South dealer; both sides vulnerable

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                        NORTH
                        ♠ 9 7
                        ♡ K 10 5 4 2
                        ◇ Q 3 2
                        ♣ J 10 4
    WEST                                EAST
    ♠ A K J 10 8                        ♠ 6 5 3 2
    ♡ 9 3                               ♡ Q 8 7
    ◇ 10 9 7 4                          ◇ A J 6
    ♣ 5 2                               ♣ K 7 3
                        SOUTH
                        ♠ Q 4
                        ♡ A J 6
                        ◇ K 8 5
                        ♣ A Q 9 8 6
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OPEN ROOM

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
Diamond	**Weinstein**	*Platnick*	**Levin**
1 NT	Pass	2 ◇	Pass
2 ♡	2 ♠	Pass	Pass
3 ♡	Pass	Pass	3 ♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

CLOSED ROOM

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
Sadek	*Moss*	**Elahmady**	*Gitelman*
1 NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

In the Open Room, Weinstein didn't want to defend against two hearts, so he prebalanced. There was some risk with an unlimited hand behind him, but the strong spades (and LHO's failure to use Stayman) made it unlikely that he would run into a disastrous penalty double. Diamond and Levin each competed based on their relative major-suit lengths. I agree with Diamond but not with Levin. East has poor shape, the queen of the opponents' suit, and no spade strength. His hand is defensively-oriented, and the vulnerability argues for defending. It is more likely that both contracts will fail than that both will make. In fact, three spades has little play, while after a high spade lead and a diamond shift, declarer might fail to make three hearts—the winning line is to play back a pointed suit to get entry help from the defense, then (if necessary) to guess hearts correctly.

Platnick led a spade. Weinstein won, drew trumps, and led a diamond to the jack and king. Diamond returned a diamond, which looks like the right defense, because a discard from one of dummy's three-card holdings wouldn't help declarer much. Eventually, Weinstein was down one, minus 100.

In the Closed Room, Elahmady overrode the popular conception always to transfer with a five-card major. Considering his 5-3-3-2 and scattered values, I agree. Hearts does not rate to be two tricks better than notrump, and it seems more likely that two hearts will fail against a bad heart split while there are seven tricks in notrump.

Moss led the king of spades, a power lead. Gitelman would unblock an honor or show count, which he did. Moss shifted to the ten of diamonds, to declarer's king. Sadek gave himself two chances by playing ace of hearts, jack of hearts to the king, and, when the queen didn't fall, finessing in clubs. This might have cost an extra undertrick had the club finesse failed, but the extra chance makes it a worthwhile risk. When the club finesse succeeded, he had eight tricks.

To have a chance, Moss should have assumed that Gitelman had four spades, not two, and continued spades. Maybe the defense could take the first seven tricks. East might have had ace-queen of hearts or ace-king of clubs, and after the trick-two diamond shift declarer might have had seven tricks of his own. In addition, forcing might have foreclc (though not on this c