



## Book Review

**Robert R. Dies and K. Roy MacKenzie, Editors.** *Advances in Group Psychotherapy: Integrating Research and Practice.* (American Group Psychotherapy Association Monograph Series, No. 1.), New York: International Universities Press, Inc., 1983. 226pp. \$22.50.

The American Group Psychotherapy Association is publishing a new monographic series. This first volume is a book of readings designed to help group psychotherapy practitioners and researchers to recognize their common concerns and interests. The editors accurately note that group researchers and clinicians have carried out their activities largely in isolation from each other and identify a need for more collaborative efforts between the two. Throughout the nine chapters, a conscientious effort is made both to develop the research base for the topics discussed and to lay out the implications for practitioners. The task is undertaken by the inclusion of three kinds of articles: those that are primarily theoretical, those concerned with methodology, and finally reviews of research.

The theoretical articles cover a variety of topics, including group leadership, developmental processes, social roles, and norm regulation. In the opening chapter, Dies analyzes the reasons for the traditional standoff between group researchers and practitioners, concluding that the presumed differences of interest between the two groups have been exaggerated. Dies devotes considerable attention to the need for precise instrumentation in group research and gives recommendations for instrument development and usage. His chapter provides an encouraging beginning to a well perceived need to bring group research and practice closer together. Two chapters present models of group development.

In presenting their six-stage model (Chapter 4), MacKenzie and Livesley discuss the group as a living social system in which individual personalities, leader behaviors, and context all interact to determine how the group develops through its various stages. The authors go on in the next chapter to discuss the relationship between the social roles characteristically found in the group and the personalities of the individual group members. They do a very good job of relating these social roles to the developmental model presented in Chapter 4, leaving the reader with a clear sense of the complex interaction of individual dynamics in defining the group's progress.

Another group developmental model is presented by Beck et al. (Chapter 6) and stems from work by her Chicago area research team. Their research is inclusively concerned with defining stage boundaries, particularly as this process is facilitated by four leader roles assumed by various group members. The authors are likely correct in stating that much of a group's activity can be summarized in relation to the developmental stages of the group and these leader roles. The chapter is, however, somewhat diffuse in focus.

The last theoretical chapter in the book is Bond's work on norm regulation. He points out the traditional difficulties in defining norms either as the combined result of member expectations of what is likely to occur, or as member evaluations of what should or should not occur in the group. In an area which has been subject to considerable ambiguity, his model is quite useful in helping researchers and clinicians to define and quantify group norms.

In addition to the theoretical chapters, two chapters are concerned with research methodology. Coche's discussion of the CORE Battery and other instruments is a good attempt at helping clinicians to incorporate research into their clinical work. The chapter's main contribution is in encouraging the development and use of a standardized battery of instruments in a field which currently has almost as many instruments as researchers.

MacKenzie then presents the Group Climate Questionnaire (Chapter 7) which measures interaction among group members. By showing the applicability of the instrument both to Yalom's curative factors and to the influence of social environments on individual behavior, MacKenzie describes this as a very viable research tool. While I have seen no other research using the instrument, it is clearly applicable in many kinds of groups and shows great promise for further research application.

A final contribution of the book is the inclusion of two chapters which review the research published to date. Chapter 2, written by Dies, reviews 95 studies which set the empirical foundations in group leadership during

the 1970s. The review is comprehensive and includes a number of well-balanced conclusions by Dies, who has published fairly extensively in this area. He ends with a helpful model for leadership in short term therapy groups, based on his review and on clinical experience.

In a second review chapter (Chapter 9), Lieberman both reviews the research on change mechanisms and reports on the findings of his own recent research. His promotion of groups that provide a wide range of learning experiences should free clinicians from the press to discover the perfect group format. Furthermore, his suggestion that group researchers find what they look for may help them to expand their sights and to be more open to new perspectives in their work.

Overall, the book achieves its large and really difficult goal of pointing to the need for researchers and practitioners to work together. It also facilitates this coming together by including useful accounts of research in various settings and discussions of theory and methods as they apply to the clinical setting.

The book touches on many different topics and is therefore unable to pursue any one of them in great depth. This is more a critique of the current state of the field as a whole, however, than of this book in particular. At this time, group therapy research includes many individual projects with very little cross-fertilization of ideas or methods, a problem which is of explicit and appropriate concern to the book's editors. This book does assault that mountain in a way which is both reflective of a significant amount of thought and research and at the same time concrete with regard to clinical work. Perhaps its greatest strength is in the presentation of a comprehensive package for researchers and clinicians. It does this by providing operational definitions, making specific recommendations for group research and practice, and also presenting the instrumentation to carry out these recommendations. As it was intended to be, the book should prove useful to researchers and clinicians alike.

### **Rex Stockton**

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Dr. Stockton is active in group work and has directed a therapeutic small group research project. He can be reached at the department of counseling and educational psychology in the H. L. Smith Center for Research, 2805 E. 10th Street, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana 47405.

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