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Psychodrama and Sociometry Training: A Survey of Curriculums

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The survey was undertaken to examine curriculum requirements in various clinical and academic programs. Of the 95 trainers, educators and practitioners (TEP's) contacted, only 31 replied. Although limited, the survey helped raise a number of questions relating to curriculum, certification requirements, and the role of the three main organizations: the American Society of Group Psychotherapy and Psychodrama, the American Board of Examiners of Psychodrama, Sociometry, and Group Psychotherapy, and the Federation of Trainers and Training Programs in Psychodrama. The relative lack of emphasis on training for empirical work in psychodrama and sociometry seemed to be prevalent within the various training programs in psychodrama.

J. L. Moreno (1953) pioneered the first formal training center in psychodrama and sociometry in Beacon, New York. The institute was approved by the State Education Department, Division of Special Occupational Services, Albany, New York, at the graduate level and offered an experientially based residential training program. The center awarded a variety of certificates ranging from "Certificate of Attendance" to "Certificate of Full Director." To be certified as a director, a student needed to complete twelve hours of residential training or sixteen weeks of training or earn a total of 96 points (Warner, 1968). Since the inception of the Moreno's Institute in 1937, a number of training centers have been established all over the world. It is noteworthy that until his death in 1974, Moreno was the certifying officer for practicing psychodrama. In 1974, the American Board of Examiners of Psychodrama, Sociometry and Group Psychotherapy (ABE) was formed and established certification guidelines at two levels: (1) Practitioner and (b) Trainer, Educator and Practitioner (TEP). According to the ABE's guidelines, a trainee needs to complete a minimum of 780 hours of supervised training at any center and the completion of evaluation requirements im-

plemented by the ABE. To be certified as a TEP, a trainee needs certification at the practitioner level, three additional years of supervised training and completion of evaluation requirements implemented by the ABE.

Although the ABE has specified evaluation requirements for certification, it has not thus far developed any curricular guidelines for training at the two levels. Neither has there been any publication from individuals that suggests curricular requirements for training at these two levels. Interestingly, however, there have been publications suggesting requirements for setting up psychodrama programs for therapeutic purposes (e.g., Enneis, 1952, Hollander, 1968). Under these circumstances, one would expect a wide diversity of curricula offered at various institutes. This survey was primarily instituted to gather information on curricula used in psychodrama and sociometry training from practicing psychodramatists, Trainers, Educators and Practitioners. Originally this survey was undertaken to seek ideas for designing a psychodrama and sociometry training program in a university setting. After examining the responses, it was felt that a report of the analysis would be informative for TEP's who are in the process of either developing or redesigning their training program.

Method

Ninety-five Trainers, Educators and Practitioners (TEP's) in psychodrama, group therapy and sociometry listed in the *American Board of Examiners in Psychodrama, Sociometry and Group Psychotherapy Directory* were sent the following letter (by the first author) in July 1980:

I am in the process of collecting psychodrama and sociometry course descriptions for the purpose of developing a curriculum in the action modalities. The program will be housed in the Psychology Department at West Chester State College. For this purpose, I would appreciate it if you would send me syllabi, bibliographies, course descriptions, workshop guides, etc., in the area. When I complete this task, I will share with you the results. I am looking forward to hearing from you.

Results

Rate of Return

Of the 95 TEP's contacted, only 31 (33%) responded. Two responses came from Canada, two from Europe, one from Australia, and 26 from nine states in the U.S.A. The responses included materials such as brochures, course descriptions, bibliographies, training program models, articles and conference brochures. Five TEP's who are not involved in teaching or training programs simply responded by a letter.

From the responses, it seemed that there were two basic types of training programs: (a) clinical/skill training programs housed in specialized training cen-

ters and (b) academically based training programs housed in colleges and universities.

Clinical/Skill Training Programs

Seventeen respondents (55%) indicated their involvement in a clinical/skill program. These individuals work out of specialized training centers with their primary focus on psychodrama and sociometry. From their responses, it seemed that the overall requirements for certification are similar in the various training centers and compliant with the American Board of Examiners in Psychodrama, Sociometry, and Group Psychotherapy (hereinafter referred to as the ABE) requirement of 780 hours of training. However, there are variations: One institute offers a total of 1080 hours of training, and another institute indicates a minimum of 600 hours. Furthermore, various institutes offer different levels of training which are not in compliance with the ABE: One institute uses three levels—psychodrama assistant, 260 hours; associate director, 520 hours; and director, 780 hours. The training institute that indicates a total of 1080 hours of training requires 360 hours for each level of proficiency; a third institute breaks down the 780 hours into six levels of proficiency (assistant director in training 100 hours, associate director in training 200 hours, director in training 300 hours, assistant director 400 hours, associate director 500, and director 780); a fourth institute uses three levels of proficiency (psychodrama assistant, 420 hours; psychodrama leader and/or psychodrama therapist, 600 hours). Another center offers a 200-hour training program but does not specify proficiency levels or any type of certification. Additionally, this center has a twelve-month program upon completion of which a student obtains a certificate of satisfactory completion of one year's training in psychodrama and sociometry. The graduates of this program are eligible to apply to the ABE for the certification examination.

Only four training centers sent details concerning course descriptions, course objectives, training schedules and/or bibliographies. All four programs combine theoretical with technical applications of psychodrama. The technology of psychodrama is traditional and derived from Moreno's classical description of psychodrama. The most comprehensive programs, in terms of content, appear to be the 200-hour program and the one-year program. These programs include theoretical, philosophical, technological as well as ethical components in the training program. Other unique features are learning sign language and psychodramatic applications to special populations, such as blind, deaf, Hispanic, police, alcoholic, children, adolescents and institutionalized populations. Their annotated bibliography categorized into 23 seminars is impressive and current. The other programs appear less comprehensive in the scope of content rather than in the number of hours required for training; for the most part their content seems to center around psychodramatic techniques and applications.

There seem to be varied practices concerning evaluation procedures. One program uses rating sheets for the evaluation of the individual participant as an auxiliary and as a director. It is not clear who carries out the ratings and how often the ratings are done. The students are also required to write group reports for which specific guidelines exist. The group reports center around warm up, action, closure, post-group activity and the role of the therapist. (It appears that this is an individual's perception of the drama itself.)

Another center requires two written papers on topics in psychodrama and sociometry, attendance and participation in a number of training sessions. In another training center, evaluation is conducted by a board of four members, two are chosen by the center and two are chosen by the applicant. The board uses written criteria (probably variable) for each candidate. They also require the student to submit a paper for publication. The objective of this assignment is to have the student integrate and apply concepts of psychodrama and/or sociometry. One of the centers requires a thesis but it is not clear what the thesis entails.

Academic Program

Nine respondents (29%) indicate their affiliation with academic institutions. Two of the respondents are also involved in a separate clinical skills program as well. One recognizable feature of the responses is that psychodrama training is simply a part of either undergraduate or graduate degree programs in various fields: theater, continuing education, psychology, sociology, communications and social work. Only two of the programs indicate that they are recognized by the American Board of Examiners as counting towards the certification in psychodrama, sociometry and group psychotherapy. The University of Arkansas Graduate School of Social Work offers a specialization in action methodology (psychodrama, sociometry, sociarty and related experiential approaches) in which twelve out of the 20 months of training are spent in the action methodology course sequence (a total of seven courses). All courses include theoretical as well as experimental training. However, their announcement does not specify how many hours a student accumulates toward the certification process. Lesley College of Cambridge, Massachusetts, offers a Master of Arts degree in expressive therapies with psychodrama as one of the areas of specialization along with a program for post-doctoral Visiting Fellows for Advanced Study in Expressive Therapies. The psychodrama specialty involves 36 hours (credits) of course work split into 12 courses of three credits each or 45 contact hours per course. The course work is divided equally into theory and practice. An additional feature of their program is the requirement that the students write a thesis. To date 15-20 theses, based on a review of literature, have been written on psychodrama and sociometry. Furthermore, it is not clear how many hours a student accumulates towards the certification process.

There was only one school in the U.S.A., the University of Humanistic Studies, that offered the M.A. and Ph.D. degree programs in counseling psychology with emphasis in psychodrama. According to their 1980-81 catalog this program does not exist any more. Although psychodrama courses and workshops are still being offered at this school, it is not clear whether any TEP's are involved in their training program.

It appears that in the past there has been only one attempt to initiate a full-fledged Master's degree program in psychodrama and sociometry in the U.S.A. This effort was made by the Psychodrama Section of St. Elizabeths Hospital, some years back, to house the program in the American University. Their proposal was not accepted.

Private Practice Response

This category includes private practitioners who do not hold part- or full-time positions with either college/university or training centers. Six people (16%) who responded simply forwarded names of persons and training centers that trained them to be contacted for details on curricula.

Discussion

It was disappointing to receive responses from only 33% of the TEP's contacted. Hence, the results reported in this study are of limited scope and must be treated with caution for their generalizability.

An examination of the clinical/skill programs reveals an integrated approach of theoretical and technical aspects of psychodrama. In the programs surveyed, the classical Morenean model of psychodrama appears to be the major focus. One obvious weakness in these programs is the lack of emphasis on both theoretical and applied aspects of sociometry. Moreover, it is not clear how much of total training time is devoted to theoretical concerns via lecture and/or discussion and how much time is devoted to experiential psychodrama. It was also noted that different institutes employ different terminologies concerning proficiency levels. The number of hours required to attain these levels is also variable. However, it is not apparent what course work or content is actually involved in the attainment of different proficiency levels, even though the number of hours required (e.g., 260 hours for assistant director) are specified. The most comprehensive psychodrama training programs (200 hours and one year) seem to be at the St. Elizabeths Hospital located in Washington, D.C., which cover experiential, theoretical, philosophical, and ethical aspects related to psychodrama. However, it is not clear where their training of 200 hours leads to in terms of certification as a psychodramatist. It is suggested that a breakdown of requirements in terms of courses (theoretical and experiential), and specifying time as well as cost, would be very helpful to both trainers and trainees. This suggestion applies to all training institutions. It is worth noting that St. Eliza-

beths Hospital Psychodrama Section is the only institution in the country that offers a full year stipend to the trainees.

A source of confusion about the various training programs is the titles used for various proficiency levels. The comparability of the proficiency levels across institutions is not clear. For example, the Camelback Hospital's Western Institute for Psychodrama requires 360 hours or 36 credits to become a psychodrama assistant; the Psychodrama Center of New York requires 100 hours to become assistant director in training. In addition, the Camelback Hospital's Western Institute for Psychodrama requires a total of 1080 hours to earn the title of psychodrama director, but the Psychodrama Center of New York requires 780 hours to achieve the title of director.

One major concern that we have is with the titles used with the proficiency levels. Obviously, these titles serve only an "in house" function while in training, although the Camelback Hospital certifies at three levels, viz., assistant, associate and director. Such titles and institutional certification at various levels may mislead potential trainees and trainers to believe that they would be able to practice psychodrama in some capacity. This danger is more pronounced when titles such as assistant or associate director are used. In other words, a certified associate director may come to believe that s/he has license to practice in a directorial capacity. It is recommended that the ABE or perhaps the Federation of Trainers examine the relevance of institutional certification at various levels and also the titles used for various proficiency levels. In any case, it is necessary that announcements of training programs must specify that only those people can practice psychodrama who have been certified by the ABE. A related issue is the requirement of 780 hours for certification by the ABE. It is recommended that this requirement be re-examined from the point of view of more specific curricular and experiential requirements which first would have to be identified and detailed. Perhaps a task force of the ABE might undertake to develop guidelines with a regard to specific curricular and experiential requirements. In other words, the ABE must clarify what the 780 hours mean. It may also be pointed out that all other requirements of the ABE need further examination and clarification. Perhaps the principles and guidelines prepared by the American Psychological Association (June, 1981) may be helpful in this regard.

Despite the inclusion of theoretical aspects in the clinical/skill programs, it appears that the training is practitioner oriented. It is suggested that the training curriculum should include at least one or two courses in statistics and research design. A research-based thesis might also help in the advancement of the field, especially with regard to the implementation of various psychodramatic techniques. There is no doubt that there is a need for more research on the effectiveness of psychodrama as a modality and also research on developing the various psychodramatic techniques. Perhaps the ABE might include such a thesis as one of the requirements for certification.

Regarding evaluation procedures, it was noted that the practices vary across institutions. To create a system in which credits obtained in one institution are honored by another institution it would be useful to develop standard procedures for evaluation. In other words, there should be some common understanding about what it means (in terms of degree of proficiency) for someone to have completed X number of hours of training in psychodrama. Perhaps a set of rating scales need to be devised that are to be filled in by trainers on the proficiency achieved by students in various roles (for example, doubling and mirroring) in the process of training. Used on a regular basis, these scales may also help chart the progress of a student through a program and would provide a basis for evaluating the student. It is not clear from this survey how many training centers use such procedures. It is important that institutions attempt to make evaluations more objective.

In reference to the academic programs, there appeared to be two comprehensive programs, viz., University of Arkansas and Lesley College. It is worth noting that the University of Arkansas was first in offering a *specialization in action methodology* with emphasis on psychodrama and sociometry. Lesley College, to our knowledge, is the only one in the country that offers a Master's degree in expressive therapy with a *concentration in psychodrama*. This concentration is offered in conjunction with other expressive modalities, art, dance and music. It is important to note that students specializing in psychodrama must take at least 12 elective credits in expressive modalities outside their area of specialization. This is commendable as it provides the student an opportunity to learn about related modalities and how they can be used in conjunction with their primary therapeutic modality. However, the University of Arkansas provides a balanced approach by way of including sociometry and sociatry as part of the curriculum. Lesley College does offer an introductory course in sociometry and socioanalysis, but it would appear that at least three additional courses should be introduced in order to balance their psychodrama program. It is recommended that the academic programs devote at least six hours (two courses) in statistics and research design. It is somewhat disheartening that the academic institutions, such as Lesley College and the University of Arkansas, do not encourage research based theses on psychodrama and sociometry. It is felt that research design training and research based theses would help develop a more experimental orientation toward the theory and practice of psychodrama and sociometry. It appears that the classical Morenean model has remained unchanged for many generations except in terms of applications and scope of its use. Experimental work is imperative not only for advancement in theoretical aspects but also to establish psychodrama as an area of study that is amenable to scientific investigation. Kipper (1978) had likewise stressed a need for empirical validation of assumptions and the underlying rationale in psychodramatic theory. From a review of research done on psychodrama, Kipper concluded that the data on the validity of psycho-

drama is scarce. We feel that Lesley College does have an excellent setting for promoting research within the aegis of their Center for Advanced Study in Expressive Therapy which is primarily geared to the training of doctoral fellows.

Although it is an achievement for Lesley College to have a Master's program in psychodrama, it is not clear how many hours of the Master's program count towards certification as a practicing psychodramatist or if they actually count at all. It is also not clear whether a Lesley College graduate in psychodrama can serve as a director of psychodrama, or that further training is required to be certified by the ABE. A closer look is required at the academic programs including the need for a Master's degree in psychodrama.

Conclusions

It is re-emphasized that this survey was limited by the number of responses received and hence cannot be taken as a comprehensive review of the state of training in the U.S.A. or other parts of the world. However, the responses received did serve to raise some important questions concerning curriculum, proficiency levels, certification and degree programs in psychodrama and sociometry. It is hoped that this paper will serve the professional community as a starting point for discussion to bring about changes to improve our training programs and stimulate empirical research in psychodrama and sociometry.

The survey points to the need for a clearer definition of purposes for the American Board of Examiners as well as for the Federation of Trainers and Training Programs in Psychodrama. The two bodies need to work in concert to develop more detailed guidelines than those which exist concerning certification requirements. Lastly, it is not clear what role, if any, the American Society of Group Psychotherapy and Psychodrama plays in the certification process.

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Theoretical Applications of Symbolic Interactionism and Psychodrama

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This article explores symbolic interactionism and psychodrama for conceptual links which can form the basis of an empirical theory of group practice. George H. Mead's process oriented theory is enhanced by Jacob L. Moreno's dramaturgical approach on four critical fronts. The resulting synthesis begins to articulate universal themes which appear to be present in all groups as having potential for intervention by a trained facilitator. Such formal dialogue on a theoretical level has been neglected in previous methodological development and is a prerequisite for the production of viable models on small group theory.

Psychodrama and the principles of sociometry are frequently acknowledged as interesting approaches to group process, but peripheral to systematic theories of group interaction. In contrast, the application of psychodramatic techniques enjoys wide appeal among group leaders who seek to operationalize one or another theoretical model. The net result is a misrepresentation of both the substance and elegance of the classic paradigm founded by Jacob L. Moreno over a half-century ago.

While it is true that Moreno did not explicate a coherent system of group practice principles in the usual scientific fashion, his thought and techniques reflect a strong reliance on theory. In many ways, Moreno was one of the earliest practitioners to theorize what occurs within a small group structure. To highlight his contribution the present article identifies some fundamental concepts underlying Moreno's psychodramatic-sociometric approach to human interaction and discusses their relation to the sociological construct known as Symbolic Interaction Theory. An earlier article explored whether Symbolic Interaction Theory could serve as a sound basis for evaluating the action techniques of psychodrama (Kelly, 1976). The present work continues a more formal effort toward the

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