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The role of the field work consultant in social work education

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NOTES TO CHAPTER 10

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5. Helen Perlman. "Intake and Some Role Considerations." Social Casework, 41: 171-177, 1960.

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15. Ruth Smalley, Theory for Social Work Practice, p.140.

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18. Smalley, op. cit., p.146.

19. Ibid., p.165.

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21. Ibid., p.167.

22. Ibid., p.171.

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27. Ibid., p.229.

28. Ralph Tyler, "Distinctive Attributes of Education for the Professions." C.S.W.E. A Source Book of Readings on Teaching in Social Work, p 4.

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CHAPTER 11

THE ROLE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE FIELD WORK CONSULTANT, SUPERVISORS AND STUDENTS: I. RELATIONSHIPS WITH SUPERVISORS

The empirical data presented in Section III provided some answers to the question "What should the FWC aim to achieve with supervisors?" The "How?" of the process will now be considered. In other words, which methods should the FWC as a representative of the School of Social Work, use in order to achieve the goals described earlier?

11.1 The Effect of the Triangular Relationship - FWC-Supervisor -Student

In a sense it is somewhat artificial to consider the FWC-supervisor relationship in isolation from the FWC-student relationship as the two are mutually interdependent in many ways. Supervisor, student and FWC constitute the field work triad and it is important to consider the nature of the triangular relationship as well as its components.

Annette Garrett, whose work "Learning through Supervision" published in 1954 represents one of the major contributions to this subject, stated as follows:*

> Full realisation of the potential values made available by good supervision requires also the integrating touch of a teaching member of the social work school faculty who maintains in broad perspective a close relationship with the details

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*It should be noted that the term "field work consultant" is equivalent to her term "faculty supervisor" and that her study was based on the field work programme of the Smith College School for Social Work which operates on the block system, although this in no way renders her remarks irrelevant to a School using the concurrent system.

> of each student's progress. Poor agency supervision will, of course, give field work relatively little value. But even when agency supervision is excellent, ultimate responsibility for the student's learning experience rests with the faculty supervisor. She, more than anyone else, knows the developmental needs of the student, the educational aims of the school, and the potential contribution of the particular agency and the particular agency's supervision. She stimulates both the student and the agency's personnel in a way which brings about the continuing progress of the student toward professional achievement.[1]

In the Smith system described by Garrett the faculty supervisor (or FWC) is also responsible for teaching casework during the academic sessions, and this type of arrangement has certain educational advantages. Garrett states that

> through knowing the student in the classroom, through planned interviews while the student is on the school campus, through periodic visits to the agency where the student is placed, and through regular reports from both the student and the student's agency supervisor[2]

the faculty supervisor is able to give continuing guidance to the student's work in the following respects:

(i) Through her teaching and her contacts with the students and faculty at the school, she obtains a picture of the student's knowledge, interests, abilities and emotional attitudes. On this basis she seeks to ascertain the stage of development that has been reached by the time the student enters the field, and she shares the relevant aspects of this knowledge with the agency and particularly the agency supervisor.

(ii) The faculty Supervisor participates in the original attempt to match the individual student to the individual agency at the time field work assignments are made so as to assure that

the student will be especially fitted to utilise the opportunities which that particular agency offers and, consequently, able to obtain a practical learning experience which will contribute most of her development.

(iii) Through keeping in close touch with the agency by means of regular visits and reports, the faculty supervisor follows the student's developing relationships with the agency and her clients. Pooling her knowledge with the agency supervisor's, she is often able to help in appraising the student's needs and to work out with the supervisor suggestions for improving the quality of the student's performance.

(iv) Through continuing contact with the student and the agency staff, the faculty supervisor is able to keep in close touch with the student's growth in field work. Sharing of knowledge and perspectives between school and agency supervisors makes an essential contribution to the student's well-rounded progress during placement.

(v) The faculty supervisor's direct familiarity with the educational goals of the school enables her to share this knowledge with agency staff thereby helping them to assist the student with the integration of theory and practice.

> (vi) In this whole process the faculty supervisor combines knowledge of the student, the school, and the agency with her diagnostic skills to co-operate with the agency supervisor's knowledge and skills in noting the student's progress at each stage and planning the next stages in her training.[3]

Garrett details the nature of the contacts which the FWC (or faculty supervisor) has with agency supervisors and students as the student's development unfolds throughout the academic year.

She describes what the nature of the contacts is as well as the dynamics involved at particular stages in time. Goldie Basch Faith of the Pennsylvania School of Social Work does likewise in her study entitled "The Professional School and the Social Agency: The Nature of their Relationship as affording Correlated Class and Field Training for Functional Practice in Social Work." The Functional School, whose psychological theories are based on the teachings of Otto Rank, have formulated a detailed account of the emotional reactions involved in the professional growth process which students undergo. This has been described in the work of Virginia Robinson, Jessie Taft and Goldie Basch Faith, among others. Aspects of this process apply too to the development of the young and relatively inexperienced supervisor, and an understanding of the dynamics involved is useful to the FWC in the performance of her role in relation to students and supervisors.

These are American contributions to the subject. South African and British social work educators have also made statements on the FWC's role in the triangular relationship. In South Africa, Annette Muller and F.C. Shaw have described methods of working with supervisors and students.[4] At the time of Muller's study in 1965, she found that there was no education for supervision in South Africa and in 1969, in his address to the National Conference on Welfare Planning, Professor I.J.J. van Rooyen stated as follows:

> Praktykopleiers moet intensiewe opleiding vir hulle taak ondergaan en met die teorie en nuwe ontwikkelings op die hoogte bly. Dit beteken dat 'n baie noue skakeling tussen universiteit en opleidingsorganisasie geskep moet word. Dit is noodsaaklik omdat die geheelopleiding van studente die taak en opdrag van universiteite is.[5]

The British writer G.D.C. Woodcock has made some important comments about the tutor's function in the field work triad:

> The tutor is a sort of go-between in relation to student and supervisor, and must have close links with each, but not so close that either is impeded from entering confidently into the supervisory relationship .... Both student and supervisor must feel safe in discussing their problems with the tutor, so that confidence is kept. In essence, the tutor must find ways of creating an area of freedom around student and supervisor in which both can develop further competence. Having done so, he must avoid intruding upon their relationship ... The tutor is often the centre of complaints from both sides. He must never lose sight of his main responsibility, which is the students' education.[6]

The FWC's role within the field work triad, Supervisor-Student-FWC is, in the writer's opinion, to act as a safety valve, keeping a balance between the free flow of communication necessary if misunderstanding and confusion is to be avoided, and the need for confidentiality. In assessing criticisms voiced to her, she should always listen carefully and differentiate between those based on reality factors and those which are the result of the emotional factors inherent in the learning situation. A research study conducted by Sheldon Rose in the Netherlands and reported in 1965 revealed that the intensity of a student's criticism of his field instruction experience is partly a function of the level of learning which the student has attained. Beginning students tended to be more critical of field instructors than were advanced students.[7] Though this finding was not confirmed by a later study done by Rose and others at the University of Michigan,[8] it does correspond with the views of the Functional School based on their experience with students. The demand to perform new tasks for which skill is as yet undeveloped, and to change established patterns of behaviour, which professional

education imposes on the student, is met according to functional writers, with fear and resistance, which is often translated into criticism of the supervisor, the agency, or the course at the University. This lessens as time passes and the student gains in knowledge and skill. The FWC should always be aware of this phenomenon in deciding when communications should be passed on andwhen she should contain anxieties and criticisms expressed to her. In Goldie Basch's words:

> It is a strength of the dual training plan that the student may turn to one for help with a phase of learning difficult in the other. If this is understood in both places, he will not be involved by one in an attempt there to solve the problem of the other; rather he will be offered support and encouragement to return to the place of his problem and there solve it by his own courageous action.[9]

At the University of the Witwatersrand, the FWC's have experimented also with joint interviews consisting of FWC, supervisor and student. These have been used mainly in crisis situations, for example, when a student is performing well below the expected level, but some supervisors and students have expressed the desire for this type of interview even on the occasion of the FWC's routine visit to the agency to gain information on the progress of the placement from the supervisor's point of view. This form of interview can be useful, but requires confident handling and an ability to be confronting within an atmosphere of acceptance. Both FWC and supervisor need to be comfortable in their roles and confident enough of their ability not to feel threatened by possible criticism.

11.2 The complexities of the FWC-Supervisor Relationship

The closest link between University and agency is the relationship between the FWC and the supervisor. For this to

be most productive, each party involved should see the relationship as one between colleagues which is based on a feeling of trust, as Edwards has pointed out.[10] In practice however, the relationship is often a complex one involving ambivalent feelings.

Woodcock's study in Britain reported in 1967 revealed that many beginning supervisors viewed the role transition involved with apprehension and anxiety, mixed also with pleasurable emotions[11] Bessie Kent's experience with a group of supervisors attending a refresher course on supervision at Leicester University in 1965 was similar. She found that supervisors' anxiety often led to the angry feeling that "the tutors of the social work training courses were failing them in not providing the answers to their questions about the nature of student supervision." While supervisors are entirely justified in expecting such guidance from the FWC, Kent points out that there was also "an unrealistic component to the supervisors' fantasies about what the tutors could provide, almost a feeling that the tutors were omniscient and wilfully withholding information."[12]

On the other hand, as Goldie Basch Faith points out, the supervisor may be intimidated by what she perceives as the FWC's greater knowledge and authority;[13] she may also resent the fact that the FWC operates in what may appear to be a more leisured setting, free from the heavy pressures of the field and yet attempts "to tell the supervisor what to do."

As Kent states: "the supervisor-tutor relationships is often precariously balanced; against the motivations and gratifications which sustain it through difficult situations must be weighed the inherent tensions arising out of the differing perspectives of the supervisor and tutor."[14]

Howard Irving, also using role concepts based on social systems theory, has expressed the view that the field instructor is in an "ambiguous" and "extremely vulnerable position" because of the "contradictory role expectations of the field consultant and the casework director (in the agency)."[15] Most authorities recognise that the supervisor can face a conflict between the demands of serving clients and teaching students. However, in the writer's opinion, if the field work system is viewed as a whole, it seems that the role conflict can be minimised if the University and the Agency strengthen their ties and intensify the degree of communication between them. If the FWC involves the casework director and even the Board in negotiations, the agency as a whole will embrace the goal of student education to a greater extent and reduce the practice-education conflict, which Irving describes as "inherent in the contradictory nature of the agency-employed field instructor's dual responsibility to the school and the agency."[16] As Garrett states:

> The agency supervisor is, of course, identified primarily with the agency. This is as it should be. It gives the field work a realistic rather than an artificial aspect ... and ... accelerates the development of a professional attitude (in the) student .... It is important that the agency supervisor identify also with the school and share in its educational goals. Having a good relationship with the faculty supervisor contributes to this identification, and working cooperatively with her helps the agency supervisor to realize that agency aims and school aims are not discordant but compatible and even mutually complementary. By the same token, the faculty supervisor must have an identification with the agency, and it is this mutual identification that makes for maximum co-operation ... (and) professional development. [17]

Kent describes other difficulties that can arise in the FWC-supervisor relationship, stemming from the tutor's anxieties about maintaining high standards of professional education and

other pressures, and because of the overlapping of the roles of FWC and supervisor. This demonstrates the need for constant and close communication and consultation, and a mature acceptance of differences in approach. The FWC needs to be aware of the dynamics of her relationship with supervisors, and also to help supervisors gain such awareness.

To sum up in the words of Edwards:

> The relationship between supervisor and tutor is complex; there are fears and rivalries, as well as goodwill, on both sides, but a recognition and acceptance of this leads to mutual understanding, and results in more effective co-operation towards the shared objective of making his professional education a valuable learning opportunity for the student.[18]

11.3 The Functions of the FWC in relation to Supervisors

Lydia Glover Nolan categorised the FWC's functions in relation to supervisors under three headings: Administrative, Educational and Consultative.

11.3.1 Administrative functions

In this case, it is difficult to separate the FWC's role in relation to supervisors and in relation to the agency as a whole, and particularly the executive director, as these activities are inter-related.

As Nolan states: "The faculty consultants have overall responsibility for maintaining educational standards in the field work programme."[19] They need to amass general knowledge of the various agencies in the community and the social workers who could act as supervisors, in order to use this to develop student placements. Brown and Gloyne's study revealed that such information was accumulated from a variety of sources - the

"grapevine" system, visits to agencies and consulting central sources of information. In this connection, in the South African situation, FWC's could possibly explore establishing closer contact with National Councils who could supply information about affiliated organisations, while Brown and Gloyne's recommendation that professional associations keep registers the names, qualifications and places of employment of their members who would be interested in supervising,[20] could also be explored locally. The selection of the supervisor in any placement should be made in joint, diplomatic consultation between FWC and agency staff. It is certainly an important part of the FWC's task to determine in advance of a placement who the supervisor will be.

As Helen Cassidy points out, at times the role of the FWC may be viewed as "trouble-shooter with agencies, super 'con' artist who extracts additional student placements from hard-pressed agencies; manipulator of placements trying to 'make do' in reconciling the student population with agency offerings."[21]

The FWC is responsible for developing working arrangements with agencies undertaking field instruction for the first time, and must define what the agency's and the school's responsibilities are. The drawing up of a field work manual or guide to field instruction centres is very useful in this regard, as is providing the supervisor in advance with details of the evaluation he will be required to make at the end of the placement. Provision should also be made to keep the supervisor informed of curriculum content, that is syllabuses and reading lists. If the FWC clearly communicates such information to supervisors and agencies in the initial stages of planning for student placements, this will "provide a firm foundation for developing working relationships between school and agency which will bear fruit in a successful experience for supervisors and students."[22]

The importance of orientating supervisors to their task cannot be over-emphasised. A group meeting of supervisors at the commencement of the period of field instruction can be useful. Nolan suggests that a trip to the campus is helpful in transmitting the fact that the supervisors' tasks are an extension of the educational process. Lois Sentman points out that group meetings should be held periodically "to discuss various field-work policies of the school and more effective ways of working together."[23] An overall evaluation meeting at the end of the year, involving agency executives as well as supervisors, together with the whole staff of the school, not only the FWC's, is particularly useful.

Some schools form curriculum content committees composed of school staff and agency field instructors. This ensures that what is taught has relevance to current practice as well as to developing, theoretical trends, affords status to field instructors, enables them to integrate into the teaching team and keeps them directly informed about the theoretical content of the course.

In most cases, the school is responsible for selecting the students for placement in each agency, although in Johannesburg a number of psychiatric agencies prefer to conduct selection interviews themselves. In any event, the FWC should review with the agency the basis for decision in each instance. How much information about the student should the FWC supply to the supervisor for purposes of formulating an educational diagnosis? There are differences of opinion on this question. In the writer's view, the FWC should furnish the identifying information and details of educational attainment of each student. She may further share her understanding of the student's learning ability in the academic setting, and perhaps give some indication of the student's learning needs as revealed in previous placements. However, there is an extremely important qualification: As Sentman puts it, "the agency

supervisor must rely primarily on a knowledge of the student in the dynamics of the supervisory relationship."[24] Goldie Basch points out that the student "may reveal to the agency aspects of himself quite other than those revealed to the school." Furthermore, the student will be developing and changing over time, and these aspects of her functioning "we must each learn - student, school and agency" as time passes.[25] Perhaps a sound policy is to provide the supervisor initially with factual data such as the student's name, age, educational level, previous placements and work experience (if any) and to exchange other information in later consultations with the supervisor once he has had the opportunity to formulate his own tentative assessment of the student.

The administrative responsibility of the FWC in relation to the supervisor's evaluation of the student is important. The FWC must devise a detailed outline for the evaluation report and send this to the supervisors for their guidance. She must ensure that evaluation discussions between supervisor and student occur timeously and that the written evaluation report is submitted to the School. If it is the School's policy to show the report to the student and to discuss it, (a policy favoured by the writer) then this should be clearly communicated to the supervisor.

According to Nolan, a mutual evaluation between consultant and supervisor regarding the year's field instruction programme is also helpful. It can result in the identification of improved techniques for both partners aimed at improving students' field experience. Brown and Gloyne's study showed that supervisors often felt the need for such feedback, as well as for reports on the subsequent progress of students they had supervised.[26] Such methods assist in making supervisors feel an integral part of the teaching partnership.

11.3.2 Educational Functions

It is self-evident that if field instructors are to provide supervision of quality they must be equipped for their task. The field instruction and supervision of social work students is a specialised task requiring specialised knowledge and skill. Experienced student supervisors often have these attributes and can hand them on to new supervisors, but the responsibility for educating supervisors remains essentially that of the School where it is the task of the staff to develop expertise in the sphere of social work education. The FWC can and should utilise experienced supervisors in teaching, but she is administratively responsible for organising seminars and courses for supervisors and other educational activities. Lucille Austin wrote in 1952 that "planning for more adequate training (for supervision) in the future is an essential - not a luxury."[27]

In 1973 South African social work education this remains applicable. If the standards of field instruction described in Part III of the present study are to be implemented, the supervisors responsible must be informed what these standards are and should understand their importance within the context of social work education. This can only be meaningfully imparted to them through an educational process initiated by the field work consultant.

Many universities in the United States run formal courses on supervision and attendance is compulsory for all student supervisors. Goldie Basch Faith describes the course entitled "Supervisory Practice" which she ran at the University of Pennsylvania School of Social Work from 1943 onwards. This course had originated in 1934 when Virginia Robinson had initiated it under the title "Supervision in Social Work" and it is important to note that Basch Faith reported that agencies paid fees for this course.

If such a course is impractical, schools should run shorter series of seminars for supervisors. Ruth Werner describes the system at Case Western Reserve University School of Applied Social Sciences which provides a series of orientation sessions for new field instructors. A short, relevant bibliography is provided, along with specific assignments for meetings which deal with the following subjects:

(i) Orientation to the role of social work educator.

(ii) The concept of educational diagnosis.

(iii) The selection of learning experiences for social work students.

(iv) Responses to learning experiences in the field.

(v) Evaluation as an educational process.

This programme was modified from time to time on the basis of experience, responses to a questionnaire completed by participants and the wishes of the participants.[28]

During 1969, the second year of the present study project, a series of five seminars for supervisors was introduced at the School of Social Work, University of the Witwatersrand. It was attended by 22 agency supervisors and four staff members from the School and meetings were held monthly from April to August. The first session was taken up by a general discussion about the seminars, their purpose and content, the identity of the participants, the field work requirements of the school including the details of the guides to field instruction centres, and the content of the theoretical syllabus, as well as details of the research project being conducted by the writer during that year. The following four seminars involved a study of supervision, with "The Student and Supervision in Social Work Education" by Priscilla Young as the basic text. At each seminar, the FWC acted as the discussion leader but group members presented papers on the topics

selected and general discussion followed, during which participants raised issues deriving from their experience as supervisors and exchanged views with each other and staff members from the School. When the series was over, the supervisors who attended were asked to evaluate the seminars on an attitude scale devised by Kropp and Verner for the purpose of evaluating short-term educational programmes for adults.[29] The scale consisted of 20 items randomly arranged* and respondents were asked to check each statement which reflected aspects of their attitude to the series of seminars. The instrument was scored to give a measure of the success of the activity on an eleven-point scale with "one" being the most favourable possible reaction, "six" representing a reaction of indifference, and "eleven" representing the least favourable reaction. The mean score for the 18 respondents who completed the attitude scale (82 percent of all participants) was 3,98, which may be interpreted as a favourable response to the seminars. The two items on the scale checked by the largest number of respondents (16 out of 18, or 89 percent) were

"I think it served its purpose" (the 7th most favourable response on the scale)

"I hope we can have another one in the near future" (The 3rd most favourable response on the scale)

The most unfavourable items checked by only one respondent each were:

"I leave dissatisfied"

"It was much too superficial"

These represented the 4th and 5th most negative responses possible on the scale. Not one respondent checked any of the three most unfavourable responses. Three respondents checked the most

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* See appendix 9

favourable response, five the second, while 14 or 78 percent chacked the 4th most favourable item:

> "It provided the kind of experience that I can apply to my own situation"

These results would seem to give a clear indication that these supervisors valued the opportunity of attending such seminars and therefore confirm Hypothesis IV as stated in Chapter 1. Seminars for supervisors have been continued in different forms at the Wits. School of Social Work annually since 1969.

There is a second aspect of the FWC's educational responsibility to supervisors. Not only must she provide opportunities for them to learn about field instruction and supervision per se, but she must also enable them to become acquainted with the theoretical syllabus taught at the School. This is necessary if supervisors are to perform the important task of helping students integrate theory and practice. As Boehm wrote in the Curriculum Study:

> Professional education, if it is to be academic education, must constantly strive to help the student perceive the theoretical base of his practice and to see in his practice the application of theory. 30

However, as Berengarten has pointed out:

> One problem in achieving the objective of integration is the fact that the professional education of field instructors occurred at an earlier date .... To help the field instructor assimilate newer knowledge, the school must take its full share of responsibility for providing the media by which student supervisors can become acquainted with the total curriculum and may become related to changing content. 31

The School should therefore organise seminars and short courses on syllabus content as such and lecturers giving theoretical courses to students should keep the field instructors informed

during the year of the progress of their courses. Conferences could also be held. Smith College School for Social Work for example holds an annual conference to which all supervisors, administrators and other agency personnel directly involved in student training, as well as students, are invited. The conference is centred on a specific theme which is relevant to the profession as a whole.[32] Along with the provision of such educational opportunities for field instructors the School should also make the facilities of the University library available to them.

A third major area in which the FWC functions as an educator is in the area of innovation in methods of field instruction. As Werner puts it, her role is "to stimulate, facilitate, and encourage evaluation of experimentation."[33] Many examples of innovations have been described in the literature. The FWC should become familiar with these and discuss them with supervisors. Examples are Schubert's finding that direct observation by students of interviews was extremely beneficial;[34] the use of tape recordings as described by Itzin in 1960, Kelley in 1962 and Kohn, 1970; Hannon's description of methods aimed at increasing rapport between middle-class students and lower-class clients; shared interviewing by student and supervisor as described by Sherman 1968, Leader 1968, Ryan and Bardill 1964, Wells 1971; observation and interviewing of "normal" families and children as described by Urdang in 1964 and 1966* and many others.

It is desirable that there should be close communication and collaboration between the FWC and field instructors in relation to new ideas and the research evaluation of methods in field instruction.

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* Details of these publications are to be found in the Bibliography at the end of the present study.

11.3.3 Consultative Functions

In Lydia Glover Nolan's words,

> The major function of the consultant in relation to supervisors is that of advising and conferring about field work education. The relationship should be dynamic in quality, with mutual give-and-take, and geared to helping supervisors achieve increased skill in helping and stimulating the student in his learning. The consultant's function is not a supervisory one. The supervisor should feel free to make use of the consultant's services in any way he wishes, and both should feel free to initiate contacts at any time. Creativeness in ways of working together and in developing student-supervisory techniques should be encouraged.[35]

The supervisor's task is an exacting one, intellectually and emotionally, a task which he undertakes on behalf of the educational institution which will confer the final award of professional competence on the student. The supervisor should therefore be able to expect guidance and consultation from a member of the School's staff. The FWC has knowledge of how the student functions at the School but will need to know how the student is functioning in the agency setting. In Kent's words:

> Both supervisor and tutor will have differing perspectives on the student and can enrich each other's understanding through discussion of their differing perspectives. In this sense, each has a consultant function for the other.[36]

Most supervisors to a greater or lesser degree, experience negative feelings of one sort or another in relation to supervision - feelings of inadequacy, unreadiness, apprehension, and it is part of the consultant's task to help them deal with these feelings. Young supervisors need support and encouragement. Supervisors who graduated some years in the past may feel that their students must know more than they do. Priscilla Young makes the point that

> any social worker with experience (and supervisors do have more experience than their students, either in years or in training) can, if she is willing to give the time and energy, provide the right climate for a student to learn.[37]

The FWC needs to encourage supervisors to perceive what they can offer students of themselves as people and as social workers. If supervisors can develop confidence in themselves, they can admit to not-knowing or to being mistaken without this negating their supervisory role. Enabling supervisors to perceive this is one of the goals of consultation. However, this applies also to the FWC in the performance of her role. According to Young "the student should feel free to talk to the course tutor about his fieldwork supervisor, or to the supervisor about the tutor, without feeling that he is being disloyal to either."[38] Each should be sufficiently mature and confident to feel that they have a contribution to make to the student's development without having to know all the answers. Each should recognise that the other could have a different opinion, without feeling unduly threatened. This is not easy, but is possible through frank consultation in an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust. As Goldie Basch wrote: "A well-maintained collaboration for professional training provides stimulus for fresh resolution of differences arising in thinking and practice, to the benefit of practice."[39]

Consultation between FWC and supervisor can occur either at the University or the Agency, although since it usually concerns the student's placement in the agency, it is advisable for the FWC to visit the agency for discussions with the supervisor. It aids the partnership and facilitates integration when supervisors come to the University for meetings, seminars and conferences while the FWC visits agencies for consultation. The spacing of visits is variable: some authorities advocate monthly visits

over the period of a concurrent placement, but one or two routine visits may be more practical, supplemented by others should the need arise. The student may feel somewhat uneasy at the prospect of supervisor and FWC conferring about her. She should know in advance when the visit is to occur and should understand that the purpose of the visit is to advance her professional education. She should be informed afterwards by both supervisor and FWC of relevant aspects of their discussion; at times, as mentioned above, she may attend the consultation. The purpose of the consultation is for FWC and supervisor to exchange information about the student's performance and jointly to assess her progress and identify future goals.

Opinions vary as to whether or not the FWC should read the student's agency records. Nolan[40] and Kent[41] are in favour of this procedure, as an aid to the FWC in adjudging the student's ability in the field and to assist the supervisor in her evaluation. Annette Garrett however expressed the opinion that routine reading of case records could confuse the roles of the FWC and the supervisor and added that at Smith "where reading of student records occurs, it is done selectively in those instances where it is likely to add some insight to a baffling situation."[42] The present writer is in accord with Garrett's view that the FWC should read student's records only in special instances where there is a problem or where the supervisor requests her to do so.

Consultation is important too at the time of evaluation. The FWC must help the supervisor express critical opinions frankly and openly if he is hesitant to do so, and should encourage the supervisor to discuss the evaluation report fully with the student. While the supervisor's evaluation is valued highly by the school, the supervisor should be clear that the student's final, overall, evaluation based on her performance in all placements and at the

school, remains the responsibility of the school. In the case of students "at risk" who are possible prospects for counselling out of the course, the closest consultation between FWC and supervisor is required.

In conclusion, it may be stated that if the FWC fulfils the functions in relation to supervisors which have been outlined, this would be conducive to the implementation of the type of field instruction procedures described in Part III. However, as Goldie Basch Faith stated, the most important aspect of the connection between agency and school resides not in the devices of contact and communication, but in the quality of the relationship, "in the current of feeling, ... in the hard-won respect for difference; in the candid acceptance and meeting of difficulty; in the genuine self-involvement, in the sense of a process mutually sustained."[43]

NOTES TO CHAPTER 11

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CHAPTER 12

THE ROLE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE FIELD WORK CONSULTANT, SUPERVISORS AND STUDENTS: II. RELATIONSHIPS WITH STUDENTS

12.1 The Concept of Faculty Advising

The role of the FWC in relation to students has received a fair amount of attention in American and British literature recently, where the FWC is referred to respectively as the advisor and the tutor. American articles are those by Merle in 1969, Yelaja in 1972 and Rosenbloom et al. in 1973, while in Britain in 1972, Clare Morris and Robert Elmore both expressed views on the subject. One of the most important statements however was that made by Samuel Finestone of Columbia University in 1963 at the Annual Programme Meeting of the Council on Social Work Education.

Finestone defined "faculty advising" as "all faculty activities, except direct academic or field instruction, by which students are assisted to achieve goals of professional social work education"[1] but warned that different schools could hold different conceptions of the process. However, three closely related components could be identified. The first was a general educational advising component aimed at supporting the student's educational experience as a whole. The second and third components were more specific. The second was related to academic programme planning and student academic performance. The third was related to field work planning and performance.

According to Finestone, there are three major conceptions of faculty advising:

> One conception ... is that faculty advising is a matter of <u>administratively facilitating</u> the educational programme. Advisor-student relationships are ... discontinuous and not intensive ....
>
> A second conception f[illegible] from ... the assumption that the advisor-student relationship <u>is</u>, <u>in itself</u>, a central aspect of learning. This relationship, structured by frequency and content of conferences, is assumed to be both continuous and intensive. Advising is centralized by assigning a single faculty member to each student; thus the faculty advisor is general advisor, academic advisor, field advisor, and, in addition, may be the student's classroom instructor in social work method.
>
> A third intermediate conception may be identified, in which the advisor-student relationship is considered as much more than an administrative facility, yet not in itself a central aspect of learning ... advising in[illegible]es specific assignments of faculty members to ind[illegible]dual student advisees and regular planned conferences... The goal of advising is to help students, administratively and through individualized educational counselling, to make maximum use of learning opportunities and meet educational requirements. The provision of an intellectual and emotional learning experience is not considered a goal of advising, but it may occur as a by-product.[2]

At the University of the Witwatersrand prior to 1969, the first of Finestone's conceptions governed the role of staff members at the School of Social Work in this regard. The experience of the writer at the School from 1966 to 1968, combined with study and consultations with academic staff in Britain and Israel, led her to believe that regular scheduled conferences were required and consequently, as part of the present study, fortnightly tutorials or consultations of half-hour duration were scheduled between the writer (as field work consultant) and each of the eleven students in the final year class of 1969. These developed primarily out of a concern with field work planning and performance but aspects of the other two

components cited by Finestone entered into the conferences. All interviews between FWC and students were tape-recorded and transcribed in detailed summary form in order to determine empirically what the content and form of the tutorials were. The pattern that emerged approximated Finestone's third conception with elements of the second conception in certain cases.

Initially the tutorials were structured in the following way (derived from the transcript of the initial interview with one of the students):

"The student said that she was confused as to whether this was meant to be a second supervisory session but I assured her that this was not to be so. I said that supervision was specifically related to the actual work done in the field. Although this was a very important part of the curriculum because it involved the translation of knowledge into skill, it was only one part, and the School remained responsible for the integration of the entire curriculum. In the tutorials the students could discuss anything they wished about the curriculum: their feelings about social work, and about the course in general; or any aspects of their field work which perhaps they might feel they could not discuss with their supervisors."

Within this broad structuring, the keynote of the tutorials was the students' freedom to use them as they wished. Implicit in the structuring however was the purpose of communication about the field work placements, as this group of students was each week completing the weekly questionnaires for the research project described in section III of the present study, and each student returned these to the writer during the tutorials where they were checked and discussed if necessary.

12.2 The Placement Process

Before discussing the tutorials further however, it is necessary to describe the process by which students are placed in agencies for field instruction. This is an important part of the FWC's task with students, precedes the tutorials in time and in some cases affects the content of the consultations. Traditionally in social work education"students are generally encouraged in the first instance to express their preference for the type of field work ... to be undertaken, partly because this is seen as a good principle in adult education, partly with a view to economy."[3] Furthermore, as Kent puts it "a great deal of effort has gone in o matching students to supervisors in the past."[4] Margaret Schubert's research project into field instruction in social casework at the University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration described in 1963, revealed however that random assignments of students to field settings was equally satisfactory as individualised assignment and she concluded that it seemed that "some of the painstaking effort that goes into ... placement plans is superfluous. It might be more useful to expend this effort only on the relatively small group with special needs."[5] Nevertheless it is the view of the present writer that the process of placement can be a valuable learning experience for the student if the FWC individualises the process. The student can learn something of the meaning of self-determination as limited by the demands of reality, since student choice can never be the sole criterion to be taken into account. The availability of suitable supervisors limits the range of agencies that can be used, while the circumstances of particular agencies determine the number of students they can accommodate at any one time. Furthermore the needs and choices of all the students in the class must be reconciled.* In the writer's view the use of all these

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* These remarks apply to Universities situated in urban areas where numerous welfare organisations exist. In other areas choice may be severely limited by the lack of community resources.

factors, including student preference, by the FWC in working with the student in the placement process can provide the student with a real and valuable learning experience concerning the exercise of personal choice in life in relation to the limitations imposed by the real world. Rosemary Reynolds makes the point that supervisors should demonstrate by their own attitudes towards students the same casework concepts they stress as important for the student to have towards clients, and the same applies within limits to University staff.[6] As Charlotte Towle has stated: "When an educational system processes its students without individualizing them, it becomes mechanistic and fails to afford a humanizing experience. The student is prepared for a professional life that becomes more treadmill than pilgrimage."[7]

The following is an example of the placement process relating to the 4th Year concurrent placement, as practised by the writer in her capacity as FWC at the University of the Witwatersrand. It is based on a record written by a student at the request of the present writer:

> Having had a satisfying and good experience working at the ABC agency (a general family welfare agency dealing with black people and operating part-time in central Johannesburg and part-time in an outlying area) I was anxious to return and do my final year placement at that agency.
>
> This proved to be impossible on account of my not having transport with which to travel out to the agency on my field work days, when it operated outside of Johannesburg. My feelings were confused. Not being able to go to the agency of my choice was such a disappointment that I felt resentful and unhappy about any other placement. These feelings were heightened by my field work consultant's persistence that the XYZ agency would serve as a good substitute. This agency was also a family welfare agency but had a strong community work approach and was situated in a newly-established community of another sub group of black people.

My second choice was the DEF agency, but my field work consultant informed me that this would be a frustrating experience. She encouraged me to explore a third agency similar to the agency of my first choice, and I went to interview the Director, but again in this case transport proved the greatest drawback.

My field work consultant, knowing of my personal ambition to work in Israel, and therefore to have experience in a field which would benefit me there, and realising that I felt dissatisfied, arranged a consultation session in which we discussed the agency she suggested as suitable, that is, the XYZ agency. At the time this agency had a negative image among the social work students. I also had an irrational fear of and dislike for working with the particular population group concerned. I was resistant to working at the agency, and I put forward the rationalisation that transport difficulties would arise in this case too.

My field work consultant pointed out the following advantages of the placement:

(i) XYZ was a community welfare organization whose primary emphasis at the time was on community organization and group work methods which I preferred to casework. I would therefore receive a generic field instruction experience if I went there.

(ii) The agency operated in a multi-problem community similar to many multi-problem communities in Israel. Working there would enable me to gain experience in working within the framework of a culture different to my own. Furthermore, my irrational feelings about this population group indicated that I needed experience in getting to know them as people.

(iii) The agency had recently employed a new social worker who gave the impression of being dynamic and progressive in social work theory and practice, and would provide good supervision.

(iv) Finally, the agency could provide me with transport.

> It was decided that I should think about the placement and discuss it with my parents. After some thought and discussion, I chose to go to this agency, feeling somewhat of a martyr as no other fourth year student had been placed there before, and I felt that I would not be able to discuss the placement with any other student in my class. The decision-making was difficult at the time, but in retrospect I see that it was a growth point in my professional development, and I shall always be grateful for my field work consultant's guidance in the matter.

12.3 The rationale for Individual Tutorials

Not only should the student be individualised by the FWC as far as possible at the time of placement, but this process should continue during the placement. This is one reason why individual tutorials are important. As Towle stated:

> The demands of professional education cannot be individualized but the learner can and must be for the maximum development of his capacities and for an identity with the profession through which his individuality has not been impaired. This is seen as important not only for creativity but also in order that the student may become a socially intelligent professional person rather than a narrowly professional one.[8]

A second reason for including student advising in the curriculum is the compartmentalisation and specialisation within the present educational system. Because these features exist

> it therefore behoves the responsible educator to consider structures that can be developed within the system to help the student cope with the consequences .... A well-conceived and well-planned student advisement programme is an important and necessary structure within our educational system.[9]

Rosenbloom, Stanton and Caroff in their article "Faculty Advisement - A Proposal for the 1970's" cite yet another reason which is concerned with the impact of depersonalisation, innovation and uncertainty in a rapidly changing world. While this applies perhaps more to the United States, it is becoming increasingly characteristic of the Republic too, where our society is changing and where social work must in time adapt to changing demands. A student in these circumstances, if he is well taught, will soon realise that

> the school has fewer answers for him than ever before and that in order to become a true professional he must learn to remain a learner throughout his career. He naturally responds with anxiety to this state of uncertainty, and the school must provide strong and continuous support to enable him not only to live with this anxiety, but also to make it productive by channeling it into motivation for life-long learning.[10]

Perhaps the most basic reason for the system of individual consultations with students is that social work education involves both intellectual and affective aspects of the person; as Merle puts it, the student is required to bring together "head and heart in the service of others." This is stressful and the school therefore must provide a consultation system which "will help the students master these new and unfamiliar educational requirements."[11]

12.4 The Nature of Consultations with Students

In 1953 Lydia Glover Nolen wrote that in view of the unique combination of qualities accepted by the profession as necessary to qualify a person for social work practice, it was essential that at least one member of the faculty - the consultant - came to know the student as a total person; not simply her production in field work and in class, but how she thinks, feels and performs generally within the total experience of her professional education. Nolan saw the consultant's responsibility as falling into two overlapping

categories; first as counsellor in such matters as programme planning, choice of field placements, long-term plans, employment opportunities and such administrative policies as the student needs to understand for her smooth functioning. "The consultant should transmit the feeling that she is there to encourage, to enable, to let alone, or to take hold as the situation demands." Because of her knowledge of the student, she would be the one to draft letters of reference for the student for purposes of scholarships or post-graduate employment. The second aspect of the consultant's function according to Nolan is to fulfil a teaching role by providing "guidance and tutorial counsel." Guidance in this sense implies

> direction in helping the student sort out and understand his own thinking and feeling and in seeing the different parts of his training in relation to the whole.... The consultant should serve as an educator with whom the student can think out loud, express his thoughts, feelings, doubts, confusions, and even his anger and resentment about what he is experiencing.[12]

12.5 The Relationship between Tutorial Counselling or Consultation, and Supervision

Consultations with a member of the University staff are to be differentiated from supervision with a social worker within the agency. As Sentman put it as early as 1949, the consultant clarifies with the student "that she does not act as an additional case supervisor but instead focuses on co-ordinating for the individual student the knowledge gained in the classroom and the field."[13]

Nevertheless, because both FWC and supervisor are professional social workers performing a teaching role in relation to students there is inevitably some overlap in their function. As Jean Snelling

stated at a seminar on supervision in London in 1955, "the casework teacher in the academic part of the course should be doing exactly the same thing (as the supervisor), albeit with rather different material and in rather different situations."[14] K.M. Lewis, another British writer, pointed out that it is impossible to define clearcut boundaries of function. In her words:

> it is appropriate for both tutor and supervisor to discuss general principles in relation to cases. Differences of opinion can easily be resolved if there is close relationship and easy contact between them. These are the safeguard, rather than a rigid demarcation of function.[15]

What is required to prevent a student playing one mentor off against the other, is contact between consultant and supervisor, communication, co-operation and mutual confidence.

Inevitably, both consultant and supervisor will provide a professional model which influences the student's sense of professional identity. Hence the importance of the relationships they establish with the student and with each other. Finestone makes the important point that this identification "should be a mature and selective one with plenty of leeway for critical thinking and independent action by the student",[16] and both FWC and supervisor should be aware of this.

12.6 Methodology of Tutorials in the Present Study

12.6.1 Timing: At the University of the Witwatersrand School of Social Work in 1969, it was decided, as part of the present study, to introduce regularly-scheduled fortnightly tutorials for all students in the 4th Year of study. It was considered important for the FWC to take the initiative in providing the student with a fixed and regular time for consultations in order to ensure regular communication between FWC and student and to demonstrate that the FWC had, in Nolan's words, "a genuine interest in (the student) individually, and ... the time in which to demonstrate this interest."[17]

Past experience had demonstrated that if the initiative was left to the student, she would always have to make a decision as to whether or not her communications were significant enough to take up the FWC's time, and often she would fail to make use of the service available.

The writer therefore disagrees with Sherman Merle's view that "the student should be the one to initiate the timing and regulate the need for conferences with his advisor" although even he concedes that such a procedure "should not preclude the advisor's holding a minimum number of conferences with the student to get some 'feedback' on how the student is perceiving and reacting to the total educational experience."[18] Clare Morris, a British writer, endorses the value of regular and frequent tutorials while stating that one cannot be dogmatic about their specific timing.[19]

Robert Elmore, of Oxford University, in discussing tutorials in October, 1972, described tutorials as "an unwarranted intrusion into the personal life of the student" if an element of counselling should enter into them.[20] The writer disagrees with this point of view, but in any event, the way in which the tutorials were structured in the present study gave students the freedom to use them as they wished. If they preferred to use them to explore ideas with the tutor, an approach favoured by Elmore, they were free to do so. If they chose to discuss issues of more personal concern, they could exercise their prerogative that way. As Elspeth Latimer has pointed out, when one has an analysis of the functional roles involved in the advising process, "one can begin to assess in what areas the advising process may be appropriate and essential for every student."[21]

12.6.2 Use of Tape Recorder

In 1950, Eileen Blackey challenged the social work

profession to give consideration to the tape recorder as a device for teaching, and Itzin in 1970, Kelley in 1962 and Kohn in 1970, described ways in which this could be done. It was decided to record on tape the tutorials in the present study in order to determine empirically how students used them and how the FWC responded to their expressed needs. The tape recorder was placed on the desk between the FWC and student and discussed with each student at the commencement of the tutorials. Any initial hesitancy about its use passed in most cases. Only one student reported when asked to assess the tutorials at their termination, that the tape recorder had worried her in the beginning. She added: "I don't think it worried me very much after a while." Another student stated explicitly that she had not found it at all inhibiting. She said "Even if you don't forget about it, it doesn't disturb you - it doesn't make a noise. It would be marvellous if you could use it in casework. It would be useful for teaching." In spite of this comment, there were times when the technical demands of the tape recorder did interrupt the interview, but this occurred only rarely, and the advantages for research would therefore seem to outweigh the disadvantages by far.

12.7 The Content of the Tutorials in the Present Study

Each of the 11 students was scheduled to have 12 tutorials, the series to terminate at the completion of the period of field instruction. Only one of these tutorials was missed by a student because she "forgot." In some cases, extra tutorials were provided at the students' request. Ten extra interviews were held with six (54,55 percent) of the eleven student. One such interview was a joint interview between the FWC and two students who were receiving field instruction together at one agency (this was calculated as 2 student interviews). In the case of nine students (81,82 percent) of the group, one extra interview each was required at the end of the year to discuss their evaluation

reports which had come in late from the Agencies. The grand total of tutorials held was therefore 150. Unfortunately, the records of 8 of these interviews were destroyed owing to circumstances beyond the investigator's control, and the following results have been extracted from the transcripts of 142 interviews i.e. 94,67 percent of the total. The mean number of interviews analysed was 12,91.

When a survey was made of the topics discussed in the tutorials, it was found that twelve main topics were discussed, with four others which were grouped under a thirteenth heading, "other." Once this categorisation had been drawn up, the interviews were analysed by the writer in consultation with two social workers of the University of the Witwatersrand in order to ascertain whether or not each topic was mentioned in each of the tutorials. As in the case of the analysis of supervisory sessions described in Section III, therefore, the results do not represent a content analysis. All that is recorded is the discussion of each topic (either once or more frequently) within each tutorial.

The results are recorded in the following table:

TABLE 33: FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF TOPICS DISCUSSED IN CONSULTATIONS* BETWEEN FIELD WORK CONSULTANT AND STUDENTS, UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND - SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK, 1969

Listed in order of frequency of occurrence TOPICS DISCUSSED IN TUTORIALS	Column I N = 11 Number of Students Discussing Topic	Column II N = 11 Percentage of Students Discussing Topic	Column III N = 142 Number of Tutorials in which Topic was Discussed	Column IV N = 142 Percentage of Total No. of Tutorials	Column V N = 699 Percentage of Total No. of Topics Discussed	Column VI Mean no. of Tutorials in which Topic Discussed
1. Aspects of Field Instruction Placement, other than Supervision	11	100%	98	69,01%	14,02%	8,91
2. Supervision and Relationship with Supervisor	11	100%	98	69,01%	14,02%	8,91
3. The Student's self-awareness and professional development	11	100%	96	67,61%	13,73%	8,73
4. Theoretical topics; discussion of literature. Integration of theory and practice	11	100%	81	57,04%	11,59%	7,36
5. Case discussion	11	100%	58	40,85%	8,3%	5,27
6. Student's Curriculum as a whole	11	100%	51	35,92%	7,3%	4,64
7. Dissertation	10	90,91%	45	31,69%	6,44%	4,09
8. Relationships with Staff other than Supervisor at Field Instruction Centre	10	90,91%	44	30,98%	6,29%	4
9. Tutorials	11	100%	39	27,64%	5,58%	3,55
10. Evaluation Reports	11	100%	36	25,35%	5,15%	3,27
11. Relationships with other Students placed at the same field instruction Centre	9	81,82%	29	20,42%	4,15%	2,64
12. Student's Personal Problems	4	36,36%	16	11,27%	2,29%	1,45
13. Other	5	45,45%	8	5,63%	1,14%	0,73
	-	-	699	-	100,00%	-

What was included under the heading of each topic?

1. Aspects of the Field Instruction Placement other than Supervision (Topic One)

This involved the discussion of matters such as the size and composition of the students' caseload, (excluding discussion of specific cases which was classified under another heading), recording requirements, office accommodation at the field instruction centre, transport arrangements for visiting clients, and the University's regulations regarding the time structure and other aspects of the placement. As far as the latter point was concerned, the FWC always stressed the rationale for the structure and the importance of the regulations, but allowed the students some scope for flexibility depending on the circumstances of each individual case. This type of approach would seem to be important with young adult learners. In one instance where a student wished to prolong her placement because in fact she had difficulty in terminating relationships, the FWC helped her to see the real reason for her request and dissuaded her from continuing. In another instance, the interview record read as follows:

> The FWC and student discussed the possibility of the student doing two more interviews with clients beyond the end of the placement. The Supervisor had spoken to the FWC about this as he considered that the interviews were important for the student's learning. The FWC agreed stating that the field work regulations were not rigid, to be adhered to for their own sake, but for the benefit of the student. The student should bear in mind however, that a great deal of time was needed for academic study at the end of the year, and should not use more time for field work than was absolutely necessary.

This extract illustrates also the two-way nature of the communication in the tutorials, both FWC and student communicating to each other details of relevant events each had been involved in outside of the tutorials. This point applied particularly in the case of discussion of the next topic.

2. Supervision and the Relationship with the Supervisor (Topic Two)

This topic, together with the previous one, was discussed in the largest number of tutorials, namely 93 out of 142 or 69,01 percent. Students seemed to have a great need to discuss this topic, both in objective terms and in terms of their feelings about it, and the frequency with which it was discussed seemed to be positively related to the degree of discontentment they experienced in relation to the supervision they were receiving. The following table presents a comparison between the percentage of field work weeks in which students received formal supervision in their field instruction centres and the percentage of tutorials with the field work consultant in which they discussed the supervision and their relationships with their supervisors:

TABLE 34: A COMPARISON BETWEEN THE INCIDENCE OF FORMAL SUPERVISION AND THE INCIDENCE OF DISCUSSION OF SUPERVISION IN CONSULTATIONS

Students listed individually	% of Field Work Weeks in which Formal Supervision Received	% of Consultations in which supervision and relationship with supervisor discussed
Student One placed at Agency F	16%	75,00%
Student Two placed at Agency E	25%	61,54%
Student Three placed at Agency B	42%	83,33%
Student Four placed at Agency B	50%	80,00%
Student Five placed at Agency C	68%	93,33%
Student Six placed at Agency C	78%	92,86%
Student Seven placed at Agency D	83%	50,00%
Student Eight placed at Agency A	89%	[illegible],54%
Student Nine placed at Agency A	92%	76,92%
Student Ten placed at Agency D	92%	33,33%
Student Eleven placed at Agency E	92%	50,00%

It is interesting to note that with one exception (Student number nine) those students who received formal supervision in more than 80 percent of field work weeks discussed their supervision in less than 55 percent of tutorials. Those who received formal supervision in less than 80 percent of field work weeks discussed supervision (with one exception, Student Two) in 75 percent or

more of tutorials. The results of Student Nine indicate that the degree of satisfaction occasioned by a placement depends on intangible relationship factors as well as objective factors in the placement. Student Nine had formal supervision in 92 percent of field work weeks but the placement was complicated by a personality incompatibility between supervisor and student, acknowledged by both, which resulted in inadequate and confused communication. A similar situation applied at Agency C where both students Five and Six shared a supervisor who seemed to be unable to meet their emotional needs and perceived the students as a threat. In circumstances such as these, the students used the tutorials to air their frustrations and to discuss with the FWC ways of dealing with the situation in order to derive the maximum benefit from what the supervisors could offer.

Because of the complexities of feeling experienced by students during professional education, described by the Functional writers and others, and alluded to in the previous chapter, in most cases the FWC merely listened to and discussed these delicate issues of relationship in the tutorials and encouraged the student to deal with them herself within her relationship with the Supervisor. There were times however when the FWC did intervene, for example, visiting the Agency and encouraging the supervisor to set aside a fixed time for formal supervision whenever possible. Such action requires tactful and discreet handling but can improve the situation as the following extract illustrates:

> The student thanked the FWC for going to see the Supervisor saying that it had helped a great deal. The FWC asked in what particular ways, and she said that now the students each had a half-hour with the supervisor at a set time each week and this did help. Supervisor and student discussed the reports the student had written and the supervisor told the student to continue writing reports bringing in the social work techniques she used. The thinking involved in writing the reports in this way was very helpful according to the student, who added that "things were very nice and I'm quite thrilled about it."

The FWC needs to exercise judgement in deciding when to intervene and when to leave the situation for supervisor and student to handle in their own way. The success of any placement depends on the interaction of the personalities of student and supervisor for which each bears some responsibility, as well as on the objective features of the supervision and the field instruction in general. One student remarked:

> I found my supervision frustrating but I realise that it was a two-way thing in which possibly we were both to blame. There were times when I just wasn't prepared to talk. On the other hand the supervisor didn't help me with my feelings of discomfort and lack of confidence. She also didn't help me with the dynamics of interviews. She just read my case reports and said "All right, go ahead."

Student Two who had a poor placement in terms of the incidence of formal supervision (25 percent of field work weeks) and several other criteria, discussed her supervision in only 61,54 percent of tutorials. The reason she gave was that she felt a sense of disloyalty in doing so. The FWC accepted this but later interpreted to the student that her own guilt about certain events in her placement was unrealistic and seemed related to the student's fear of expressing aggression.

Fred Berl has stated that "tension is inherent in he supervisory task." Situational factors affect it as well as relationship factors, that is, the elements in the interaction between supervisor and learner which foster or impede learning. As a general guideline it could be said that the FWC can in certain circumstances contact the supervisor in connection with situational factors reported by the student, but in general she should communicate with supervisors about these issues in the non-specific setting of seminars and meetings. The FWC's role is <u>not</u> to act as a supervisor to the supervisor and she must

avoid projecting this image. With regard to relationship factors, Berl states that "the major problem in supervisory practice is the need for the participants to find and maintain a balance between the tension-provoking elements inherent in the process"[22] (writer's emphasis) and the FWC's role in this connection is therefore generally to enable the student to cope with the relationship without intervention from the FWC.

3. Self-awareness and Professional Development (Topic Three)

The importance of self-awareness in social work practice and the difficulties associated with developing this during the course of professional education for social work, have been described by many writers. Of the Functional writers, Jessie Taft wrote eloquently in her article "A Conception of the Growth Process underlying Social Casework Practice" of the "deep pain of realizing the 'not knowing' and 'not being able'."[23] Florence Hollis has also described the periods of anxiety which arise and the "characteristic periods of discouragement such as the one that has become known as 'the second semester slump'." This occurs once the student "has learned a great deal about how casework 'ought' to be done but he is definitely clumsy about actually doing it. He has temporarily lost his spontaneous way of relating to people and has not yet achieved the new professional way of relating that will eventually incorporate his spontaneous ways also."[24]

This topic should feature prominently in supervision, as discussed previously, but it also falls within the province of consultations with the FWC. She has experience of many students and is therefore better acquainted with the phenomenon of growth in professional education and she can communicate this knowledge to students in tutorials. As Hollis writes: "Just to know

that there is a slump and that his fellows are feeling it too and that one does survive and become a caseworker after all is anxiety relieving."[25] Secondly, this process does not relate only to events in field work. Students can grapple with their feelings towards social and moral issues, such as abortion, in relation to theoretical principles such as acceptance, even though this may not feature in any of the cases they are dealing with in field work. This particular issue arose in the case of two students in the present study who raised it in consultations with the FWC, not purely as a theoretical issue but in terms of the development of their individual attitudes towards it, both personal and professional.

Included under this topic heading were discussions of the student's feelings, reactions and personal qualities as these affected professional performance, as well as the student's professional plans for the future. The topic was discussed by all students in the study and featured in 67,61 percent of the 142 tutorials analysed. Kotkin's undergraduate study of the same group of students confirmed that they needed and wanted support in their "professional growth" and often experienced strong feelings which they needed to resolve in discussion, while another undergraduate dissertation by Beer on a related subject in 1972 produced similar results.

The types of feelings students experience have been described by many writers. Kent describes a period of doubt not only about the student's own contribution to social work but also about the usefulness of social work itself;[26] Selby, in a very useful contribution, describes a number of problems which can be encountered, such as the student clinging dogmatically to old standards and beliefs perhaps derived from religion, the student's fear of assuming responsibility or fear of forming close

relationships.[27] Walsh describes the problems of controlled intellectualism in students who tend to over-theorise, and the special difficulties of older students returning to study.[28] Another issue which could arise is the relationship between over-identification with clients and detachment, in other words, the development of the "right" degree of involvement with clients.

Yelaja describes the advisor's responsibilities in a situation where the student is not meeting expectations or there is a serious question about his continuing in the School.[29] In the writer's experience, students who have failed subjects other than social work and have to repeat a year, often require encouragement and support from the FWC, who should be prepared to meet these needs.

Some of the feelings described by students in the present study are illustrated in the following extracts:

> *The student said that she had felt utterly depressed at the agency last week and found it very painful to have her work criticised during supervisory sessions. She realised criticism was necessary, but at the moment she was so overwhelmed by feelings of inadequacy she wondered whether she was in the right profession.
>
> *The student reported that she felt much happier and had overcome her doubts about social work. Both the tutorials and supervision had helped. When she looked back she realised how much she had changed. She felt much more confident in the whole situation.
>
> *I've had an excellent relationship with my supervisor but I was hurt and upset by the brutal way he told me he thought I couldn't use myself in a more assertive way in the casework situation.
>
> *The student laughed as she described her swings in mood. Last week she felt as though she wanted to leave the course. Now she was feeling fin[illegible].

It is particularly important to discuss feelings at the termination of the placement as the year and the course draw to a close soon afterwards. One student remarked that her supervisor was absent on her last day and there was no formal leave-taking. This left her feeling "peculiar." Another student described her feelings this way:

> It's the end of the year and everything is ready to end. It wish it was all over. It's difficult in some ways but I'm also glad it's ending. I have two feelings about leaving University. I'll miss my friends but after four years I've had enough. I want to get on and do something else. The 4th Year has been a hard year emotionally. I feel that it's ending and I'm glad. I'm ready to leave. In other ways I'm sorry to be leaving University. It'll be a big change. My whole life will turn upside down.

The FWC's role is to listen, accept, clarify and interpret the difficulties encountered in the process of professional development and the difficulties arising from the student's individual approach to her work. As Clare Morris states:

> Although the aim of these tutorials is at all times educational, in view of the reasons for the support and the nature of the support, the tutor may be involved in giving the student insight into his motives and actions.[30]

In Lola Selby's words:

> This kind of self-discovery, within the context of learning how to become a social worker, may have therapeutic value for the student concerned, but it is basically an educational rather than a treatment experience. In the educational setting the student invests himself for the purpose of learning how to use himself in a professional capacity to help others. That he will grow personally as well as professionally during the process is inevitable, since the whole self is involved.[31]

This leads logically on to a consideration of

4. Students' personal problems (Topic Twelve)

This was discussed in the case of four students (36,36 percent of the group) and featured in only 16 or 11,27 percent of the 142 tutorials analysed.

It cannot be emphasised strongly enough that in general the FWC must act as an educationist and not as a therapist. The student has come to the school to learn a profession and not to seek help with her personal problems and will undoubtedly resent probing into her family background or personal circumstances. As a general rule the FWC must be concerned with the students' present reactions and behaviour as they affect her performance in her work and not with the sources of such reactions and behaviour. As Hester wrote in 1951 in relation to supervision, and it is equally applicable to the FWC's approach to students:

> The supervisor's interest is not in what makes up the feeling, but in helping the worker see that it is affecting his ability to work... (He) does not attempt to get into the origins of the feelings or ask the "why" of them.[32]

In the words of Bloom and Herman:

> The supervisor is not dealing with a patient in distress who has sought help, but is dealing with a person whose professional life is devoted to helping others to solve their emotional problems, a person whose role implies that he leads a reasonably mature emotional life,[33]

while Frances Scherz makes another relevant point:

> It is the supervisor's responsibility to use supervision in the interests of facilitating service and to assess the individual only in relation to ... his job responsibility and the agency's (or school's - writer's addition) requirements.[34]

Priscilla Young, Dorothy Pettes and Bessie Kent[35] emphasise this point also. The emphasis must be on the students' feelings and attitudes as these affect her work, and not on her personality dynamics as such or the origins of such dynamics.

Nevertheless, certain exceptions do arise. At times, the dividing line is crossed in the natural course of discussion and the FWC should be prepared to do this provided it is done with awareness and with certain safeguards. In the case of one student in the present study, the question of independence versus dependency needs in relation to her placement arose in the third tutorial of the year. The student felt very disturbed by the discussion and at the next tutorial informed the FWC that she had consulted the student counsellor* about it and had resolved her anxiety. The FWC accepted this and the matter rested there until towards the end of the year when FWC and student discussed the termination of the placement, the tutorials and the course. The question of the student's independent attitude arose again. She spoke almost with bitterness and resignation of an event in her past which had forced her to become independent at a relatively early age. It was clear that she had unresolved conflicts in relation to dependency, but she was now aware of them and the FWC did not pursue them. Undoubtedly her work would have improved had she resolved these conflicts, but as an independent adult she would have to pursue her difficulties herself outside of the School structure should she choose to do so.

In another instance the FWC took a more active therapeutic role. The student concerned developed symptoms early in the year

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* The University of the Witwater and has a Student Counselling Service which can be consulted by all students experiencing personal difficulties of various types.

which at mid-year were diagnosed as temporal lobe epilepsy. The symptoms had affected the student's ability to work and she had described them to the FWC in tutorials. The diagnosis, and the hospitalisation which preceded it together with the medication which followed it, also caused the student great anxiety. At first she discussed these in relation to how they had interfered with her performance in the field and at the School but the transition from this type of discussion to a more personal discussion was inevitable and in this case desirable. It dealt with the student's tendency to set high standards for herself and how the diagnosis had affected her self-image. The student herself described the features of her family dynamics which had contributed to her patterns of behaviour and present reactions. The FWC suggested that she consider consulting the student counsellor but the student did not wish to establish a new relationship and in three or four tutorials held at weekly intervals, she passed through the crisis and her equilibrium was restored.

As Nolan wrote:

> To give some help and support in relation to personal problems that are standing in the way of learning does not seem to fall outside the consultant's role as teacher, and this part of the consultant's responsibility calls for skill, judgement and discrimination. [36]

Nolan went on to state that the consultant should seldom take the initiative in suggesting psychiatric help to a student, but the writer disagrees and many published views also support the opposite approach, for example Virginia Robinson,[37] Priscilla Young,[38] and Lola Selby.[39] Sherman Merle's words published in 1969, sum up this approach aptly:

> In instances where a student's personal emotional-psychological organization may be interfering with his making adequate use of the educational experience, he should be advised of his need for professional help and be aided in securing this help outside of the School of Social Work. In many instances, university services may be available to him, and he should be informed of these. In other instances, whatever community resources that are available should be made known to the Student.[40]

In cases where the FWC considers that the student could benefit from therapy yet the student's present performance is not markedly below the acceptable level, she should raise the issue for the student's consideration without openly advising her to seek such help. The decision is a far-reaching one, and a very personal one, and the FWC should respect the student's right to make her own decision in the matter.

It will be remembered from the diagram of the field work system (Figure 3, page 37) that structural authority is inherent in the relationship between the FWC and the student. It could be postulated that this could inhibit a student in exposing herself emotionally to the FWC. However, in practice it appeared that this was not an impediment to free and open communication between student and FWC. Students were prepared to discuss their feelings about their placements, the course and themselves. Only one student alluded to this aspect when giving her views on the system of having tutorials. She stated:

> At first I resented the tutorials to some extent and indirectly brought it up by discussing your role as lecturer and then your seeing us in this capacity as well. Later I found them very satisfactory and valuable, but I still have my doubts about the idea of a person on the lecturing staff taking these, although there are also certain advantages in that arrangement. The person taking the tutorials must be able to compartmentalise. This is possible, but I don't know if everybody could do it.

5. Theoretical Topics; Discussion of Literature: Integration of Theory and Practice (Topic Four)

In this connection the words of Rosenbloom, Stanton and Caroff are apposite:

> Field instruction staff consists of agency practitioners. Their task is the education of the student in the areas of their greatest competence - their own practice.... The expectation of the school has been that agency field instruction staff become educators of much more content than their own professional speciality assures.... It is time to realize that the school's expectation of an outside agency as a provider of this primary educational function is quite unrealistic....As long as schools continue to have community agencies as the primary providers of the practice experience for the student, the school - now more than ever - must offer appropriate linkages to ensure that the integration process for the student extends beyond what a specific agency can offer.[41]

The results of the present study relating to the content of supervisory sessions and reported in Chapter 8 confirm these authors' further statement that "the expectation of many schools that the student will be systematically taught how to use theoretical conceptions in understanding the live problem situation and vice versa is rarely met."[42] This points to the need to supplement the supervisor's contribution in this regard in individual tutorials.

As Lydia Glover Nolan wrote:

> This attempt to help the student integrate theory and practice falls more within the consultant's responsibility than that of the supervisor, since the consultant is more closely in touch with total curriculum content, although the supervisor can assist in this process whenever the opportunity presents itself.[43]

Ruth Gilpin in her work "Theory and Practice as a Single Reality: an essay in Social Work Education" assigns to the adviser a central role in uniting the the two halves of professional education, school and agency. Her thesis is that the adviser fuses school and agency within herself and thereby becomes for the moment "the school-agency, the single reality." In Gilpin's words: "Here, then, is the theory to provide the resolution of the duality that the student meets in academic and experiential learning and a solution to his need for singleness in his external reality."[44]

In Gilpin's view, the adviser is therefore responsible, in an ultimate sense, for helping the student achieve integration between theory and practice.

While this approach may be somewhat extreme, the FWC undoubtedly has an important role in this regard. In the present study, this topic arose in the tutorials of all 11 students and featured in 57 percent of all tutorials studied. Examples of theoretical topics which were discussed are the following: authority in social work, confidentiality and the law, Carl Rogers' therapeutic approach, existentialism in psychiatry, work with multi-problem families, Jessie Taft's approach to the student's professional growth, and others.

One student who had received excellent supervision summed up the relationship between supervision and consultation as follows:

> My supervision became far deeper as the year went on, probing one's personality in relation to one's reactions in casework and just generally dealing with casework and community organization situations. In the tutorials I felt more able to go back to the theory in relation to myself. In supervision it was more practice in relation to myself. This is where

> they complemented each other so well. And I think latterly I've also been able to bring in more of my own personality and difficulties, as well as theory, in relation to it all.

6. Case discussion (Topic Five)

All eleven students discussed cases from their field work in the tutorials. This topic featured in 40,85 percent of interviews analysed. At first glance this might appear to encroach on the supervisor's territory and consequently cause confusion for the student. However, if properly structured, this is not the case. The FWC must make it clear and explicit that it is the supervisor who has ultimate responsibility for the student's work with clients in the agency. However as Rosenbloom et al point out, "it is important for the student to learn that there are many approaches to the helping process."[45] She must learn too that with the state of present knowledge there are often no definite answers to problem situations and part of professional development entails learning to exercise judgement when presented with different possibilities. As Kent points out,

> even when the tutor and supervisor have adopted similar theoretical concepts on which to base their practice, there will be some differences of selection and interpretation: such differences are not necessarily destructive, since the student can use variations in perspective to enrich his own understanding.... The student can experiment, choose, and use, and thus develop his capacity for independent assessment.[46]

As one student said at the end of a tutorial she had requested in order to discuss a case: "Thank you. Now that I have the views both of my supervisor and yourself, I will think about the matter and consider what the best course of action will be." According to Rosemary Reynolds "experience has proved that the soundest professional development takes place when the student is

encouraged to make his own decisions after the supervisor has clarified his thinking as best she can"[47] and this development can be enriched by the FWC's contribution provided it is given within an appropriate structure.

7. Student's Curriculum as a Whole (Topic Six)

This topic involved a discussion of the student's experience in other subject courses, and in other aspects of the social work course, for example in class or in the group discussions held with a clinical psychologist,* and discussion of the time allotted to various parts of the curriculum and how this should be re-allocated. In fact, partly as a result of the feedback from students, certain aspects of the curriculum were altered in subsequent years.

The student is a social work student but also attends courses outside of the School. She is however a unitary entity, and responds as such to all parts of the curriculum. She has a need to integrate all aspects of her academic and field experience and the FWC can help her to do this. This topic was raised by all 11 students in the present study and featured in 51 or 35,92 percent of the tutorials. Students discussed experiences they had had in Psychology lectures, in Psychiatry lectures and demonstrations, and what was particularly important for FWC and student, events in the Case Study Seminar, a social work sub-course led by the FWC. It was the structure of the course at the time that the FWC was also the lecturer who took the class as a whole for the study of advanced casework primarily through the case study method. She was therefore able to observe the student's performance in class and integrate her impressions into the discussions in the tutorials.

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* Up to 1972 members of the Social Work IV class attended a weekly discussion or group counselling session with a clinical psychologist.

The cases used in the class teaching were cases from the students' own field practice. This method is used by teachers of the Functional School, such as Goldie Basch Faith[48] but is in contrast to the method favoured by Charlotte Towle.[49] Students can learn from a pre-selected course of case records secured from experienced practitioners but there are many advantages in teaching from the live material presented by students. It has a relevance and a significance beyond that of prepared records, and has great utility in assisting the FWC to aid the student in integrating theory and practice. There would seem to be many advantages in FWC's also acting as class teachers wherever possible. As stated earlier, this can complicate the FWC-student relationship by increasing the structural authority elements in the relationship, as the FWC in her capacity as lecturer then marks one of the students' examination papers at the end of the year. However, in the writer's experience, these aspects of the role can be separated, and the one need not materially affect the other if the situation is handled with awareness.

8. The Dissertation (Topic Seven)

The inclusion of this topic in tutorials would seem to encroach on the preserve of the dissertation supervisor, another member of the School's staff, but as in the instance of case discussion, this is not necessarily so.

Annette Garrett in describing the system at Smith College wrote that "the faculty supervisor assumes no direct responsibility for the student's thesis, but the student may bring it into discussion just as she does any other important educational experience."[50]

Lola Selby sheds light on why the student needs to discuss the dissertation in personal as well as academic terms:

> In the school curriculum there seem to be two areas that stimulate the most intense personal involvement on the part of the social work student, because these two areas implicitly demand direct use of self in a creative way. In field work and in the research project all the emotional elements of the student's learning come into play.[51]

Finestone also alludes to the student as "an anxiously inquiring person, who expends a good deal of emotional energy searching for a project topic."[52]

The student will often want to present a facade of competence to the dissertation supervisor and not expose her anxieties about dealing with the demands imposed by the project. She can benefit by taking these anxieties to another staff member. The FWC can help her by her appreciation of the difficulties experienced by many students in the process of formulating and conducting a research study. If the study is located at the student's field instruction centre, the student's relationship with the supervisor or other staff members will affect the conduct of the dissertation and vice versa, and the student may wish to discuss this with the FWC. As with case discussion, the FWC must make it clear that the student must discuss her ideas with her dissertation supervisor prior to taking any decisions, but again within this framework, the FWC might express her views on the subject as a stimulus to the student's thought and should, if she is able, recommend relevant reading matter which might assist the student in her project.

In the present study, ten out of the eleven students or 90,91 percent of the students discussed their dissertations with the FWC. This topic arose in 31,69 percent of all consultations analysed.

9. Relationships with Staff Other than the Supervisor at the Field Instruction Centre (Topic Eight)

The student is placed for field instruction with an agency, not with an individual social worker and therefore in susceptible to influences from the other members of staff at the agency besides the supervisor. Ten of the eleven students in the present study (90.01 percent) discussed this topic in 44 or 30,98 percent of the tutorials. The following are examples of the types of situations described by the students: the appointment of an alternative supervisor while the assigned supervisor was on leave; differences of opinion between these two supervisors; contacts with social workers at the field level from whose caseloads the student's cases had been drawn; complications with clients which arose through the ignorance of staff members of the student's presence in the agency; social relationships with and between staff members. Two students for example reported how disconcerted they felt when the executive director of the agency ignored their presence, did not communicate directly with them even when face-to-face with them and always passed on messages, including praise for their work, through the supervisor. By contrast, they found the office secretary of the agency warm, friendly and supportive, and this was comforting. Another student reported on a clash with staff members because, owing to shortage of office accommodation, the students were working in the room used by staff for recreational purposes in the lunch-hour. In this instance, the FWC discussed with the student the dynamics of the situation and possible ways in which the student could deal with it.

10. Related to the above topic was the question of the Student's relationship with other Students receiving field instruction at the agency concurrently (Topic Eleven)

Reference was made in Chapter Seven (page 185)

to the desirability of placing at least two students together at a field instruction centre but complications do arise as was demonstrated in the present study. All the students placed in pairs, plus one student who was placed singly, raised this issue for discussion with the FWC, making a total of 9 students or 81,82 percent of the group. The topic featured in 29 or 20,42 percent of the tutorials analysed. Students inevitably tended to compare themselves with their class-mates placed at the same agency and found this uncomfortable so that they deeply resented the supervisor drawing comparisons between them as this accentuated their own negative feelings. The FWC encouraged them to try and separate their own individual learning needs and performance from that of their class-mates. They should, of course, communicate about their supervision but perhaps not in too-detailed a fashion as this held the danger of feeding the rivalry. Some students reported that they were irritated by certain traits manifested by their classmates. In one agency, complications arose in social relationships since the one student was married while the other was not, and neither was the supervisor who was fairly close to the students in age. The FWC held a joint interview with these two students in order to clarify the difficulties in relationships at the agency. The students had each felt that the supervisor identified more strongly with the other. In the joint tutorial it emerged that the Supervisor tended to identify professionally with the married student (she praised her ability to her classmate) while she tended to identify socially with the unmarried student so that her classmate felt excluded. The insight gained by the students in the joint interview with the FWC enabled them to manage the relationships in the agency more constructively. In an agency where one student was performing at a very much higher level than the other, both students experienced discomfort which they raised for discussion in tutorials. Students placed

together at an agency usually had an ambivalent relationship with each other; as well as manifesting negative aspects, it was usually also a close relationship featuring mutual support.

11. Evaluation Reports: (Topic Ten)*

Discussion of evaluation reports occurred in the tutorials of 100 percent of students, but only in 25,35 percent of tutorials because of the time structure associated with the request for such reports from the School and their submission by the Agencies. At the commencement of the series of consultations the FWC would discuss the evaluation report from the Vacation placement in another agency. In the middle of the year, supervisors were asked to submit interim evaluation reports and at the end of the year the final evaluation report was submitted. The School's policy was to encourage Supervisors to discuss the report fully with students and show them the final draft, but whether this was done or not, the FWC produced the report in tutorials for the student's perusal, and a full discussion followed. In the writer's view if evaluation is to serve as a learning experience for the student, the student should be aware of the content of her assessment. The FWC who has the details of the student's total performance, both in previous placements and academically, is in a strategic position to discuss the student's total progress with her. As Nolan wrote: "A discussion of periodic evaluations affords an excellent opportunity for sharing a student's thinking and feeling about his field work as well as his overall performance."[53]

In the present study, the FWC's approach would be for her and the student each to read the report, and then to encourage

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* Topic Nine, the Tutorials, will be discussed last as it involved an evaluation of the system of tutorial counselling

the student to comment on any significant points while she would do likewise. She would be frank in recognising difficulties but would encourage the student to recognise the positive aspects and to see the negative aspects in the correct perspective. This is an important feature of the FWC's responsibilities.

12. Other i.e. Topics which could not be classified, (Topic Thirteen)

Topics which could not be classified under any of the above-mentioned categories occurred in 5,63 percent of tutorials and were raised by five students, or 45,45 percent of the subjects. These topics included discussion of student politics, relationships within the class as a whole and in one instance, the specific and unique ramifications of the relationship between the agency where the student was placed and the University.

13. Discussion of the Tutorials Themselves (Topic Nine)

Nolan wrote that "a free flow of communication is more likely to be possible between student and consultant if there is adequate interpretation to the student on the part of the faculty at the beginning of the year of the role of the consultant."[54] The FWC in the present study attempted to do this, and to re-interpret from time to time if appropriate, that the students could use the tutorials as they wished, or not use them if they preferred to remain silent. In the case of only one tutorial, the student preferred not to communicate and the tutorial ended after ten minutes; the FWC respected the student's right to decide for herself. At the end of the series of tutorials the FWC asked all students to evaluate the tutorials. In this case it was for research purposes but evaluative feedback should always feature in an enterprise of this kind to ensure that the students' needs are being met.

There was only one student who expressed the view that the tutorials did not serve much purpose. She felt they were too brief and too far apart and therefore of little assistance in relieving the difficulties she encountered in her placement. She said "I could probably have managed without them. It would have just made things a little bit harder. I'm sure I would have managed. I would have just felt more frustrated and more isolated than I did. The tutorials did contribute something." However even she acknowledged that in the tutorials the student could "let out what happened in the Agency" and in fact all eleven students in the group expressed a similar view viz. that the tutorials enabled them to ventilate their feelings about their placements, their supervisors and their cases. As one student said, "the tutorials are an avenue to express frustration and there's frustration in every agency even where the supervision is ideal." Experience with the group confirmed this opinion. All but one student referred to the need to gain relief from frustration, even a student who described her supervision as "first class. I couldn't have wished for better. I could never have developed to the extent I have without my supervisor's help."

Five of the students (45,45 percent) specifically mentioned their need for help with cases from the tutorials; two (18,18 percent) mentioned the opportunity afforded by the tutorials to discuss moral and other general issues in social work and one mentioned the help she had received with personal difficulties. Two students (18,18 percent) mentioned that students needed to be able to express their frustrations about the curriculum as a whole as well as frustrations with field work. Four students (36,36 percent) specifically commented on how the tutorials and supervisory sessions complemented each other. One added that though there might sometimes be some overlap, the FWC might tend more to see things from the student's point of view.

Seven students (63,64 percent) acknowledged that their feelings towards the tutorials had fluctuated during the year. At times they were not clear about their purpose; at times they resented coming. All but one of these however expressed unreserved support for the system of consultations by the time the series was completed. The one exception said that she remained puzzled as to their purpose though she had received support from them. These results therefore confirm Hypothesis V as formulated in Chapter 1.

One student was particularly articulate in assessing the tutorials in an overall way, and her comments are reproduced as follows:

> I think that the tutorials are essential. I think their purpose is related to each student as he experiences the placement, because it depends on the kind of supervision you get as well. But I see the general purpose as being a liaison between agency and school, and I think this is the only real point of contact between the two. The tutorials are the only place where you can honestly bring your problems from your agency and relate them to your school curriculum. And I think that this can be done in areas where the Supervisor isn't able to help. You (the FWC) could help me in perhaps relating areas of the curriculum to what I was doing in my field work because you are more in touch with both. And then I found them extremely helpful just in relieving the frustrations I felt at my agency, and in being able to get some kind of a perspective. When you're in an agency, and you become involved with the work, and you try to relate it to your theory and it doesn't quite fit, - I just got completely confused. It's a relief if the school backs at least some of your feelings, and you know where you're on the right road and where you're on the wrong road, otherwise it can be completely bewildering. And that was how I saw the function of these tutorials.

> Having a period where I knew I would be able to come and discuss things meant that I could cope with them much better during the two intervening weeks. I knew that at least there would be an opportunity to bring them out somehow, and I could manage in the meantime. I suppose they could have been longer and more frequent, but that always applies.

Column 5 of Table 33, page 384 provides the percentages which each topic represented of the total number of topics discussed. Certain of the topics relate exclusively to field work, viz Topics 1, 2, 5, 8, 10 and 11. The combined percentages of these topics is 51,93 percent. This indicates that the field work component was the major one in the tutorials studied. In Finestone's terms mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the general educational advising component and academic programme planning, together made up less than half the topics raised in the tutorials. In other words, the role of the field work consultant with students is primarily to aid them integrate their field work into their total educational experience.

In concluding this section on the role of the FWC with students a quotation from Bessie Kent is apposite:

> Because students involve us in their learning experience, we find ourselves also learning .... Continued experience of student training deepens and complicates our understanding and we feel ourselves to be more complete as human beings - as well as more competent as social work educators. The infinite variations of student personalities, the constantly shifting intermixture of potential, aspirations, pleasures, and tribulations which students bring form a colourful kaleidoscope which continues to fascinate; irritations and frustrations there may well be, but overriding these is the lasting pleasure found in working with others to make a shared contribution to the future well-being of society.[55]

NOTES TO CHAPTER 12

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CHAPTER 13

THE ROLE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE FIELD WORK CONSULTANT AND THE AGENCY AND UNIVERSITY SUB-SYSTEMS

The field work triad (Elements A, X, L in Diagram 3, Chapter 2) is the heart of the field work system as conceptualised in Chapter 2. However, in terms of systems theory all the elements are interrelated. The goal of satisfactory field instruction can be achieved only if the inter-relationships of all the elements are considered. What should the FWC's role involve in relation to the Agency sub-system (W, X, X_1, Y and Z) and the University sub-system (A,B,C,D)?

13.1 The FWC's Role in relation to the Agency

Field instruction and supervision of the desired quality is not only the result of the efforts of the individual supervisor but is the outcome of an administrative process within the agency. The policy making body of the field instruction centre should create the climate conducive to effective field instruction and all the staff should facilitate the process. As. M. Elizabeth Edwards states:

> In the agency, the tutor works mainly with and through the supervisor, but he also needs to be in touch with other members of the agency's staff, its chief executive, and its managing or employing committee, if he is to achieve his aim of enabling students to make the best possible use of their opportunities to learn when in their fieldwork placements.[1]

The initial approach from the School to the Agency should be through the Chief Executive and the selection of the Supervisor should be a matter of joint concern of the FWC, as School representative, and the Agency Executive. This channel of communication appears in the model of the field work system as the direct line A → Y. If the School has a declared policy

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