



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE
AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES
A DIVISION OF HEBREW UNION COLLEGE – JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION

MS-831: Jack, Joseph, and Morton Mandel Foundation Records, 1980-2011.

Series F: CIJE Accrual, 1981-2011, undated.
Subseries 2: Dan Pekarsky, 1981-2011, undated.

Box
74

Folder
1

Core concepts. Jewish dimension of Jewish educational leadership, 1998.

For more information on this collection, please see the finding aid on the [American Jewish Archives](http://AmericanJewishArchives.org) website.

THE JEWISH DIMENSION OF JEWISH EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP¹

Daniel Pekarsky, October 1998

INTRODUCTION

The challenge of this essay is to develop a perspective on the Jewish dimension of Jewish educational leadership that seems sensible and that can offer us some guidance as we develop an institution whose purpose will be to cultivate a cadre of leaders for Jewish education in North America. The essay is predicated on the belief that how we understand the Jewishness of Jewish educational leadership will prove important in determining whom to recruit, the social organization and curriculum of the program, and its indices of success. While the conception of Jewish educational leadership that is developed is indebted to reflection on images of Jewish leadership, educational and other, across the ages, the essay does not even pretend to distill from an analysis of Jewish educational leaders across the ages some essence of Jewish educational leadership. Rather, the essay offers what Scheffler has called a programmatic definition of its subject-matter -- that is, a definition, avowedly prescriptive in character and grounded in a variety of considerations, that can guide future practice.

¹The thinking that has informed this paper is indebted to years of rich discussions with Professor Seymour Fox and Daniel Marom of the Mandel Institute around the development of the CIJE-Mandel Institute Goals Project. It has also benefitted from stimulating conversations with Nessa Rapoport occasioned by our attempt, some time back, to conceptualize a program designed to develop lay leadership for Jewish education. In addition, the paper in its current form has profited from the feedback it called forth at an October, 1998 CIJE consultation, as well as from the comments of my colleague at the University of Wisconsin, Professor Francis Schrag.

It is also important to note that the essay is not an attempt to identify a particular leadership style as distinctively Jewish. On the contrary, the essay's guiding principle is that there is no single style of leadership that should be privileged: like leaders in other domains, Jewish educational leaders will differ in their temperaments, styles, and communal/institutional circumstances, and these differences will be reflected in the way they lead. Nonetheless, it is possible to identify certain higher-level features of Jewish educational leadership that, while not giving concrete shape to the leader's activities, nonetheless give it a significant and valuable Jewish cast. Put more generally, the essay's perspective is that Judaism offers a rich set of languages through which to understand the leader's challenges and options; but just as the English language does not dictate in specific terms the kinds of poems that will be articulated by its means, so too, having the language of Jewish educational leadership meaningfully influences, but does not dictate, the Jewish educational leader's understanding of his or her work.

As suggested above, my immediate purpose is to articulate some ideas concerning the fundamental nature of **Jewish** educational leadership -- ideas that go beyond what I take to be "givens" in the context of our work, namely, that a Jewish educational leader is Jewish and that he/she is exercising leadership (at a communal, institutional, or programmatic level) in relation to Jewish education.²

A Jewish educational leader might be the director of a Jewish educating institution (like a summer camp, an Israel program, a congregational educational program, a college of Jewish studies, and new kinds of educating institutions/programs); he or she might be the leader of an

²"Jewish education" is understood as "the education of Jews, informed by the purpose of contributing to their growth as Jewish human beings."

institution or program dedicated to the cultivation of Jewish educators (including the leaders of such institutions) in pre- or ins-service phases; he or she might also serve as an educational leader operating in a denominational or local, communal organization dedicated to developing and enhancing Jewish education in its particular domain.

In addition to distinguishing Jewish educational leaders based 1) on the kind of educational contexts in which they work, 2) on whether they lead “direct-service” institutions/programs or agencies/programs designed to improve the quality of Jewish education, and 3) on the level of seniority they occupy in the larger system of Jewish education, it may be useful to draw to other distinctions. The first is between leadership roles in existing institutions and programs and the kind of leadership that is needed to launch new, or new kinds, of institutions. While the skills, aptitudes, and dispositions for these roles surely overlap, there may be significant differences as well that are pertinent to selection of candidates, to training, and so forth.

The second is the important distinction between professional and lay leadership. Lay leaders play a pivotal role in Jewish education at all levels; and is it of critical importance that the question concerning the nature of **Jewish** educational leadership be asked in relation to lay as well as professional leaders.

Before going on to discuss the distinctive character of Jewish educational leadership, I want to point to an uncomfortableness I feel with the concept of “a Jewish educational leader.” The term suggests a distinction between educational and other kinds of leaders of Jewish organizations and programs, e.g. Federation directors, congregational rabbis, the directors of Jewish Community Centers or Social Service agencies, or the publishers/editors of Jewish newspapers or periodicals. There is a sense in which this distinction is warranted: for the

individuals we identify as Jewish **educational** leaders have as their principal and publicly recognized purpose the achievement of avowedly educational purposes, whereas the others may not understand their roles as primarily educational. At the same time, it is worth remembering that policies and practices encouraged by an editor, a Federation director, or a congregational rabbi have significant educational consequences even though they are not understood as fundamentally educational in their purposes. How, say, a Jewish community chooses to address problems of poverty within or outside of the Jewish community, or the kinds of hiring/firing or sick-leave practices that operate in a Jewish organization -- these kinds of things may, for better or worse, powerfully educate various constituencies concerning what it means to be Jewish or a Jewish organization. That is, even leaders whose role is not publicly identified as primarily educational play, whether they acknowledge or like it or not, a powerful educating role, influencing beliefs, attitudes, and commitments in important ways. There is an important sense in which they, too, are Jewish educational leaders -- and in terms of their impact there may be times when they prove the most significant of our educational leaders. It may therefore be worth pondering such matters as whether we are exclusively interested in leadership roles associated with avowedly educational purposes, or whether part of our challenge is to get Jewish leaders who don't think of themselves as "educators" to take seriously the inevitable (and often powerful) educational dimension of their work.

JEWISH EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

What is distinctive about **Jewish** educational leadership? In answering this question, I want to steer a path between two perspectives which, though very different, both suggest, if not a dismissive attitude to this problem, a reformulation of the challenges we face. One of these perspectives asserts that the essential skills and dispositions associated with educational leadership

are generic, and that therefore the educational leader who will be leading a Jewish educational effort should be getting the same training as educational leaders in the non-Jewish world who occupy similar niches in the educational system. Skills relating to administration, to conflict-resolution, to strategic planning, to working with boards, to representing the institution to internal and external constituencies, etc. can be learned in a kind of generic way; and this learning (which could go on in an Educational Leadership program at, say, Vanderbilt or Harvard or some other institution) can then be supplemented with an additional program of learning designed to acquaint the future Jewish educational leaders with the particular institutional realities, constituencies, aims, and educational content in relation to which he/she will apply his/her generic leadership skills and knowledge.

If we take this view seriously, we might conclude that it is a waste of effort to create an institution for cultivating Jewish educational leadership. Rather, we should invest our funds a) in recruiting high quality individuals for programs of study in state-of-the-art educational leadership programs in general education, and b) in the development of a program designed to enable those who have the appropriate leadership skills to integrate into and to meaningfully apply these skills in settings informed by Jewish educational purposes.

A second perspective that casts skepticism on the effort to offer a general characterization of **Jewish** educational leadership differs from the first in that it does recognize something distinctive in Jewish educational leadership; but, according to this perspective, there is something amiss in the suggestion that this “something” can be characterized in general terms that will apply to the variety of Jewish educating efforts and environments. Here I have in mind the perspective of our own Goals Project, which could be taken to suggest a position like the following: “There

are a multitude of powerful conceptions of the nature of Judaism and of the kind of Jewish life we should aspire to, collectively and as individuals. Each such conception or vision carries different implications for the process, organization, content, and aims of Jewish education, inclusive of the way the purposes, dilemmas, activities, pre-requisites, and guiding principles of leadership are understood. If, then, it is true that the nature of leadership must be understood through the lens of the vision, this suggests that not just the content and aims of Jewish education, but also the approach to planning, to conflict-resolution, to supervision, to teaching, to evaluation etc. will be interpreted through the lens of the vision. Therefore, it is misleading to speak of Jewish educational leadership as though it were something generic (in the sense that it is in any meaningful sense the same across Jewish communities, whatever their guiding conception of Judaism).

An implication of this second perspective might be that if there is to be a JEWEL, its job will be the following:

1. it will strive to develop an array of models of Jewish educational leadership, each tied to a particular conception of the nature, significance, and purpose of Judaism and Jewish life;
2. it will then develop training-models that in their forms and aims are coherent with these paired conceptions of Judaism and Jewish educational leadership;
3. it will recruit into JEWEL individuals with leadership potential who are already identified with a particular vision and/or it will provide opportunities for individuals identified as having strong leadership potential to develop a compelling vision of Jewish life;³

³ Note that from the standpoint of the perspective under consideration, this last formulation is problematic, for the formulation suggests that it is possible to characterize "strong leadership potential" in independence of a particular vision of Judaism and Jewish life -- and this is precisely what this perspective denies.

4. it will provide individuals identified with a particular understanding of Jewish life with appropriate leadership development opportunities (as defined by #2).

Each of these perspectives points to truths that will be important for us to take into account as we think about the development of JEWEL. There may well be some generic educational leadership skills and dispositions that are learnable in educational settings that are not distinctively Jewish -- skills and dispositions which, having been learned, acquire a Jewish cast by virtue of the context, content, aims, and clientele that define Jewish educational settings. And it is also likely, as what we have called "the Goals perspective" suggests, that significant aspects of Jewish educational leadership are so integrally bound up with particular understandings of the nature of Judaism that it doesn't make sense to characterize them in any generic terms.

This said, the fact that each of these perspectives may have something to offer us as we try to get clearer on nature of Jewish educational leadership does not entail they are correct in their shard denial that there are significant features of Jewish educational leadership which are, on the one hand, sufficiently distinctive to be marked off from the general area of educational leadership and, on the other hand, sufficiently general to be applicable (albeit in different forms and with different emphases) to educating efforts informed by diverse conceptions of Judaism. In developing JEWEL, our assumption is that it is possible to identify features of Jewish educational leadership which fall, as it were, in between the legitimate scope of these two perspectives -- features of Jewish educational leadership which are neither generic to all educational leadership nor so narrowly connected to any particular conception of Judaism that they cannot be relevant to forms of Jewish educational leadership that are tied to other conceptions of Judaism. Below I try to sketch out some of these features..

TOWARDS A CONCEPTION OF *JEWISH* EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Building on a history of conversation concerning leadership within the CIJE community, I want to suggest a number of features of Jewish educational leadership that would, if recognized as important, help to define the aspirations and educational program of JEWEL. In developing these points, I have found the metaphor of “conversation” particularly helpful. That is, Jewish civilization or tradition can be understood as a conversation concerning a number of important matters that had the power to enrich and give a Jewish cast to the thought and practice of a Jewish educational leader. These conversations are identified below, along with some ideas about how participation in this conversation relates to the work of a Jewish educational leader.

Before proceeding, however, it is essential to add that attention in this particular paper to critical conversations and dimensions of leadership that grow out of Jewish sources and civilization is decidedly not intended to suggest that Jewish educational leaders will be understood exclusively in Jewish terms or that concepts, ideas, theories, and debates found in the general literature on educational leadership are not be central to Jewish educational leadership. On the contrary, a credible approach to Jewish educational leadership may insist that Jewish educational leaders be initiated into pertinent conversations concerning leadership and education to be found in the general, as well as in the Jewish, literature, and that they understand their roles in categories that draw on the richness of both these traditions. But exactly how Jewish ideas, perspectives and debates pertaining to leadership and their counterparts in the general culture are to be connected to each in our understanding of a Jewish educational leader and in the cultivation of such leaders is far from obvious; these are matters worthy of serious discussion. With this qualification, I proceed to propose some features or dimensions of **Jewish educational leadership**.

1. Participation in a conversation concerning educational and other kinds of leadership.

Over a period of thousands of years, Jewish civilization has given rise to a multitude of images of leadership and to varied discussions of the responsibilities, risks, dilemmas, and necessary conditions of educational and other kinds of leadership. Joseph, Moses, Aaron, Joshua, Deborah, Samuel, Saul, David, and Solomon, Bar Kochba, the Sages of the Rabbinic period, the Hassidic rebbes overseeing their communities, well-known heads of Yeshivot of different kinds across the ages, Zionist leaders like Hertzl, Ben Gurion, Golda Meir, and Menachem Begin, the leaders of European Jewish communities under Nazi siege during the Holocaust -- these represent only a few of the examples and images of leadership to be found within Jewish history. Each such image is associated with a style of leadership in relation to particular social and economic circumstances, with the characteristics that make for good - or bad - leadership, and with the challenges and dilemmas to which leaders respond, and with the consequences of responding to these circumstances in one way rather than another.

Along with these complex, situated images of leadership, there are to be found within Jewish tradition, varied discussions of leadership and of particular leaders. Samuel's critique of Saul, rabbinic perspectives on the responsibilities of leaders under different circumstances, and Ahad Ha-am's "Moses" represent but a few of examples of significant discussions of the nature of leadership that have gone on in Jewish history.

Taken together, these complex images of leadership, including its challenges, dangers, and limits, and discussions about the nature of leadership can be understood as an ongoing, polyphonic conversation concerning the nature of leadership, a conversation that includes varied voices and that is marked by particular themes, questions, insights, concerns, and concepts. In the

course of this conversation, the nature of leadership - its hallmarks, its styles, its challenges, its guiding principles, its risks, and so forth - is variously explored, debated, and through this process, illuminated.

A Jewish educational leader is an initiate into this conversation. He or she is familiar with the language and the literature that make up this conversation; a Jewish educational leader is capable of situating his/her role and activities in relation to the questions, issues, images, and insights to be found within this tradition. Being party to the conversation does not determine in any specific sense how the leader understands his or her work, but it provides a valuable vocabulary through which to articulate its character and challenges.⁴

2. Leadership and vision.

The very first principle in CIJE's evolving Guiding Principles document asserts the following:

"Vision at the heart. The soul of an educating practice or institution is a guiding vision that identifies in a compelling way its paramount aspirations. An adequate guiding vision points to the attitudes, knowledge-base, dispositions, and skills to be encouraged in the learner. An adequate vision is grounded in serious encounters with powerful Jewish ideas that concern the nature and moral challenges of Jewish and human existence in the cosmos, in history, and in contemporary America. Such a vision, if genuinely shared, energizes the participants and provides an indispensable basis for educational decision-making and

⁴ I owe the metaphor of a "conversation", as used in this discussion, to the writings of Michael Oakeshott and Alasdair MacIntyre.

evaluation. A vision is a **guiding** vision only to the extent that it permeates the entirety of an institution's life, from hiring practices, to architecture, to daily learning experiences, to budgetary decisions."

This principle carries significant implications for our understanding of Jewish educational leadership. If, as suggested above, Jewish tradition can be understood as an extended and multi-faceted conversation concerning the nature of leadership, it is also a conversation concerning the essential nature and significance of Judaism and the kind of life we should be living as Jews. This age-old and continuing conversation takes place within and between the Torah, the Talmud; among religious philosophers; between Hassidim and Mitnagdim and Epikorsim; between Charedim and Secularists, and so forth. A Jewish educational leader ought to be familiar with significant perspectives found within this conversation and to have situated himself or herself in relation to the voices that make up this conversation. That is, against a background of familiarity with a range of these perspectives, the Jewish educational leader is able to identify, explain, and render compelling a vision of Jewish existence in its individual and communal dimensions that will guide his or her work as an educational leader⁵.

More specifically, our organizational commitment to the centrality of vision suggests that a Jewish educational leader needs to be aware of the importance of vision, and to be familiar with an array of visions that might serve as organizing principles for Jewish education; is himself or herself committed (in the spirit of Ahad Ha-Am's characterization of Moses as leader) to a vision of Jewish existence; has the ability to represent and convey a powerful vision, grounded in Jewish

⁵ It is noteworthy that this feature of Jewish educational leadership seems at least on the surface consistent with, and not unrelated to, Mordecai Nisan's recent piece on an "identity-model" for the development of leadership for Jewish education.

ideas, to constituencies within and surrounding his/her institution; has the ability to help the constituencies that make up an educating community clarify a vision that will both inspire them and guide their work; understands how such a vision must suffuse the life of an educational program or institution and have the ability to move the institution to greater coherence between vision and practice; is able and disposed to evaluate the extent to which the practices associated with the vision actually serve to promote it; is able and disposed to interpret and adapt the vision in response to change circumstances and new understandings.⁶

To say of the Jewish educational leader that he/she represents, articulates, and communicates to various constituencies the institution's guiding vision is to suggest a significant sense in which Jewish educational leadership is as much (if not more) a moral vocation as it is as a technical role. The leader represents a moral ideal (a vision of what Jewish existence at its best is) and is adept not just at using it to shape institutional practice but is also able to help his/her faculty and other constituencies keep faith with that ideal despite the demoralizing tendencies of routinization.

⁶Note that there is an ambiguity in this characterization of the relationship between leadership and vision. On the one hand, it suggests that the leader must be genuinely committed to a powerful vision of Jewish existence and to an associated vision of a desirable educating institution; on the other hand, it suggests that a leader needs to be able to help a community of critical stake holders develop and clarify a vision that will guide their work. The first seems to suggest someone who has worked out a personal vision and then tries to shape an educating institution in its light; the second suggests someone who facilitates the development of a vision in a community and then identifies himself/herself with the vision that results from this effort. This tension can be approached in a number of ways: one possibility, for example, is that the two alternative posed are the poles of a continuum, and that the ideal leader falls somewhere in between the two poles, with different balances appropriate to different settings; a second possibility is that these two alternatives speak to different kinds of educating leaders, each of which may be effective with different constituencies and in different circumstances.

As the foregoing suggests, there are multiple dimensions to a Jewish educational leader's work that pertain to vision: the development of personal and institutional visions, the ability to develop support for a vision, to work through its implications for curriculum, admissions standards, physical and social organization, and so forth, and, equally important, to understand its implications for the way leadership itself is to be understood and operationalized -- all of these are important matters. And they are matters which need to be thought through systematically as we develop JEWEL's curriculum and its admissions criteria.

3. Jewish educational leadership and the conversation on ethics.

It was noted above that in a significant sense Jewish educational leadership, though it involves varied technical skills, goes beyond technique in its emphasis on vision. Another way in which Jewish educational leadership goes beyond technique is in its emphasis on the ethical dimensions of institutional and educational practice. The social and educational practices of a Jewish educating institutions must be ethical to the core not because of the fear of law-suits, or even because this will give rise to a positive social climate and worthy educational consequences, but for the more fundamental reason that exemplary ethical conduct that is not to be compromised in the name of efficiency or effectiveness is an irreducible element in Jewish educational leadership as we understand it. Note that to speak of **ethical** Jewish educational leadership is to suggest not just conformity to ethical standards and rationales taken for granted in general education but also to be familiar with and to draw on ethical concepts, precepts, principles, stories, questions, and ways of thinking about ethical dilemmas found within Jewish tradition. Here, too, the metaphor of conversation is of value: for Jewish tradition is also a continuing conversation concerning what is morally required of us in different roles and circumstances. While it makes little sense to urge

that a Jewish educational leader should act this way or that in any particular set of circumstances, it is reasonable to expect that he or she regards conformity to ethical imperatives as essential and that his or her thinking be informed by the tradition's wealth of intellectual tools, insights, debates, questions, and images. This would include on opportunities to study and reflect on traditional Jewish understandings of significant ethical dilemmas that educational and other kinds of leaders face⁷, as well as on traditional approaches to these dilemmas.

4. Jewish educational leadership and the conversation concerning education.

A fourth conversation going on in Jewish civilization that is pertinent to the work of a Jewish educational leader is a conversation concerning that nature and aims of education. This conversation encompasses a plethora of discussions, including arguments concerning the importance of learning, its relationship to deeds, its place in a balanced life, and the characteristics needed to be a successful learner; discussions about the aims of learning and the kind of pedagogies, settings and activities that are likely to facilitate important kinds of learning with different kinds of students; and varied perspectives on the relationship between teacher and student and on the place of education in the life of a community and the community's responsibility for education. A Jewish educational leader is a participant in this conversation; he or she is able to draw on the ideas and debates found within this rich conversation in deliberations concerning the process, aims, and organization of education in his or her own arena.

5. Leadership and learning

⁷ The kinds of ethical dilemmas I have in mind include: the tension between the needs or well-being of the individual (be it a bad teacher or a difficult kid, etc.) and the welfare of the group; the place and limits of truth-telling in the leader's relationship to boards, parents, teachers, and students; issues pertaining to confidentiality, etc.

CIJE's evolving Guiding Principles document includes the following principle:

“Learning -- both the means and the end of education. In an adequate educating institution the activity of learning is intrinsically rewarding, while meaningfully contributing to the student's growth and daily experience as a Jewish human being as interpreted by its community's guiding vision. We think it likely that if the student's learning-experiences regularly satisfy these demanding standards, the student will develop into a person with the capacity and disposition to engage in serious Jewish learning regularly and enthusiastically. This is important because we believe that however differently various sub-groups understand the aims of Jewish education, Jewish education should always aspire to empower and dispose the student to be a learning Jew, whose activities as a learner guide and enrich his or her approach to life.”

If, as this principle suggests, the ideal of “a learning Jew, whose activities as a learner guide and enrich his or her approach to life” is at the heart of Jewish educating institutions, Jewish educational leaders must, in more than one important sense, be wholeheartedly identified with this principle. Not only must they be committed to hiring policies and educational practices that will do justice to this commitment, they themselves will need to embody this principle in their own lives. Jewish educational leaders must themselves be serious about and regularly involved in their own Jewish learning.

Note that to speak of the Jewish educational leader as a learner is consistent with the metaphor of conversation that has been used to explain the Jewish dimension of the Jewish educational leader's work. Recall in this connection the way life-long learning is interpreted in our statement of guiding principles:

“Centrality of Jewish ideas and texts. We understand Jewish tradition as a conversation about the most important things which every Jewish human being has the right to be a part of. Within this historical conversation can be found insights, questions, and ways of thinking that have the potential to challenge, deepen, and transform our understanding of our situation in the world and our challenges as Jewish human beings.

These ideas are to be found in classical Jewish texts like the Torah, the Siddur, and the Talmud, as well as in other products of Jewish cultural creativity including novels, poems, films, music, and the plastic arts. Jewish practices can also be understood as texts that articulate powerful Jewish ideas.

A central challenge of Jewish education is to facilitate personally meaningful encounters with this textual tradition, the kind of encounters that lead to an appreciation of the ideas it embodies, as well as to a desire and capacity to become, through continuing Jewish living and learning, active participants in the conversation in which these ideas are voiced, interpreted, debated, and expressed in daily life. A hallmark of a successful Jewish education is that the learners come to view Jewish texts as lifelong companions and as sources of meaning and guidance."

REFINING THE PROPOSED IDEA: CONCEPTUAL AND PRACTICAL CHALLENGES

This notion that a program aimed at cultivating leadership for Jewish education should take as one of its principal aims the initiation of its clientele into the conversations articulated above must address some difficult and important challenges. I want to point to some of these challenges below.

One of them begins with the question: how, if at all, will the ideas and perspectives acquired in the process of being initiated into these conversations inform the way graduates of the new program will approach the challenges of leadership they encounter in the field? Is there not a serious risk that, in the midst of the pressures, multiple demands, political realities, and fast pace that typify the situation of educational and other leaders, all of the fine ideas that the leader has pondered and even found interesting in the protected environment of an advanced graduate

classroom will be shoved aside in favor of more immediate and pragmatic considerations and ways of thinking? Is this not, after all, the fate of much that gets learned in philosophy of education courses aimed at future practitioners?

This is by no means a trivial challenge, and it requires a serious answer. To begin, this challenge helps to highlight a critical set of assumptions. One of these assumptions is that in urging that students in the leadership development program should be initiated into the extended conversations described above, the suggestion is not just that they should understand the nature of these conversations and be able to situate their own views relative to the other views. In addition, success in initiating them into these conversations also entails their coming to identify in a deeply personal way with the importance of these conversations, inclusive of the questions, perspectives, and insights that they embody; otherwise, it is scarcely credible that what they have learned will seriously inform their future work.

This assumption, which requires that the future leader grow strongly identified with the importance of the conversations in which he or she has been engaged, is intimately connected with a second assumption, one that is also at work in some of the most thoughtful defenses of liberal education. This assumption holds that it is possible to acquire certain ideas, perspectives, and ways of thinking in so deep a way that they will forever inform and enrich the way the learner looks at the world in everyday situations outside the classroom.⁸ The mark of a successful liberal

⁸ As Richard Peters has expressed this point in the context of defending the educational importance of theoretical pursuits: "Science, history, literary appreciation, philosophy and other such cultural activities...consist largely in the explanation, assessment and illumination of the different facets of life. They thus insensibly change a man's view of the world...A person who has pursued them systematically develops conceptual schemes and forms of appraisal which transform

education, say its proponents, is precisely that the learner has been transformed in this way.

To the extent that this actually happens, one need not worry that what is learned in the academic setting of an advanced professional development program will inform the future leader's work in the field; for it has become a part of his or her identity, a part of the equipment with which he or she spontaneously interprets the world. This is an appealing view, and something like it underlies the perspective on leadership education developed in this paper. But there's a rub here -- and it is a rub which is embedded in the formulation of the challenge articulated above. For it is notorious that although educators may aspire to the kind of transformational learning just described, in reality, even if it is very engaging at the time, the more philosophical learning done by future practitioners in academic settings, often fails to be carried in meaningful ways into the practitioner's work-settings.⁹ Put differently, when proponents of liberal education assert that what is learned in the educational settings they represent will transform the way students will approach their future endeavors, they are making an act of faith rather than offering a claim with strong empirical grounding. In suggesting this, I do not intend to challenge the importance of this liberal perspective on education; on the contrary, I have already suggested that it is integral to the position I have developed. But precisely because I do identify with this position, I think it imperative that we not cavalierly assume that the learning in question, no matter how interesting at the time, will necessarily be interiorized in a way that ensure that it will enter into the learner's

everything else that he does." ETHICS AND EDUCATION (Atlanta: Scott Foresman and Co., 1966), p. 86.

⁹Both Plato and Dewey seem to recognize this point. See, for example, Dewey's EXPERIENCE AND EDUCATION (New York: Collier Books, 1963), pp. 47-48; and also, PLATO'S REPUBLIC, Cornford edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), pp. 199-200.

future transactions with the world in meaningful ways. If we aspire to such an outcome, in building such a program, a careful effort must be made to design the program in such a way that reflection on more philosophically-oriented issues and perspectives will not only generate interest but will also come to suffuse the way future educational leaders approach their work in the field.

Our ability to successfully address this challenge may depend on how well we address a second challenge, one pertaining to the integration of the different dimensions of the leadership development program we are hoping to build. I have already alluded to the problem and importance of meaningfully conceptualizing the relationship between the conversations in Jewish tradition that are pertinent to leadership and the parallel conversations that are found in the general literature. At this juncture, though, I want to point to a somewhat different challenge, that of adequately conceptualizing the relationship between, on the one hand, the program's more philosophically-oriented dimensions and, on the other hand, those that focus on the development of understandings, skills, and dispositions associated with the day-to-day practice of leadership. If, at the one extreme, the challenge is to avoid making the more philosophical component of the program seem an irrelevant, if possibly interesting, frill as compared with "the important real-world stuff", at the other extreme, the challenge is to avoid making the acquisition of essential practical skills, understandings, and dispositions seem like a prosaic step-child. The challenge of find a meaningful way to integrate these dimensions of the program is of fundamental importance.

A third important challenge is also related to the preceding two. This is the challenge of conceptualizing the relationship in the new program between its Jewish dimensions, on the one hand, and ideas about leadership development found in the general literature, on the other. This

issue emerged at a CIJE meeting at which a version of this paper (that focuses on the Jewish side) was considered along with a paper concerning the new leadership development program that grew out of the general field of leadership development. While it seemed clear that many of the issues and ideas developed in the present document dealing with the Jewish dimensions of leadership and its cultivation could be meaningfully interpolated into the framework of the other paper, one participant expressed uncomfortableness with this exercise in interpolation; for the exercise seemed to assume that the intellectual framework that will guide the new program would be the one that is grounded in the general literature on leadership; and this seemed to this person a problematic assumption. Calling into question the wisdom of making an outlook grounded in the general literature on leadership the starting-point or foundation of the new program, she suggested we consider the alternative of making a perspective that starts on the Jewish side (like the one articulated in this paper) the program's foundation. Underlying this suggestion was the anxiety that by starting on the general side we would end up introducing the Jewish dimension in such a way that it becomes a kind of condiment rather than the program's backbone. It may be worth trying to more deeply understand and to consider this proposal.

A fourth challenge is to make good on a promise made at the outset of this paper. The claim was made that this paper would address concerns relating to the cultivation of professional **and** lay leadership for Jewish education. In truth, however, it was professional leaders that I had in mind as I developed this draft of the paper. This does not mean that the approach taken would be substantially different if the problem of lay leadership development had been more central to the paper's develop; it does mean that even if this paper seems to moving in the right direction with respect to the cultivation of professional educational leaders, there is a need to consider its

applicability to the problem of lay leadership development.

NEXT STEPS

This is as far as I've managed to get with this effort in the available time. My suggestion would be to review it with attention to: a) the usefulness, formulation, unclarity and/or wrong-headedness of particular distinctions and claims regarding Jewish educational leadership; and b) missing elements. More generally, it would be important to clarify whether the points included in this document address and adequately respond to the concerns that gave rise to the suggestion that, as part of the effort to invent JEWEL, a paper be drafted that focuses on the Jewish dimension of Jewish educational leadership.

Along with efforts to critically examine the ideas at work in this paper and to imagine their implications, it would be of value to launch the parallel initiative that the JEWEL Planning Team recommended as a complement to this paper. This second initiative would approach the challenge of developing a guiding perspective on Jewish educational leadership by moving, as it were, "from practice to theory", i.e., by investigating how individuals we recognize as significant Jewish educational leaders understand the Jewish dimension of their work as leaders. It would be illuminating to compare what emerges from this investigation with the results of the more theoretically-grounded account developed in this paper.