PLAY THERAPY AND RACE CONFLICT IN YOUNG CHILDREN

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THERE seems to be a growing interest on the part of many people today to explore more fully and objectively the dynamics of group behavior in an attempt to determine better methods of meeting the issues that sometimes arise in the areas of human relations. Certainly the race issue is one that provokes further investigation and study. And as one sees examples of individuals becoming involved in race issues, with the scatter and spread and clash of the generated emotionalized attitudes that are often a part of this issue, many questions arise that might throw some additional light on this problem if they could be answered in such a manner that a constructive way of meeting the problems would be forthcoming.

In this article there is a brief account of some experimental work done in group play therapy with six-, seven-, and eight-year-old children. The primary purpose of the study was to determine the effectiveness of play therapy for small groups of children who were having difficulty adjusting to other children. The children who were selected for participation in the group therapy experience were either extremely withdrawn or aggressively antisocial. There were four groups of children from four different classrooms—and four children in each group, two girls and two boys.

The plan for the therapy was as follows. Each group would meet with the play therapist for one 40-minute period each week for ten meetings. At the conclusion of the tenth meeting the groupings would become transitory, mixed groupings. In other words, the eleventh meeting of the grouping would be composed of four children, one from each classroom represented in the study. The next four meetings would continue on this pattern so that each time there would be a group of children who had never been together in the play group before. The purpose of this procedure was to study the children's adjustability to new group experiences.

A study of the data of this experiment revealed some interesting material on the problem of racial conflict among young children and the results of the group experience for these children. In this article only that material related to the race issue will be included.

This material is presented here for consideration as a possible means of studying the dynamics of group behavior, and the generation and dissipation of the childrens' emotionalized attitudes. It is presented with these questions: Does this type of verbatim descriptive material seem to lend itself to a scientific study of the "race issue"? And does this therapeutic procedure seem to be an effective way of resolving racial conflict among children?

These play contacts were not directed by the therapist. The children were in a free play situation where they could express any attitudes and feelings that they wished to express. In this type of experience we often see the child's real self in spontaneous expression. Consequently, it seems that such material might offer rich resources for a detailed study. These excerpts, lifted out of the complete context of the record of the children's play, are presented only as
examples of the type of behavior that is available for further study and analysis. Brief as they are, however, it seems to me that they suggest a way of studying the race issue from the inner frame of reference of the child. It seems as though a more detailed collection of data, a more rigorous analysis of the material, and a more systematic procedure might yield some very significant studies of the race issue.

In the nondirective play-therapy sessions no attempt is made to bring out any specific type of material. Consequently, the examples offered, coming as a completely spontaneous expression on the part of these children, seem to be more valuable because of that very spontaneity.

When the complete record of this play group is studied one notes that these children are not always "race-conscious" children. Nor does the issue loom up after every clash of personalities. One might ask: Why does it become an issue at one time and remain completely out of the picture at another time? The play experiences of these children ran the gamut of the usual group therapy play with all shades of interaction and self-expression coming out. In only five brief incidents was there any obvious awareness of the race issue on the part of these children. So, when studying these children's behavior and emotional reactions, it seems well to keep this in mind so that they are seen in more accurate perspective.

In the first group mentioned are four seven-year-old children. There is June, a Negro. Her teacher describes her behavior as "aggressive, quarrelsome, sulky. The children do not like her because she is always starting trouble." Beverly's teacher describes her as "wild, rough, loud, aggressive, destructive and naturally not liked by the other children." Jackie is described as a "very quiet, dreamy, child, who will not participate in group activities, but who always clings to any adult in the group." The children do not dislike Jackie, according to his teacher, but he rejects any overture from them to include him in the group. Pete is described as "impossibly aggressive, highly emotional, extremely quarrelsome."

This constitutes the membership of the first group. The first and second meetings were stormy ones—with the children frequently arguing over the toys—usually playing alone. Jackie, true to his reputation, assumed the role of kibitzer most of the time. During the third meeting of this group the following incident occurred.

June's opening remark as she enters the room is to the effect that she had gotten sand in her hair the last time she had come to the group meeting and her mother had said that she was not to get sand in it again. Beverly, who is loud, active, aggressive, jeers at June. "So what if you do get sand in your hair? You know what our rules are. We can throw sand in this half of the room. And if you come over that line you risk getting sand in your hair. And if you don't like it you should stay over there on that side and not come over here and try and bring the rules for that side of the line over here on this side of the line."

Jackie is a quiet, gentle dreamer who talks a great deal to the therapist but has up to now stayed out of any active group participation—other than calling across an observation to one of the other children.

Pete is active, excitable, and aggressive. He wants to run the show. When things do not go as he wants them to go he quickly doubles up his fists and asks belligerently, "Do I have to show you I mean business?"

June and Beverly went into the pup-
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pet theater—June crossing the line and squealing out, "Don't throw the sand on me!" and the boys throwing it because she stepped over the line. Finally they settled down. The girls idly manipulated the puppets. The boys played in the sand. Then the girls went over to the easel and began to paint. Pete commented that he didn't see why they couldn't do absolutely everything they wanted to do in this place even to killing one another and demolishing the room. He had experienced the limitations only when he had in previous contacts made an attempt to strike someone in the group and when he had not been permitted to throw paint on the walls or to dig off the plaster. He had accepted the limitations but was still verbally growling about it. The therapist accepted his feelings of wanting to do these things, but held the limitations firmly in place.

Suddenly the two boys whispered together, then quickly jumped out of the sand box and proceeded to wreck the collapsible doll house. This was an acceptable play of destructiveness, the house having been constructed for that purpose. They screamed and yelled.

Pete: "Tear down the house. Wreck it."

Jackie: "The morons will completely demolish this dump."

Pete: "Off with the roof. Off with the walls. I hate—hate—hate this miserable house. The walls close in on them all. Bang, goes the roof right smack down on them."

Jackie: "Did they get killed? Did they? Did they?"

Pete: "Of course they got killed. They died horrible deaths. And their blood ran like rivers down the street."

The two girls were watching the boys. Beverly picked up her brush, dipped it into the red paint, and swiped it across the picture.

"Blood—blood—blood!" she yelled with vigor. "All over everybody and everything. Come on, June. Let's let them throw the sand at us."

"All right—all right!" June cried—and they leaped quite happily across the "safety" line. Immediately the boys grabbed up handfuls of sand and threw it at the girls. Immediately June reverted to her usual protest and Beverly as usual pointed out to June that she could not come over the line unless she would take the consequences. It was all so noisy and moved so rapidly that the therapist said nothing until a remark was addressed to her. "People are so very funny," Jackie said to the therapist. "They pretend they do not want the thing they want the most. June wants us to throw sand at her. She yells when we do. I say I don't like noise and fights and I could scream all day long and stick knives in people."

"People don't always behave the way they feel, hm?" said the therapist. "You act and say one thing and sometimes mean another?"

"Yes," Jackie said. "Quite often I do. But I never tell how I really feel. I pretend—pretend all the time."

June and Beverly lay down on the floor and rolled. Pete dumped large boxes of sand on them. They laughed and picked up handfuls and threw it back at the boys.

Then June got in the sand box. There was an immediate protest. Both boys declared the sand box was their territory and called the girls invaders.

The girls retreated to the puppet theater and put on a play. The boys watched. All the boy puppets were beaten up by the girls—declared "incompetent, feebleminded and morons." Beverly then announced that she really loved boys and wished she was a boy. Jackie said he loved girls and wished he was a girl. Pete said he was happy
just the way he was—but wished he was a king and that everyone had to obey him. June said nothing. She withdrew to the easel. Beverly's loud voice demanded that June, too, should say how she felt about herself. June turned her back to the others. Beverly continued to demand an answer. June turned defiantly and said, "I will not tell you. And you white folk went ahead and got sand in my hair again. And I told you not to."

"It was your own fault," Beverly shouted. "You got over the line."

Angrily June stepped across the line again. "I'll come across the line again," she declared, "and again and again and I'll tell my mother you white joks did this to me."

Because she was across the line, the "white folks" again threw the sand at her. The therapist reflected the attitudes all the children expressed. She did not attempt to restrain the sand throwing because June was over the line. When June got back in the safety zone and Beverly threw more sand for good measure, then the therapist entered in with a limitation. "This is the safety zone. No sand over here."

June sulked. She returned to the easel and stirred the paints without much interest in what she was doing.

Suddenly June turned toward the others, who had quieted down and were now playing together in the sand box.

"Look at you three together," she cried. "You awful three! You white trash!"

Beverly sprang up, "Don't you cali me that—you—you—" She looked furiously at the therapist.

"You want to cali her a name because she called you one, don't you?" the therapist said.

"Yes," Beverly replied.

But Jackie, the young philosopher, said, "Be kind to her, Beverly. Her feelings must be hurt." He dug quietly in the sand—looked up at Beverly and said, "You really wanted to cali her a nigger, didn't you?"

Beverly hung her head. She did not reply. June looked at them with hot eyes.

"Do you want to come in here and play with us?" Jackie invited June.

"No," June said.

"Come on," Jackie said.

"Well," said June.

"You can have my place," Jackie said, jumping out, "and I'll paint."

June gingerly took Jackie's place. Beverly handed her a shovel and a little bucket. Pete retreated to a corner in the sand box with his back to the girls. Jackie painted a piece of paper solid black. Then he placed a thick gob of red finger paint in the middle. He carne over to the therapist and whispered:

"Guess whatitis?"

"I don't know," said the therapist. "Do you want to tell me?"

Jackie grinned wickedly. "It's got something to do with June," he whispered, "and it looks like she got hurt."

Beverly and June started to play together and soon Pete joined them. Finally Jackie carne over and sat on the edge of the sand box.

"Do you like us better now?" he asked June.

She smiled at him quite happily. "Uh-huh!" she said.

Jackie went over to the easel and tore down his painting and threw it in the waste basket. He looked at June.

"What color do you like the best?" he said.

"Pink," she said.

Jackie carefully mixed some red in the pan of white paint. He tried it out on the paper.

"This pink?" he asked.

"Yes," she said and settled back to
watch him. He painted a row of pink flowers, added green stems and green leaves.

"There," he said as he finished it. "This is for you, June."

"Make me one! Make me one!" called Beverly.

"No, that's all I want to do today," Jackie said.

"Our time is up for today," said the therapist.

June chose that minute to pour a handful of sand on Beverly's hair, as she jumped out of the sand box. There was a squabble and a flare-up. Finally they quieted down and left together to return to their class at school.

This is the kind of data that seems to contain valuable material for a study of attitudes and behavior of children. A few of the significant things that stand out are the comments of Jackie, implying he does one thing, feels another, "pretends, pretends all the time." The way June reacts when they ask her how she feels about herself is interesting. The injection of racial feelings and the way in which the group meets this challenge seems important. Does this seem to be significant material for a study in attacking the problems related to social issues?

Following this meeting it was necessary to place June in another group. This was due to the fact that she was transferred to another classroom and the teacher's reading schedule conflicted with the time of the group meeting. June was placed in Group 2. This was the fourth meeting of this group, the fourth group-therapy meeting for June, but her first meeting with these children. The children were well acquainted, however, outside of the group.

These children are also seven years old. They were referred for the group therapy experience for the following reasons, as stated by their teachers:

Louise is very quiet, very withdrawn. She seldom plays with the group—seldom asserts herself.

Perry is inclined to be domineering and bossy. He always likes to have his way. He is excitable and nervous. He does not get along with other children—does not seem to want to.

Rollin is moody—at times very withdrawn and again very aggressive. He is a lone wolf most of the time.

Louise did not live up to her teacher's description at any time during the therapy. Perry and Rollin behaved more or less as they had been described. June was the only Negro in this class at school. An excerpt from the group which June joined illustrates a little more how the child sometimes expresses significant attitudes in his play—and how these attitudes are influenced by other children in the group.

Rollin, June, Louise, and Perry are playing together in the sand for the first few minutes. Then the group splits up. Rollin and June play at the doll house. Perry and Louise paint. The play at the doll house centers around the dolls going to the toilet.

"Look at him. He's on the toilet," Rollin says.

"Shame! Shame!" June cries.

"Why?" Rollin asks.

"I don't know," June says.

Then they set the table and begin to play house.

"We're eating breakfast. This is fun," June cries.

They play around. June bumps into the table and knocks it over.

"These children are bad girls!" Rollin shouts.

"They are not bad," June shouts in reply.

"You dope! Rollin yells.

"Who says Fm a dope? Fm not a dope. You're a dope yourself!"

You—you red head you!" Rollin screams.
"Red head yourself!" screams June. "You should go away to the nut-head house!" Rollin says. "Come on, let's fix this so the people won't have any home to live in."

June and Rollin yell and scream and wreck the house.

June grabs up the baby doll and swings it around by the leg. Then she says, "Oh, let's play right. Let's don't be so wild."

"Okay, okay," says Rollin. "Let's use this big doll." He tosses it in the sand box. "I'm going to put all the people in the attic and I'll lock 'em up there and they will never in the world get out again."

The other two children continued to paint—talking quietly. Perry asks for more paper. He looks at the therapist. "What is your real name?" he asks. She tells him her name. As he tries to tack up the paper he sticks his finger. "Look," he says, "I'll need first aid. I'll wash it off." He spills some water on the floor.

"Oh, I am sorry," he says.

"Why did you say you were sorry?" Louise asks.

"Well, it was an accident," Perry comments.

"I daresay you won't need to say 'I'm sorry' in here," Louise observes.

"Then that is why I will say it in here. I get so tired of saying what I'm supposed to say."

"Is anyone interested in modern art?" Louise asks with a giggle. "I think I've just done some very, very modern art."

Perry holds up the brown paint water. "Nice whiskey," he says.

June turns and holds up a small table from the doll house. "This is a cocktail table." As she reaches over she jars Rollin's arm and he spills the tray on which he was carrying "the drinks."

"Oh, for Christ sake," he shouts, "you Goddam nigger. You spilled the tray! This makes me so Goddam mad I could spit on you!"

June draws back. Her face clouds over. "I am not a nigger!" she shouts. "What are you then?" Rollin demands.

June looks about her unhappily. "I—I—I am a person!" she says.

There is absolute silence in the playroom. All three children turn and look at June.

"Oh," says Rollin. There is another silence. Rollin looks down at the floor. He goes over and sits down on the edge of the sand box. He puts his hand down in the sand, idly sifts it through his fingers. June stands still in the middle of the room, staring at Rollin. He looks up at her again. "I'm sorry, June," he says finally.

"That's all right," June says. There is once more quietness in the room. June turns her back to the others—goes over to the doll house things and sorts through them until she finds a little Negro doll. She holds it in her hand and looks at it. Rollin still sits on the edge of the sand box watching June with an odd expression on his face.

June picks up a white doll, holds the white doll and the Negro doll side by side, looks at them for a long time. She picks up one of the doll house beds and places the white doll in it very carefully. Then she glares at the Negro doll. She lays it on the table, grabs the wooden hammer and pounds the doll viciously.

"Get rid of the old nigger!" she shouts. "Dirty old nigger. Black, hateful old nigger."

Rollin stands up quickly and looks at her. "June!" he says, "June! She is a person!"

"Oh," says June in a tone of distress, "I'm sorry." She picks up the Negro
dolí. She looks at Rollin again. "Could I—" she asks, then hesitates.
"What!" Rollin asks.
"Could I put her in the same bed with the— the pretty dolí?"
Rollin comes over and looks at the white dolí in the little bed and at the Negro dolí in June's little brown hand. He considers it for a long time. Perry and Louise leave their painting and come over, too. They all gather around June, who is still holding the little black dolí.
"Is there—is there another bed?" Perry asks. "Everyone should sleep in a bed of his own. No two people should ever sleep together."
"I sleep with my sister," Louise says, "and that's all right!"
Rollin stoops down and sorts through the toy furniture. He finds another bed. June watches him silently. There are tears in her eyes. They are not doing this to the dolí. They are doing this to her. The therapist stays out of it at this point—watching this stark drama unfold slowly and with intense meaning for all these children.
"Here is another bed," Rollin says to June. She stretches the dolí out toward him. Rollins does not touch the dolí.
Perry reaches out a hand to take the bed. Rollin pulls it out of his reach. He glares at Perry. "You keep outa this," he says roughly.
Then he looks at June and asks her very gently, "Where does she want to sleep, June? Does she want a bed all her own? Or does she want to sleep with the white girl?"
June will not commit herself. She blinks back her tears and continues to hold the Negro dolí out to Rollin. Finally he takes it, places it in the bed alone, quickly removes it, throws the empty bed across the room with violence and places the Negro dolí in the bed with the white one. June smiles radiantly.
"Why did you do that?" Perry asks.
"I know why," Louise says. "I'm glad you did, Rollin."
"Why did you?" Perry demands again.
Rollin shrugs his shoulders and sits down on the edge of the sand box.
"I know why he did," Louise says. "You didn't want June to cry. Isn't that why?"
"No," Rollin says, shaking his head. "Well, I think you're crazy," Perry says, and goes after the other dolí bed. He brings it back and reaches for the Negro dolí. Rollin grabs his arm.
"You let that alone!" he yells. "You keep your hands off."
"They should each have their own bed!" Perry shouts.
"Let them alone," Rollin shouts. "Let them alone!"
The group splits up again. Rollin crawls into the sand box and sits with his back to the others. June sits down at the table and rolls a ball of clay in her hands. Louise and Perry return to their painting. None of the children speak. When it is time to go they leave quietly. June walks back to the schoolroom with Perry and Louise and they talk happily together. Rollin walks back alone—hanging his head. What is he thinking? Why did he react like that? Rollin is only eight. He is a Jew. Does this suggest that there is value in such a group for the handling of social conflicts? Does this suggest that the attitudes of even young children soon are influenced by prejudice and discrimination?
I believe that this little experience and many other group experiences will shed some light on the issue of social therapy—or social education, call it what you will. I believe this is of special significance to teachers as well as therapists.
June attended six more meetings with this group. And three more times
some aspect of the race problem was brought into focus.

The causes of the race question's being brought into the group play seem to be significant. In the first excerpt quoted here it is a bit difficult to pin down the exact cause of June's withdrawal from the group and then her attack upon them. One might speculate that she withdrew when asked to state her wish because it pointed up a difference between herself and the others—a difference which she was reluctant to face; and consequently she met it with an attack upon the other members of the group. In the second example the race issue was injected as a result of Rollin's anger. It was the climax of milder name-calling. At no time after this incident did Rollin ever bring out any attack upon June's race. However, Perry and Louise did.

The other three incidents will now be cited:

At the fifth meeting of this second group the children were playing quietly—each one pursuing his own interests. Rollin was playing in the sand. Perry was modeling an animal out of clay. Louise was painting. June was playing with the large rag doll. Suddenly June threw down the doll and sat down at the table across from Perry. He did not pay any attention to her. She reached over and took a piece of his clay. Immediately Perry sprang to his feet screaming, "Give me back my clay!"

"I want it!" June said, hugging it tightly.

"Give me it! Give me it!" yelled Perry angrily.

He reached across and snatched at it. June held it in her hands, sat down on the chair, bent over so that Perry could not get the clay out of her hands.

Perry was beside himself with anger. The therapist reflected the attitudes the children were expressing—June's desire to keep the clay and Perry's anger at the act. June grinned at the therapist. "He's sure mad!" she said gleefully. "Look at his face. He gets so red in the face when he gets mad," she giggled. "I like to make his face change color!"

Perry glared at her and said coldly, "Fd like to make your face change color. I'd like to make it white so you wouldn't be so mean!"

The therapist said, "You would both like to change the color of the other's face?"

June stood up and hurled the clay down on the floor as hard as she could. "Don't you cali me flames!" she yelled at Perry.

"June doesn't like to have someone cali her flames," said the therapist.

Perry looked angrily at the therapist. "She is a mean, nasty—"

"I am not! I am not!" screamed June and tears rolled down her face.

"June doesn't like to have someone cali her flames," said the therapist.

Perry looked angrily at the therapist. "I didn't like it, June, when you jerked away my clay. Why did you do it to me?"

"I dunno," June said meekly. She hung her head, wiped her eyes with her fists.

Louise carne up to June. "Do you want to play with one of us?" she asked. June nodded.

"Want to paint with me?" June nodded.

Louise looked at June and suddenly reached out and laid her hand on June's hair.

"Your hair feels funny," Louise said. June put her hand up to her hair. She looked at Louise suspiciously. Then she reached out and touched Louise's hair.

"Your hair feels funny," June said belligerently. But Louise was not making fun of June. She was interested in June's hair and touched it gently with both hands.
"Your hair is different," Louise said. "No!" June protested, burying her hands not so gently in Louise's hair. "No I It's your hair that's different."

"You've both got different kinds of hair," said the therapist.

Rollin got out of the sand and came over and touched June's hair very gently.

"I think your hair is nice, June," he said.

Perry stuck his hand on June's hair, then on Louise's hair, then on his own hair, then on Rollin's hair.

"Your hair is sort of like June's," he said to Rollin.

"Is it?" June asked. She felt Rollin's hair. He shook off her hand and got back in the sand box and kept his back to the others.

"Each one of you has hair that is a little different from one another," said the therapist.

June laughed. Louise laughed. Perry laughed.

"But it all grows on our heads!" Perry said. He sat down at the table. "Here's some clay if you want it," he said. June sat down and played with the clay.

Here again we note the attack, the anger, the hurt feelings when June is made to feel "different." Here again we see the dissipation of the feeling when June does not feel alone in her "differences." The exploratory interest all the children displayed as they studied the differences in the texture of their hair brought with it the calm of a shared interest. Perry's generalization that they all had one thing in common—it grew on their heads—seemed to dissolve the last shred of tension between them.

At the sixth meeting of the group Louise was painting a picture of a "princess." It was a very good picture for a seven-year-old child to draw. June watched Louise. Rollin came over and looked at it. "That's pretty," he said, with genuine appreciation of Louise's art.

"I don't think it is," June said. Rollin walked away from the easel. June picked up a brush, dipped it in the brown paint, and smeared it across the face of the "princess." Louise turned on her angrily. "You look what you've done!" she cried. "You've made my beautiful princess into an ugly nigger!"

June glared at Louise.

"Louise is angry because June painted on her picture," the therapist said.

June stood still and looked at the painting, then at Louise, then at the therapist.

"She called me a nigger," she said, but her voice was quiet.

"I did not call you a nigger," Louise said, "I said you spoiled my picture by putting that paint on it."

June looked again at the picture and then at the therapist.

"I guess I did spoil the picture," she said, "I'm sorry."

In this incident June for the first time seemed to realize that she was partly responsible for the attacks she drew upon herself. The fact that June had used brown paint and had smeared it on the face of Louise's "princess" seemed to have suggested the accusation Louise hurled at June. Why did June use the brown paint and smear it over the face? I don't know. The therapist's statement seemed to point out to June the fact that it was the paint on the picture to which Louise was reacting, rather than the color of June's skin.

During the seventh meeting the fifth and last incident in which the race issue was brought out in this play group occurred in a very interesting manner; Rollin was finger-painting. Three of
the children were playing "house." Perry said he would be the "father" and Louise would be the "mother" and June would be their "baby." Thus they started their play.

Suddenly, without any obvious reason for his change in attitude, Perry announced that June could not be their baby any more. She would have to be the maid.

"Here, Black Girl," he said "Go get-"

That was all that it took to set June off.

"I am not a black girl," she yelled. "I didn't mean to make you mad," Perry said. "I wouldn't get mad if you called me White Boy."

June looked at him, bewildered by what Perry had said.

"But she isn't black," Louise said.

She went over to the table where Rollin was finger-painting. She brought back the jar of brown finger-paint and took off the lid.

"Look," she said, "This is just the color of June." She dug out some of the paint and held it toward June's arm. At first June drew back, then, noting that Louise was not attacking her or making fun of her, she looked in the jar. Then Louise rubbed the brown finger paint on her own hands and arms. Perry, rising to the occasion, rubbed it on his hands and arms and face. Then Louise put some on her face. Perry, rising to the occasion, rubbed it on his hands and arms and face. Then Louise put some on her face. They were all laughing. June reached in the jar and rubbed the paint on her arms and hands and face. Perry, rising to the occasion, rubbed it on his hands and arms and face. Then Louise put some on her face. They were all laughing. June reached in the jar and rubbed the paint on her arms and hands and face.

"Look!" Perry shouted. "It matches exactly."

Rollin stopped his finger-painting and sat there grinning at them. Suddenly he joined the others and smeared the brown paint on his hands, arms, and face.

"This is fun! This is fun!" they cried dancing around the room.

"Where's some white finger paint?" June asked. They all stopped and looked around for the white finger paint.

"There isn't any white finger paint," said the therapist.

"We're all alive now," Louise said. "June and Perry and Rollin and me!"

And the children danced around smearing the paint on themselves for the remaining ten minutes of the play period. When it was time to leave they all washed their hands and arms and faces and left together in a happy, cheerful mood.

After this session there were no other incidents that referred to June as a Negro—or as anyone differing from the group. They all seemed to have accepted one another. This also carried over in the classroom situation. The teacher's report states that June has become "more sociable, more cooperative, more friendly, with a definite decrease in her former aggressiveness."

The report also notes that June was accepted in her classroom by the other three children in her therapy group—and gradually by the other children in the class.

The report in regard to the other three children mentions the following changes:

Louise has changed more than any of the other children in the group. She is now definitely a leader of a group and gets along well with the other children.

Perry is much more agreeable. He still likes to boss the others around but does not react unfavorably when put in his place by one of the others. He plays more with the other children.

Rollin is still moody—but seems to have more ups than downs. He seems quieter, more relaxed, less tense. He plays quite a bit with his "p's y g'up."

These children made interesting adjustments to the last series of group meetings. There was a tendency to
participate in the group meetings with an awareness of the rights of others. There was a marked tendency to plan what they would do at the beginning of the meetings and the plans were usually carried out.

Since this occurred in all the meetings, it seems that one could infer that these children had learned how to adjust to others in a free play situation so that the rights of others were considered. * Any clashes that did occur were gotten out in the open immediately and some satisfactory solution was arrived at by the children. Sometimes they each played alone, but most of the time they played together. There was a considerable lessening of destructive, aggressive play as the time passed. Finally, and certainly important, at no time during these last five meetings did the race problem become an issue. It seems to have disappeared from the attitudes and feelings of these children.

These children seem to have been able to get beneath the surface and to have achieved a respect for the personality of one another, an acceptance of their differences, and a perception of a common bond between them.

When one provides a situation wherein the children are given an opportunity to be themselves—and an opportunity to interact in a very permissive situation, then it seems that they can more readily come to terms with their own attitudes and emotions; and in a face-to-face situation where their free expression is not checked, they can and do assume responsibility for their attitudes and can experience the effect that the emotional expression of those attitudes can have upon themselves and others.

So it seems that these small group experiences had special significance for these children and enabled them to offer emotional hospitality and understanding to one another that seem to be necessary for us if we are ever to achieve a togetherness of effort and a unity of civilized thought.