. Not to do so, to continue instead with an ill-thought-out and superficial diet of "this and that", is to reinforce the message that flows from other quarters -- namely, that there is little or no reason to look to the Jewish universe in our search for existential and spiritual meaning.

To summarize: it is important for contemporary Jews to encounter powerful visions of a meaningful Jewish existence -- visions that in different ways address our basic needs for meaning, for a sense of place and time. Educational institutions have the potential to respond to this pressing social need by organizing themselves around such visions and offering their clients an in-depth opportunity to encounter and appreciate them. This said, it needs to be added that organizing our educational efforts around compelling visions of the kinds of human beings we hope to cultivate also makes good educational sense on more general grounds. Two of these grounds are discussed below.

To have a vision of the kind of person and/or community that is to be nurtured through the educational process is to have a powerful tool for making basic educational decisions. In Jewish as in general education, educational goals often have a kind of arbitrary character. In general education, we may laud "creativity"; in Jewish education, we may speak of the importance of "Love of Israel" or "Identification with the Jewish People;" but if one asks why these things are important, or even what they mean, it is apparent that they are often slogans without much intellectual content or justificatory foundation. The moment, however,

⁵The formulation of the Jewish community's predicament that is articulated in this and the preceding paragraph is indebted to A TIME TO ACT, pp. 25-30.

educational goals are grounded in a conception of the kind of Jewish human being one hopes to cultivate, the situation changes dramatically. When this conception is one that we strongly believe in, educational goals that flow from this ideal acquire a twofold power they rarely have. First, the desirability of achieving these goals is readily understood; second, when they are interpreted by the larger vision, they lose their character as "slogans" and acquire a determinate intellectual content.

An example may help to illustrate these points. "Love of Israel" is on its face very vague as an educational goal: it is unclear what "Israel" refers to (Is it the land? Is it the State?); it is unclear by virtue of what Israel is worthy of our love; and it is unclear how such love is to be expressed. But this situation changes dramatically when "love of Israel" is understood as an element in a particular understanding of Judaism and of a meaningful Jewish existence. "Love of Israel" as interpreted by Martin Buber will no doubt be different from "Love of Israel" as understood by Rosenzweig, Ahad Ha-Am, or Soloveitchik. Viewed through the lens of any of these outlooks, it will be clear why and in what sense Israel is to be loved, how such love is to be expressed, and what understandings, skills, attitudes, and behaviors are requisite for appropriately participating in such love. What a moment ago had been an empty slogan now becomes an educational goal rich with intellectual, moral, and affective content -- the kind of goal that can give genuine direction to one's effort to educate.

A related point is this. When the human characteristics identified by educational goals are all anchored in a vision of the kind of person one hopes to educate, not only their relative importance but also their relationship to one another becomes readily apparent. Thus, for Professor Moshe Greenberg, love of learning Torah, "love of the fulfillment of the

commandments between man and God," "acceptance of the Torah as a guide in the area of interpersonal morality," and "a relationship to the Jewish people in all the lands of their dispersion" are all educational goals. But to have access to the vision that underlies these educational goals is to have the key that interprets each of them and explains how they are inter-related; it is, specifically, to understand that the encounter with the text is the existential source of the desiderata identified by the other goals, the foundation out of which the understanding of and commitment to them emerges.⁶

To have a powerful vision of the kind of person one hopes to nurture is, then, to have a rich source of well-articulated educational goals; and such goals, in turn, become a basis for educational decisions across a variety of areas. Consider, for example, the problem of personnel. There is much talk concerning the need for high quality, well-trained educators. But what it means for an educator to be "high quality" and "well-trained" itself depends substantially on one's conception of the desired outcome of the educational process. The kinds of knowledge, commitments, attitudes, and skills the educator needs to have will differ depending on whether one is guided by Heschel's, or Maimonides', or Ahad Ha-Am's vision of an appropriately educated Jewish human being. Thus, to commit oneself to a particular vision is to have a powerful tool in the selection of educational personnel, in the organization of in service education, in the activity of supervision, and so forth.

Analogous points can be made concerning curriculum, admissions policies, and the

⁶Moshe Greenberg, "We Were as Those Who Dream: A Portrait of the Ideal Product of an Ideal Jewish education," unpublished manuscript, soon to be published by The Mandel Institute for the Advanced Study of Jewish Education.

organization of the social environment. In each case, to have a clear sense of what one hopes to achieve through the educational process affords lay and professional educational leaders as well as front-line educators an extraordinarily powerful tool in educational deliberations. It is, incidentally, a corollary of this analysis that a guiding vision is not just a desideratum along with high quality personnel and curriculum; rather, a guiding vision is indispensable in understanding what quality personnel and curricula are.⁷

Having a guiding vision and a set of educational goals anchored in this vision facilitates serious educational evaluation. Evaluation in the most important sense is an attempt to judge whether an institution is succeeding in accomplishing its fundamental purposes; and evaluation in this sense is important because, properly done, it enables policy-makers and practitioners to revisit existing patterns of practice with an eye towards improvement. But if it is to play this role, evaluation requires the identification of clear but meaningful educational goals: clearly defined but low-level goals, such as the ability to sight-read a page of Prayer book Hebrew, may be measurable and important but do not rise to the level of guiding educational purposes; one can be successful in attaining them without being successful in the larger sense - that is, without succeeding in cultivating those qualities of mind and heart that are at the center of the enterprise. On the other hand, goals like "Love of Text Study", which seem to point to basic educational priorities, are often too vague to permit meaningful evaluation of our efforts to

⁷The discussion in this section will be misleading if it leaves the impression that educating institutions must choose from among a menu of predesignated visions (each associated with a "great thinker") the one that is appropriate for it. Nothing could be further from the truth. What a menu of competing visions can offer a community, however, is an opportunity to clarify its own guiding vision through a process of struggling with the perspectives and insights at work in a number of very different views.

achieve them. What is needed are educational goals which are both clear enough to allow for real evaluation but also meaningfully tied to the institution's *raison d'être*, so that the answer to the question, "Why is it important for the students to be successful relative to this goal?" could be readily answered to everyone's satisfaction. A guiding vision offers this critical mix of specificity and existential power.

The evidence from general education. Thus far, I have offered three general reasons for thinking that being organized around powerful visions of a meaningful Jewish existence will greatly enhance efforts at Jewish education. As the aforementioned references to the writings of Powell et al. and Newmann suggest, the proposed linkage between a sense of vision and educational effectiveness is not an idiosyncratic hypothesis, but reflects the considered view of some deeply thoughtful members of the educational community at large. There is also a measure of empirical support for this view which is worthy of attention.

Consider, in particular, Smith and O'Day's study of reform efforts in general education. The authors begin by observing the depressing results of most such efforts. Though there have been a flurry of reforms,

evaluations of the reforms indicate only minor changes in the typical school, either in the nature of classroom practices or in achievement outcomes. For the most part, the processes and content of instruction in the public school classrooms of today are little different from what they were in 1980 or 1970.⁸

⁸M.S. Smith and J. O'Day, "Systemic School Reform." In S.H. Fuhrman and B. Malen (Eds.), *THE POLITICS OF CURRICULUM AND TESTING*, p. 234.

Such findings do not, however, lead Smith and O'Day towards skepticism concerning the potential benefits of educational reform. The problem is not, they suggest, that educational reform is incapable of making a difference in educational outcomes but that most reform efforts have failed to focus on the right kinds of variables. To understand what the right kinds of variables are, they further suggest, we need to look at what characterizes those educational institutions which, according to research, are effective. When Smith and O'Day turn to this research, they identify a number of variables, including "a fairly stable staff, made up of enthusiastic and caring teachers who have a mastery both of the subject matter of the curriculum and a of a variety of pedagogies for teaching it." But among the elements of effective schools that they cite, pride of place goes to what we have been calling vision. They write:

Beyond - or perhaps underlying - these resources available to the student, the most effective schools maintain a schoolwide vision or mission, and common instructional goals which tie the content, structure, and resources of the school together into an effective and unified whole (Coleman and Hoffer, 1987, Purkey and Smith, 1983). The school mission provides the criteria and rationale for the selection of curriculum materials, the purposes and the nature of school-based professional development, and the interpretation and use of student assessment. The particulars of the vision will differ from school to school, depending on the local context...However, if the school is to be successful in promoting active student involvement in learning, depth of understanding, and complex thinking - major goals of the reform movement - its vision must focus on teaching and

learning rather than, for example, on control and discipline as in many schools today. In fact, the very need for special attention to control and discipline may be mitigated considerably by the promotion of successful and engaging learning experiences.⁹

In other words, as against those who argue for a focus on "practical matters" like higher salaries, better facilities, more in service education, Smith and O'Day defend the need for educating institutions and those who would reform them to step back and focus their energies on a question which sounds suspiciously philosophical: namely, what is our fundamental mission as an educating institution? What kind of a person possessed of what skills, dispositions, and attitudes should we be trying to nurture? To arrive at answers to such questions which will be compelling to the institution's key stake holders is to take a - perhaps the - decisive step forward on the road to institutional self-renewal.

RESPONDING TO TWO OBJECTIONS

In this section, two major objections to the position staked out above are addressed. One of them pertains to the feasibility of the proposal, and the other to its wisdom.

Is it feasible? Among those who admit that to have a guiding vision can be invaluable for an educating institution, some will nonetheless urge that in our present social circumstances it is unrealistic to expect Jewish educating institutions to arrive at guiding visions that will at

⁹Smith and O'Day, p. 235.

once be shared, clear enough to guide practice, and sufficiently compelling to elicit genuine enthusiasm. The problem is that the constituencies served by many congregations and free-standing Jewish educating institutions are so diverse that it will be impossible to arrive at a shared vision that will be anything more than "Motherhood" or "Apple Pie." That is, only vague slogans will have the power to unite the various sub-groups that make up typical Jewish educating institutions outside of the ultra-Orthodox community; and the attempt to forge a vision that goes beyond this will inevitably push to the margins some of these sub-groups. For a number of reasons, the leaders of many institutions are unwilling to undertake a course of action that will lead to this kind of marginalization and alienation. For example, loss of membership could have unacceptable economic consequences; and there is sometimes the fear that marginalized families who withdraw may end up providing their children no Jewish education at all.

While it is hard to deny that this concern has some foundation in reality, it would also be a mistake to underestimate the progress that could be made by an institution willing to tackle the problem of vision in a thoughtful way that is sensitive to the views and anxieties of the membership. And while it may be true that any such process will probably be threatening to some groups, there are likely to be significant groups that will be relieved and excited finally to be wrestling in a serious way with questions concerning the nature and significance of Jewish existence -- especially if this effort shows promise of helping to revitalize the institution's educational program. More generally, it may be a mistake to let our fears concerning the consequences of trying to work towards greater clarity of vision prematurely paralyze efforts to do so.

But while such considerations might lead to a somewhat less shrill formulation of the institutional difficulties and risks associated with a decision to tackle the problem of vision, they do not suffice to dissolve this worrisome set of concerns. While carefully conceived efforts to work with existing institutions featuring diverse sub-groups need to be undertaken, it may in the end turn out that the extent of diversity represented in typical institutions will render it very difficult to arrive at powerful, shared visions that can guide the educational process.

If this is true, and if we also acknowledge the critical need for quality education in our present circumstances, perhaps we need to be thinking about radical structural alternatives to the way we have organized education in the American Jewish community. If it is unrealistic to think that an institution featuring a highly diverse population can go through a process that will lead it to crystallize a single vision that can guide its educational efforts, perhaps we have to begin thinking about creating an organizational universe in the Jewish community that will encourage like-minded individuals to gravitate towards educational institutions that reflect their shared convictions.

We might, for example, look to some of the voucher- or choice-plans that have been bandied about in recent discussions of general education. At present, membership in a congregation affords one the right to send one's children to that congregation's educational program -- a program that tries to be responsive to the diversity of the institution's constituency. Consider, however, a different possibility: suppose that membership in any congregation in a community would afford one the right to educate one's child in any of several educating institutions found in the community, and that an effort was made to ensure that each of these institutions represented a distinctive ideological orientation. The effect of such a policy might

well be to draw individuals with similar ideological orientations into the same educational environment, making it possible to organize education around a vision that could elicit the enthusiastic support of the population it serves. I don't claim that dissolving the currently strong tie between congregation and congregational school is unproblematic or necessarily wise; but I do want to suggest that if we are to create substantially more vision-informed Jewish educating institutions than are now to be found, we may well need to give serious consideration to routes which disrupt existing patterns.

Is it wise? Consider, now, a second set of objections to the proposal that we organize Jewish education around compelling visions of a meaningful Jewish existence. The thrust of these objections is that even if we could do so, it would not necessarily be desirable.

One variant of this objection views the effort to organize educational efforts around visions of the ideal product of a Jewish education as an assault on the autonomy of the student. According to this objection, a vision-guided institution, an institution organized down to its very details along the lines of a particular vision, is a kind of "total institution" which does not offer the child an opportunity to taste and decide among alternative forms of a meaningful Jewish life.

There is more than one way to respond to this objection. One of them takes issue with a tendency within a certain species of liberalism to resist passing on to the young any substantive ideas concerning the good life -- except those values, attitudes, and dispositions that will enable the young to choose their own way of life and to be respectful of the liberty of others. As Richard Hare and others have argued, however, there need be no real contradiction between initiating the young into a particular form of life and meaningfully equipping them with the tools for autonomous choice. Indeed, the former may be a condition of the latter.

This last point may be especially true in our own time. As intimated earlier, a serious autonomous choice between a well-developed form of Jewish existence and various alternatives implicit in everyday life in modern, or post-modern, Western culture may only be possible if children encounter and have a real opportunity to taste an approach to Jewish existence that is more than a miscellany of customs, vague sentiments, and slogans. But in our own situation it is unlikely that they will encounter such an approach unless educational institutions set themselves up to systematically embody one or another such vision of a meaningful Jewish existence. Given the world in which the students live, the result will not be indoctrination but genuine choice.

This answer may not satisfy some species of liberals. In the name of the individual's autonomy, such individuals will argue that educational institutions must set themselves the challenge of equipping the young to choose from among a variety of competing images of a meaningful Jewish existence, rather than seeking to initiate them into any one of them.

In principle, I believe there is nothing wrong with this ideal as a guide to education. In practice, however, it is a difficult educational ideal to implement meaningfully - especially given the time- and resource-constraints that characterize Jewish education today. To undertake this approach meaningfully it is insufficient for educator and students to stand above a mix of alternatives and to scrutinize them from afar; for under these circumstances each would remain superficially understood and appreciated. A meaningful decision concerning a particular form of Jewish life requires a measure of appreciation "from the inside". Thus, an educational system organized around the principle that the young should make their own choices among different forms of Jewish existence would need to offer serious opportunities for in-depth acquaintance, and even for a significant taste, of more than one of them. Since this is hard enough to

accomplish with even a single approach to Jewish existence, the odds are that the approach recommended would turn out to be superficial in its representation of the alternatives, such that the learners would not come away satisfied with any of them.

Consider, now, a very different reason for thinking it unwise to organize education around specific visions of a meaningful Jewish existence. According to this objection, when educators view their role as preparing the child for some future state of being, they tend not to do justice to the child's immediate needs, concerns, and interests; but it is precisely these needs, concerns, and interests that are the springboard to genuine education. The educational challenge, say these critics, is not to draw the child ever closer to a predesignated form of Jewish existence, but to respond to the child's developmental and other needs in ways that further the child's Jewish growth. To respond to the child's needs and authentic concerns in a meaningful way in a Jewish setting, and to do so in ways that expand the child's Jewish understandings and self-understandings and that communicate to the child that Jewish tradition can address his or her needs in meaningful ways, is quite a sufficient challenge.

I am in many ways very sympathetic to the spirit of this objection, understood as a critique of an approach to education that bypasses the living concerns and questions of children in order to prepare them to become certain kinds of adults. But in no way do I view the positive view that informs this objection as incompatible with the position I have staked out. Among other things, a vision of what Judaism is and a conception of where one hopes the student will be at the end of the educational process need not be used to suppress the child's needs but to

interpret them and to suggest ways of responding to them.¹⁰ There is not in the end an irreducible incompatibility between having a guiding vision and responding authentically to the learner's living concerns.

CONCLUSION

It is no secret that the widespread interest and financial support that Jewish education has recently enjoyed have their origins in anxiety concerning Jewish continuity. If education is to impact positively on this troubling problem, it will be because it has led its clientele to a vivid appreciation of the ways in which Judaism and Jewish life offer rich opportunities for spiritual, social, and intellectual growth. But if education is to succeed in this effort, it must go beyond a parve offering of skills, information or even "positive experiences". It is imperative that educating institutions courageously move beyond this kind of vague neutrality and declare themselves for particular visions of a meaningful Jewish existence, which they will use as a basis for organizing the educational experience of the young. Only if and when educating institutions offer students, both young and old, entree into forms of Jewish existence that they will recognize to be existentially, intellectually, and spiritually meaningful, will education be responsive to our present predicament. It goes without saying that when educating institutions organize

¹⁰See in this connection Dewey's *THE CHILD AND THE CURRICULUM*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956. Here Dewey discusses the ways in which an in-depth understanding of the existing adult civilization ought - and ought not - to inform the process of education. Dewey decidedly rejects the notion that one should think of education as a step by step process of transmitting, piece by piece elements of this adult civilization. Rather, he recommends that educators use their understanding of this civilization as a lens through which to interpret the capacities, skills, and interests of the child, and to suggest ways in which these characteristics can be built upon and directed.

themselves around such visions, they will also become educationally more serious and thoughtful learning environments.

In closing, it must be stressed that a belief in the importance of vision does not entail any particular approach to the development of vision. On this matter there are many different views. There are some who may believe that such a process begins with, or at some stage requires, an activity called "visioning". There are others who believe that explicit attempts to formulate a guiding vision should not come until after there have been extensive small-scale problem-solving efforts that engage varied stake holders in new ways and effectively transform the institution's culture.¹¹ Still others might feel that progress towards vision is best assured not by some publicly announced effort in this direction but by approaching in the right spirit the challenges that arise in the institution's day to day life. And, as noted above, there will be others who urge that the amount of diversity found in many typical institutions is so substantial that it will be impossible to arrive at a vision that will simultaneously be shared and inspiring, and that therefore the attempt to nurture the growth of vision-guided institutions must focus on strategies that will encourage new kinds of institutions to come into being. Which, if any, of these views is meritorious, in general or in particular social contexts, is a matter of great educational importance. Attention to this matter must be a principal focus of our energies if we are, in John Dewey's phrase, to find our way out of educational confusion.

¹¹See, in this connection, Michael Fullan, *CHANGE FORCES*, New York: Falmer Press, 1993, pp. 67-68.

WORKING WITH INSTITUTIONS:
THE GOALS PROJECT AGENDA

INTRODUCTION

The CIJE proposes to work with select institutions around a goals-agenda. Its guiding convictions are:

1. Thoughtfully arrived at goals play a critical role in the work of an educating institution. They help to focus energy that would otherwise be dissipated in all-too-many directions; they provide a basis for making decisions concerning curriculum, personnel, pedagogy, and social organization; they offer a basis for evaluation, which is itself essential to progress; and, if genuinely believed in, they can be very motivating to those involved.

2. In Jewish educating institutions, as in many others, there is inadequate attention to goals. All too often, one or more of the following obtain: goals are absent or too vague to offer any guidance; they are inadequately represented in practice; they are not understood or identified with in any strong way by key-stake holders; they are not grounded in some conception of a meaningful Jewish life which would justify their importance.

Goals Project work with institutions would focus on remedying these deficiencies. The following discussion tries to explain the presuppositions and the nature of this work.

WORK WITH INSTITUTIONS

Presuppositions. CIJE's work with institutions around a Goals Agenda is informed by a number of critical assumptions, including the following:

- a. Key stake holders need to be committed to the effort to work on a goals-agenda.
- b. Wrestling with issues of Jewish content is an integral, though not the only, element in the process.

c. A coach identified and cultivated by CIJE will work with the institution around the Goals Agenda. (The work of the coach is described more fully below.)

d. The institution will identify a Lead Team that will be in charge of its efforts and work with the coach in designing appropriate strategies. The Lead Team will have primary responsibility for implementing the plan.

e. The institution's Lead Team will be invited to participate in seminars, workshops, and other activities designed to enhance their effectiveness. This may well include the development of a partnership with the Lead Team of one or two other institutions engaged in similar efforts at improvement.

f. There is no one strategy for encouraging fruitful wrestling with goals-related issues. Whether to begin with lay leaders, with parents, with the principal and/or with teachers; whether to start with mission-statement, curriculum, and/or evaluation -- such matters need to be decided on a case-by-case basis by the institution's lead-team in consultation with CIJE.

The heart of the work. The essence of the work that will be done with institutions under the auspices of the Goals Project has three dimensions:

1. A serious, multi-faceted examination of the way goals do and don't fit into the institution's efforts at present. This phase of the work is designed to identify the institution's challenges by highlighting weaknesses: for example, unduly vague goals, inconsistent goals, goals that are lacking in support by key stake holders, goals that are not reflected in practice in meaningful ways.

2. Reflection and deliberation. Stake holders engage in a thoughtful effort to wrestle with the uncertainties and challenges identified through #1. This effort includes a serious effort to clarify their fundamental educational priorities, through a process that includes wrestling with issues of Jewish content. Materials emanating from the Mandel Institute's Educated Jew

Project will be invaluable to this effort. This stage will give rise to basic decisions concerning what needs to be accomplished.

3. The institution determines what needs to happen and be done in order that the basic decisions articulated in #2 can be accomplished. Strategies need to be developed and then implemented.

4. The effort to implement needs to be carefully monitored and the outcomes evaluated. This is indispensable if there is to be learning and a chance of serious mid-course corrections in aims and/or strategies.

The work of the coach. The coach is involved in all phases of this work. The coach works with key constituencies (separately and sometimes together) and wears a number of hats: he or she is sometimes a consultant on questions of strategy; sometimes a bridge to extra-institutional resources that are necessary to the effort; sometimes a thoughtful critic of directions for change that are proposed. In these and in other matters, the coach's primary job is to help the institution get clearer about its primary goals and their relationship to practice.

The initial and perhaps most important challenge of the coach is to stimulate the institution to do the kind of serious examination and self-examination that will identify its critical challenges. This means posing basic questions of different kinds, although which ones it will be fruitful to ask at any given time will depend heavily on local circumstances. Below is a list of some of the basic questions:

1. What are your avowed goals (as found in the opinion of key stake holders, as found in mission statements, as found in the curriculum)?

2. Are the avowed goals (as articulated or implicit in these different ways) clear or are they very vague? Do the participants understand what they mean and entail?

3. Are the various avowed goals mutually consistent?

4. Do the key stake holders - lead-educators, parents, and

teachers - really believe in these goals?

5. If the stake holders do believe in these goals, why do they believe they are important? How will accomplishing them help make the life of the student as a Jewish human being more meaningful in the short- and/or long-run?

6. Are the goals anchored in an underlying vision of a meaningful Jewish existence? Can the stake holders flesh out the vision that is implicit in the goals they have identified as important?

7. As a way of better understanding what they are committed to or might be committed to in #s 5 and 6, have the stake holders looked seriously at alternative views?

8. In what ways and to what extent are the avowed goals actually reflected in the life of the institution - in its social organization, in its pedagogy, in what happens in classrooms, etc.?

9. To what extent are the goals achieved? To what extent are actual educational outcomes consistent with the goals?

10. If you were serious about Goal X or Y, what would you need to do in order to have a realistic shot at accomplishing it?

