Review of *Children in Groups: A Social Work Perspective.* Marian Fatout. Reviewed by Charles Garvin, University of Michigan.

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Recommended Citation

a process in which different cultural spiritual traditions are inte-
grated to create a new, commonly accepted, tradition by members
of society. Chapter six discusses the possibility of professional
collaboration between social work and spiritual professionals.
It discuses the contributions spiritual leaders can make to the
social work profession as well as the role of informal and formal
networks in establishing the collaborative effort.

　　Although Bullis attempts to provide a non-threatening mul-
ticultural approach to spirituality, he tends to emphasize non-
Western religious ideas, which may not, at first, appear to be
relevant to the spiritual values of most Americans. Neverthe-
less, Bullis makes a laudable attempt to provide a readable book,
designed specifically for practitioners who, in order to be com-
petitive with other mental health professionals, must began to
systematically incorporate the theory and practice of spirituality
in social work settings.

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Marian Fatout, *Children in Groups: A Social Work Perspective.* West-
　　port, Ct: Auburn House, 1996. $49.95 hardcover.

　　We have now come full circle. Most of the early writings
on social work with groups focused on groups for children and
youth because in the early settings such as settlement houses
and neighborhood centers the bulk of the work was with this
population. When group workers began to offer group services
in psychiatric, health, and family agencies, among others, a shift
took place and the group work writings reflected this by primarily
describing work with adults. This led to a dearth of good, up-
to-date literature on group work with children. In this respect,
Marian Fatout's book is a welcome addition to the group work
literature.

　　Fatout's book follows a logical and predictable format. The
first chapters present her view of "theoretical underpinnings". In
this part, which consists of two chapters, she reviews the literature
on group work with children as well as on child and adolescent
development. The group work review includes a description of

phases of group development. Fatout uses language to describe group development that will be very easy for the beginning practitioner to understand and remember. She terms the phases "getting acquainted", "establishing my place in the group", "working on my goals and those of other members," and "prepare ourselves and end the group".

The second, and major, section discusses group work practice with children and youth in detail. The chapters roughly follow the stages of group development although practice in the middle phase is discussed in several chapters devoted to developing a mutual aid system, creating structures, introducing play and activity, using the group process, and interacting with and on behalf of individual members. The last chapter discusses the ending of the group.

A major strength of this book is the richness of the practice examples provided by the author. She knows her subject matter and has obviously had many opportunities to examine the experiences of children in groups. She also knows group work method well and is able to apply such concepts as group development, power, leadership, roles, group structures, and program to helping the reader to conceptualize group events as they occur with young people. She has also chosen excellent examples to portray how these phenomena occur in real groups. These examples cover most of the types of children's groups that are conducted today such as groups for children affected by divorce and other losses, getting into trouble with the law or with important institutions such as schools, difficulties in mastering developmental tasks, and limitations in their abilities to form peer relationships.

I believe there are several limitations in the book, perhaps due to its relatively short length (130 pages of text). The book is somewhat limited by its theoretical focus which is strongly ego-psychological. Fatout uses the term "latency" throughout to characterize the developmental stage of the group members although she agrees with contemporary writers who refer to a "myth of quiescence" during the latency period. She, nevertheless, accepts the idea of children having a capacity to enter into a state of latency as an important assessment issue. Her book, therefore, is strong in describing development from a "latency" point of view. I wonder if it is this theoretical orientation that

causes her to ignore throughout the book the important work on children carried out by Sheldon Rose and his social work colleagues. That body of literature is rich in describing techniques for enhancing the social skills of children through groups, certainly an important task of this phase of life. She strongly recommends single sex groups as the composition of choice although I think the jury is still out on this one.

Having referred to the gender issue, I should also note that gender differences in development is not a strong suit in this book. There is a great deal of important literature being created today that points out that many of our ideas about development has been generated from the study of males and that females' life course is different, especially with reference to how relationships are developed and norms acquired. A danger that we should avoid as group workers is to reinforce, in the very important periods of childhood and adolescence, the sex role stereotypes found in our society. Another issue often found in the kinds of children referred to group workers is that many do not conform to male and female stereotypes and this contributes to their difficulties and this should be discussed in a text such as this one.

Finally, I think that the reader would have been helped if the author had thought more about creating a few more sets of categories within which to consider her recommendations. There are substantial differences among children's groups devoted to such issues as learning social skills, handling traumatic events such as abuse and loss, and relearning behaviors that have gotten them into trouble with social institutions. While all these kinds of groups are illustrated in this book, it is unclear how and whether the worker serves these populations in similar or different ways. It could even be made clearer whether one works differently with children of different ages and how this may be conceptualized. While cultural differences are illustrated in many of the anecdotes, a more extensive discussion of this topic should have been included.

I believe, however, that despite these criticisms that Fatout has produced a basically sound book that can serve as an introductory text for courses dealing with group work with young people. The reader will be helped by these chapters to start such a group and to anticipate many of the events that occur as the group evolves.

As I stated earlier, it would take a longer book to go beyond that and to deal with some of the issues I have noted.

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Lawrence L. Martin and Peter M. Kettner: *Measuring the Performance of Human Service Programs*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1996. $39.95 hardcover, $17.95 papercover.

Government entities have historically reacted to fiscal distress and stagnant program performance with a renewed emphasis on program accountability; therefore, it is easy to see how the quest for "accountability" led to it becoming the turnkey phrase of the 90's. As a result, unsuccessful attempts to define, operationalize, apply, and measure the concept of accountability have been made by various institutions. Perhaps the difficulty lies in the not-so-obvious revelation that accountability is more of a process than it is a concept. One should be discouraged from thinking of accountability as the final end product of a program but rather as a process to ensure a valid end product.

A well deserved shift in paradigms, as illustrated in Lawrence and Kettner's book, suggests that accountability should be thought of as a ways to a mean rather than a end. Lawrence and Kettner offer a non-intimidating and quite refreshing approach to measuring the performance of human service delivery programs using the accountability movement as their canvas. An overview of the recent accountability movement is described with confidence and accuracy and includes a well warranted discussion on its moral and legal importance. The inclusion of contemporary legislative reforms which command performance measurement is a forceful catalyst and factual justification for future cooperation among human service providers.

The book contains text which is well written, logically structured and easy to follow. The text is arranged by chapters which are highly inclusive, well organized and outline performance measurement cleverly supported by everyday relevant examples. It is genuinely inspiring to see a discussion on measurement which appeals to both the beginner service provider and the