

SOCIOMETRY IN ACTION

J. L. Moreno
Sociometric Institute
New York, N. Y.

Introduction

A forum¹ of workers representing practically every state placed before the sociometrist a number of typical projects and problems which are in need of an immediate solution. Many of these problems deal with the most delicate situations in community and family life. They have resisted heretofore scientific analysis and guidance because of a lack of methods by which we could penetrate and explore the intricacies of interpersonal relation systems in an open community. The question is: What can sociometry add to the already available methods of procedure? Can sociometric methods be simplified to such a degree that they can be applied by untrained workers? Where are sociometric methods taught and, last but not least, how could they be applied to problems and projects some of which are here selected at random--City-wide introduction of a nutrition program--Position of the teacher in the school and the community--The community council in primitive communities--The organization of a slum clearance project--Selection of key-individuals for state conference work--The value of choice-motivations--The status of the powerful but unpopular person in the community--The formation of cliques and their analysis--The adjustment of isolated and rejected persons, etc., etc.

It is obvious that a general description of sociometric methods is necessary here before a specific comment to every question can be given. In the first part of this article the significance of sociometric work is explained, in the second part its application to some actual problems is discussed.

¹A Study Conference on Community Organization for Family Life Education, sponsored by the U. S. Office of Education, Bureau of Home Economics, in conjunction with the University of Chicago, which took place between July 9th and 18th, 1942 at the University of Chicago.

Sociometric Procedure

Sociometry is primarily a theory of society in which inter-personal relations are given the dominant role--a role which they have always had, implicitly, since the origin of the social sciences. Sociometry has made this proposition fully explicit and overt. In this sense sociometry is not only a fresh attack upon the territory covered by sociology; it is also an attack upon the territory covered by anthropology, economics and psychiatry--in fact, of every science in which the factor of personal relations, in its most literal sense, has been neglected. Sociometry does not expect to take over these territories by an imperative declaration but by rendering them a service, by hard and persistent piecemeal work to be accomplished by thousands of workers. Each worker should try to solve the problems with which he is immediately faced--and not such problems as are constructed in an atmosphere remote from life situations and from actual needs. Genuine sociometry is therefore always a science in action. Even its analyses bore into social reality, preparing new action. It has often been identified with one or another of its techniques or methods and this has misled the reader in his understanding and evaluation of sociometry as a comprehensive and basic philosophy of social relations. As such, it has inspired quite a number of tests and tools of analysis and measurement, of training and adjustment. But it has never taken the tools more seriously than the philosophy which inspired their invention and construction. Tools of measurement can be replaced by other and better tools. The social investigator should always be ready to abandon an instrument as soon as a more adequate one is available for measuring and studying a situation. The instruments may change but the inter-personal relation systems to be measured, for instance, the isolates, the pair-relations, the triangles, the psycho-social networks and many other more subtle structures, will always be there, challenging the investigator to uncover them as soon as they develop.

There is hardly any phrase in sociometric terminology which has been so abused as the term "inter-personal." Today lipservice is rendered to it by many sociologists, psychiatrists, psychoanalysts and anthropologists, among others, trying to convey to the reader the idea that the complex of inter-personal relation systems is fully taken care of in their studies. However, very rarely in the last few years has one met with a paper written by a student of the disciplines quoted above which actually attacked the problem of inter-personal

relations directly and in a dynamic sense. It is most deplorable that under a new cloak the same old methods and techniques are being used without making any pretence of showing how inter-personal relations originate, how they develop and what function they have in determining the behavior of social groups. It may be useful again to emphasize what the exclusive meaning of an inter-personal operation is. The unifocus approach moves in one direction only, as in case studies, in the psychoanalysis of a patient, etc.--that is, from the case worker or the analyst towards the subject--and not, at the same time, in the opposite direction--that is, from the subject or the patient towards the case worker or the analyst. Therefore, this type of approach should not be called "inter-personal," if we wish to give the word inter-personal a specific meaning. Terminology is of course a convention, but a new term is justified only if it signifies a new thing. "Inter-personal" loses its value as a term if it is used in such a broad sense that it covers every study which deals with human beings. It may already be too late to stop the flood of misuse. However, we sociometrists should give such terms as inter-personal or inter-individual a correct emphasis. When we propose that we are studying inter-personal situations we want to convey the meaning that we are concerned with several simultaneous individual foci--as in sociometric and psychodramatic tests. There are two-way relations when two persons take part in a variety of situations; six-way relations when three persons take part and interact in situations, and so on in proportion to the number of persons interacting.

The growing application of sociometric procedures to social problems has therefore brought forth the question: Which procedures are truly sociometric? It should be made clear that no procedure should be called "sociometric" which does not involve explicitly in its technique of measurement the inter-personal kernel of a situation. There are, of course, many and various forms of social measurement, near-sociometric forms, which neglect this aspect of the general problem. They have some value in preparing for sociometric analysis or for supplementing truly sociometric procedures, but they cannot replace sociometric tests. Methods of social measurement, like those developed by Bogardus, Thurstone, Chapin and others, must gradually be replaced by procedures which take care of the inter-individual and inter-group phenomena without losing sight of the objectives which the former envisage. As long as fully sociometric procedures do not exist in a special field of activity or research, the older methods must be used and recommended.

Sociometric tests have not been invented for their own sake--for the increase of the knowledge of social relations--but for improving the social status of the individuals living in groups. Therefore, we find that already in the earliest period of modern sociometry the emphasis upon aims and applications was particularly strong, for instance, matching of partners in a play-situation, in a work or home-situation, in marriage-situations, training and re-training of individuals in groups, always with the view of applying assignment and training techniques of all sorts to every inter-personal situation on the basis of sociometric and psychodramatic analysis.

A full understanding of sociometric terms and methods requires that the underlying philosophy of social relations which gave them motivation and scope be studied hand in hand with them. Sociometric tests, for instance, have been described as a new sort of questionnaire, as a method of interviewing, as a study of verbal responses and of likes and dislikes. These are only partial descriptions of the test. A sociometric test is first of all an action and behavior test of individuals in a group. The form of the questionnaire or the form of the interview, are "shortcuts" of sociometric testing. The aim to cut procedures short is legitimate as long as we do this consciously and as long as we are able to determine how valid and reliable a shortcut sociometric test is compared with a full-fledged one.

An illustration of this is a shortcut which I tried out recently--a form which might be called sociometric self-rating. It is based on the fact that every individual "intuitively" has some intimation of the position he holds in the group. He comes to know approximately whether the flow of affection and sympathy or antipathy for him is rising or falling. However vague this intuitive feeling may be it makes him feel happy sometimes--or sad. An individual tries to rate his own relation to the members of his group and their relationship to him by proceeding as follows: He sketches out all the situations in which he is involved at the time and fills in all the individuals who take a part in them and in which role. Then he tries to clarify for himself how he feels towards each of these people. He should pretend that he is taking part in a sociometric test and choose or reject them according to preference and rank, giving his reasons. In a later step he should make a guess what every one of these people feel towards him and what reasons they might have. After he has finished his own self-rating he may ask another person familiar with his

situation to rate him independently. Self-rating² is obviously like a sociometric test carried out in the mind of the tester himself in which the other individuals are like dolls. It is probable that the more systematic such a self-rating is made, the more helpful an orientation it will provide for the tester. As a compass of inter-personal relations it is of course primitive but I believe that our intuition in this direction is trainable. The validity and reliability of data from sociometric self-rating can be determined by giving to a group of individuals an open sociometric test immediately after they have rated themselves.³

Self-rating has the advantage of being anonymous. We have tried out another form in which the individuals choosing remain anonymous but the individuals chosen are made known. Since for the status of an individual in the group the outgoing choices matter little compared with the incoming choices, this procedure is a substitute where the anonymity of the voter is an indispensable condition. Such anonymous sociometric balloting should prove to be a more truly democratic process for the selection of public representatives than the ones used at present in our election polls. Far more informative are sociometric tests when they are open and direct.

It is not at all surprising to the sociometrically trained investigator that parallel with the world-wide crisis and the emergency within our own nation a rising interest in sociometry and its methods has made itself felt. The complete change in social life in every community (especially since the United States entered the war) gives the most ideal mise en scene for the application of sociometry. There has been an uprooting, or at least a changing of the conservative groupings in family life, in industry and in business, which has organized thousands of unprecedented situations--defense industries, army camps, fighting units, etc., all challenging habitual patterns of behavior and demanding readjustments of practically every individual and every social agency in the country.

Whenever radical social changes take place people may lose highly cherished principles and forms of behavior. For a freedom-loving people the form of behavior which may be lost is the process of freedom, individual and collective. Now the

²A report of such a study will be published shortly.

³Thus, the individual's intuition of his sociometric status can be compared with the objective facts of others' expression towards him, e.g., his actual sociometric status.

political concept of freedom is, from the sociometric point of view, a concept corresponding to the idea of spontaneity. Just as spontaneity of emotion and thought may get lost in a world overcontrolled by cultural conserves, freedom of action may get lost in a world overcontrolled by political power groups. The problem is how to maintain and increase spontaneity and freedom respectively, in a world so constituted as ours. The answer is that spontaneity and freedom have to be tested and trained with the same rigorousness and persistence with which we test and develop machines and cultural conserves up to the optimum which the social situation permits. Techniques of freedom have to develop hand in hand with the techniques of spontaneity. Sociometric tests may give clues to the amount of freedom desired by an aggregate of individuals. If it remains partially or totally frustrated the tests indicate how to construct techniques of freedom and where to apply them.

Comments on Actual Problems

Some of the problems and projects brought forth and discussed during the conference were particularly striking. They had been formulated in the form of questions by the various delegates of the conference and submitted to me for comments and analysis.

Mrs. Ivan A. Rustad, Coordinator
Family Life Education
Toledo, Ohio

"How can sociometric techniques be of assistance in programs which have to be carried out on a city-wide basis in order to be of benefit to every member of the community--as, for instance, in the City of Toledo?"

The problem of making a nutrition program effective throughout the City of Toledo, a method must be used by which every member of the city's population can be reached. On first sight this may look as simple as publishing the program in every local newspaper, broadcasting it from every local radio station, or sending out literature on the subject through the mails. In a totalitarian country or in a country which is ruled by commandments and orders these methods might bring about, up to a certain point, a surface acceptance, however unconvinced the populace may be of the value of the program. But in a country in which the democratic process of life is in

force, cross-currents of opinion may discredit any program. Sociometry has therefore maintained that person to person contact, and methods which make use of these contacts are more important in introducing any new idea to a population than the most powerful technological devices, like the printing press and the radio. The latter can of course be extremely useful, supplementary to a person to person approach in the diffusion of an idea. Sociometric studies have established that it is not necessary directly to reach every inhabitant of, for instance, the City of Toledo. We have found that there is only a small percentage of individuals, so-called "key-individuals" who are the chief carriers of opinion. If these key-individuals are won over to the idea, the balance of the population will almost automatically become infused with the necessary understanding and enthusiasm for the idea advocated by a federal agency. Sociometric methods are able to determine these key-individuals or carriers of opinion with a great deal of precision. They are not necessarily "leaders" in the heroic sense of the word; they may simply happen to have influence within a small circle of people where even President Roosevelt might not be able to exert any. Toledo may have a census of about 100,000 families. It might be divided into twenty areas, each of five thousand families. Each of these areas might be under the responsibility of a social worker who gathers the opinion of each family representative as to who, among the people in the area, would be a desirable candidate for a local committee within the area. Each family representative might choose five people and reject five people (rejections are often a difficult demand upon populations tested; they have to be left out if necessary). On the basis of the material gathered by these twenty field workers an analysis of these choices (and rejections) can be made and the key-individuals become visible. If there are about five hundred such individuals in the city as a whole, intensive preparation of these five hundred is sufficient to educate the total population of Toledo.

It is important to realize that once such an analysis is made for one program, the results may be helpful to any other program which is to be introduced at that time. For a given period of time, the federal agencies interested in introducing community programs can make use of these data in order to disseminate ideas which need the consent of the large majority of the population to be a success. From time to time a check on the results obtained is necessary; retests are made which may show a change in the number and identity of

the opinion carriers.⁴ It is clear that the analysis of the choices is a technical job which might best be taken care of by a Sociometric Institute or a specially trained analyst.

Mrs. Jeanne Luckey, Head
Home Economics Department
Richmond, Indiana, Plainville, Indiana

"How may the individual woman economics teacher be made more aware of her importance in contributing to the social well-being of her community?"

Home Economics teachers as well as teachers in general are often little aware of the actual position they have in the community. They are exposed as well to the positive affection as to the hostility of hundreds of parents and children. It is therefore important for a teacher to have an objective estimate of their acceptance by the group. In many communities sociometric procedures are not widely enough used for every teacher to find herself upon the community "map" and study her own position within the group, her known--and still more important, her unknown--friends and enemies. I have therefore suggested a shortcut to a sociometric test, a sociometric self-rating. Any person who is widely exposed to criticism of an intangible and invisible character, especially if he holds a public position, is often jittery because of not knowing with any certainty from which direction the poisoned arrows of hate and rejection are coming. However, we should sit down at regular intervals and figure out with the same attention we give to our bank accounts how we stand with A,B,C,D, and E, the pertinent individuals within the range of our activities. Then we should try to discover how they stand towards us. In this way we would arrive at a far clearer picture of our own situation than if we were to permit ourselves to be driven by the impulse of the moment and by flashes of intuition. If such a self-rating were checked by a co-worker or a reliable friend with a fairly good idea of our own situation, but less identified with it than we, we would supply ourselves with a near-sociometric measure.

Insight into one's sociometric position may be a deterrent for a beginner. But it was equally well a deterrent to see the X-ray picture of one's own inner anatomy for the first

⁴This procedure uncovers the "grapevines" within a community and puts them at the service of the community authorities.

time, or to learn that one had diabetes and must change the diet and live in accord with the condition. In the course of time we have learned to overcome the fear of this knowledge. Similarly we will begin to realize the great power and the advantages which one can collect from coldly analyzing the situation and how it can be improved. A community organizer may call to the rescue one or two individuals from his network in order to repair an unbalanced situation. He may have a face to face meeting with some of the individuals who are responsible for an increasingly unpleasant situation and cut short in the nick of time an impending crisis.

Eva H. Larson, Assistant Supervisor
State Division of Vocational Education
Department of Home Economics Education
State College Station, Fargo, North Dakota

"If one were attempting to organize a community council in a town when the program for better Community and Family Life and its purposes were not very well known, would you suggest postponing organization until the program was better known, or go ahead and organize, regardless?"

In a community in which the population is not sufficiently mature for the democratic processes which sociometric testing anticipates, a sociometric procedure has to be constructed in accord with the degree of democratization which can be absorbed without great friction. For instance, the majority of the community may not be able to understand the value of "choice" in the formation of a council. They may have become habituated to being governed without their consent. The demand of open and direct choices of council representatives on the basis of their personalities and capacities may confuse them and seem like a burden. In such cases, instead of using open and direct criteria (as for instance: with whom would you like to live in the same house or in the same city block), so-called indirect criteria can be used, (as for instance: from whom do you borrow money? Or tools? Whom do you invite to your house for parties? Who invites you?). The sociograms constructed on the basis of this information would reveal among other structures the key-individuals, the leader, the isolated as well as the rejected individuals. Councils can then be formed on the basis of the actual sociometric status of the people, as revealed by the test, without their being aware of the fact that the councils are formed on the basis of their own mutual evaluations and preferences. Sociometry is applied to their situations without their knowledge and the

committees will appeal to them because of the indirect influence they had upon their formation.

Dorothy D. Sayer, Teacher-trainer
Adult Homemaking Education
St. Louis, Missouri

"In many communities the key person suggested as a "good person" to lead your committee for organization of adult classes has ability to some extent, but can only work with her own group. There will be those in the community whom you will never reach because she is on the committee. The superintendent always recommends her and she, in turn, always expects to be on "any" and "all" committees. How can you work with this adult and at the same time reach all groups?

What might you give this person to do in order not to "reject" her by now having her as chairman? There is always a group that will not come to the adult classes if "Mrs. So and So" is chairman.

When she attends a class she always has her group around her, wanting to work with her. The rest of the group is rejected and has to form a minority group. What can we do with this rejected group?"

Sociometric procedures provide a check against powerful but unpopular persons in the community. An individual may exert power because of his economic status or because of his prestige within a social agency. His temperamental disposition however, his uncooperative and dictatorial manner may hinder the introduction of an excellent program. The sociometric test reveals the objective sociometric status of that individual. It gives the majority a good reason to put him in his place and it may encourage restrained members of the committee to exert an influence in better accord with their position in the group, which may be far beyond their modest expectations. The powerful but unpopular leader, on the other hand, may gain insight into his own position, realizing that the amount of hostility against him is far larger than he knew. He may try to change his behavior. He may be a person of great ambition and capacity, his total elimination from a committee might constitute a serious loss. Sociometric tests when made at regular intervals permit an objective analysis of the situation as it develops, and suggest who should be included and who should be excluded from a committee. It is good education for acceptable as well as unacceptable people.

Eleanor Troxell, Director of P.T.A. Study Groups
Kalamazoo Public Schools
Kalamazoo, Michigan

"With this sociometric test, is there danger of forming cliques? How can this be avoided. This is one of our biggest problems, hence I am asking only one question."

There are two types of cliques: those which are open and manifest and those which are invisible and hidden. It is the anonymous form which is most dangerous, first because it is intangible and second because its own members do not know to what extent they are part of a clique. Sociometric tests enable us to determine the existence and the extent of such anonymous associations. Once we know of their existence, means of their breaking up or control can be established.

The question can be raised whether the sociometric procedures themselves cannot be manipulated by a clique and so promote cliques rather than destroy them. It should be very difficult to manipulate sociometric polls, the larger the population under study. The fact for instance, that a certain individual is chosen by a large number of people does not establish in itself a leader position. A sociometric analysis may reveal that he is rejected by as many or more, or it may reveal that the individuals who choose him are isolated or rejected ones and therefore powerless. Or it may reveal that the ones who choose him choose one another and are associated like a peculiar clique. They may form a sociological island. The choices he receives may not be evenly distributed throughout the community, but the rejections he receives may be quite evenly distributed. Individuals may be chosen by few, but each chooser may represent a key-position in the group with a large following. They may be rejected by many but these may form a closed group in the sociogram and thus the meaning of the rejections may be comparatively insignificant. There are many more factors which an analysis reveals. No political strategist would be able to manipulate such intricate and complex personal structures.

Further, in certain situations anonymous sociometric tests are preferable to open tests. The sociometric electorate express their choices and rejections in form of secret ballots. As their individual names are never known to anyone, the fear of retaliation coming from any power clique in the community is eliminated. On the basis of these ballots a "symbolic" sociogram can be charted which, although incomplete, may suit the purpose. It is also within the means of a sociometric

investigator to apply to the same situation and the same individuals a battery of sociometric tests, each with a different criterion. He can array direct and indirect criteria with such skill that a political clique would be unable to master them all.

May Streepy, Head
Vocational Homemaking Department
Senior High School
Creston, Iowa

"I would like tools and methods in: Community Organization, Measurements which deal with the home, Family and Community."

Sociometric procedures can be used for: a) The position of families in the community, b) For the inner organization of families and homes. On the sociometric map of a community one can determine first the families which are as units isolated from the rest of the population. Secondly, a number of families can be discovered which are as units centers of attraction and repulsion. Between these two extremes of isolation and popularity many intermediary stages exist.

The inner organization of homes can be tested. If, for instance, parents and children choose their partners for work, recreation, and other social activities persistently outside of the home. The test reveals a flight of choice and emotion away from the home. The structure of the home is then "extroverted." If such a situation is found from re-test to re-test as persisting, then the "tele" between the members of the home is thinning--the home is breaking up. If, on the other hand, the trend of choices goes within the home towards its own members exclusively, leaving other members of the community entirely out, that will suggest that the organization of this home is "introverted." These highly integrated homes may be found for this reason, among the isolated units. At times, however, members of such families may be centers of attraction from the outside, although they may reciprocate only with a second or third choice, having their first choices reserved for their home associates. It is often found that when an introversion of choice goes parallel with a high introversion of rejection, the home may break from within because of the hostilities having no outlet.

Such homes can be treated by interview methods, psychodramatic procedure or re-assignment techniques.

Evelyn Millis Duvall, Executive Director
The Association for Family Living
Chicago, Illinois

"What methods might prove feasible in discovering psychological networks among families residing in government housing projects? Under what circumstances does it seem advisable to use other than direct approaches in ascertaining attractions and rejections within groups?"

Several investigators have studied psycho-social networks in government housing projects. Direct criteria as: Whom do you like as neighbors in the housing project, (Wolman)⁵ or indirect criteria: Mutual visiting, using other persons' well, helping to move in, helping in case of sickness, borrowing household equipment, borrowing farm equipment, helping with other work, carrying mail, cooperative purchase, etc. (Loomis) have proven useful for the discovery and analysis of networks. The type of criterion which is most helpful for analysis is suggested by the situation. There is no hard and fast rule, in fact, inflexibility of criteria may be most harmful to sociometric study. Wolman chose a direct criterion with the open participation of the settlers because he wanted to give them the satisfaction of being grouped in accord with their choices. Open criteria and open assignments and adjustments go hand in hand. Loomis was not concerned with settling people in a new project; he tested an already established community, perplexed by the large number of families which moved away from it. The psycho-social networks provided him with a key for the understanding of the "movers" and the "stayers." When indirect criteria as here are used, adjustments or re-assignments cannot be made in the "open." Loomis suggested that the administrator can, on the basis of sociometric data, form discussion groups in order to stop the process of disintegration in time. Indirect criteria and indirect forms of adjustment go hand in hand.

Mrs. E. A. Bloom, Itinerant Instructor in Family Life Education
Colorado State Board for Vocational Education
Denver, Colorado

"What does one do to help the 'isolate'?"

⁵S. Wolman, "Sociometric planning of a new community," *Sociometry*, Volume 1, Number 1 and 2, 1937.

⁶Charles P. Loomis and Dwight Davidson, "Sociometrics and the study of new rural communities, *Sociometry*, Volume 2, Number 1, 1939.

In many cases the isolate may not need any help. He may be contented with his position in the group and the balance of the group may not suffer any injury because of his isolation. There are "voluntary" isolates and there are "compulsory" isolates, i.e. against their will. It is the latter who need help and advice. They cannot help themselves and may resent their status. They may be a burden to many members of the community and resented.

Among the voluntary isolates one finds often a superior class of individuals. In some instances they are isolates only in the popular sense of the word, but from a sociometric point of view they are centers of attraction chosen by many as leader. It is they who withdraw their tele from all members of the community.

Among the compulsory isolates there are many degrees and varieties of isolation. There are many situations in which an individual operates. He may be an isolate in his home-situation, love-situation, recreational and civic-situation, but he may not be an isolate in his work-situation. One rarely finds a total isolate, that is, unchosen in all situations. He may appear as an isolate at the time of the test but re-tests of his situation at different points in time may show a change in his status. Categories like isolate, key-individual, leader, opinion-carrier, etc. are heuristic concepts. It is only detailed sociometric analysis of actual situations which give them a practical meaning.

An individual does not need to be a total isolate in order to be considered seriously maladjusted. He may show a reasonable status in all situations except in his love-situation. There he may admire one girl exclusively, but he may be only her tenth choice, when asking for a date or being invited to her house. If there is a higher percentage of isolates in a group, that often means that a small number of individuals on "top" is overcrowded with affection, coming to them far beyond their needs. A better distribution of affection is often helpful to both ends of the ladder. By methods of sociometric assignment and by psychodramatic training some of these injustices of nature can be repaired.⁷

Catherine T. Dennis, State Supervisor of Home Economics Education
Raleigh, North Carolina

"What can be done with the domineering character in the group whose financial, political or military position gives her a security that the group cannot combat in making choices?"

⁷J. L. Moreno and Helen Jennings, "Advantages of Sociometric Techniques," *Sociometric Review*, Number 1, 1936.

According to Lundberg's study⁸ "There is a tendency for people with average or lower socio-economic scores to choose friends of higher socio-economic status than themselves." Lundberg used jointly Chapin's scale of socio-economic status⁹ and sociometric testing. His findings coincide with the statistical studies of Moreno and Jennings;¹⁰ "The frequency distribution of choices shown by sociometric data is comparable to the frequency distribution of wealth in a capitalistic society." This economic reflection of the socio-dynamic effect upon the status of an individual in his group has to be weighed carefully in a sociometric analysis. An individual of less capacity and usefulness may appear preferable to a person of greater capacity and usefulness because of his economic status and prestige. If sociometric tests reveal such a situation as existing, it is often undesirable to "force" a person of greater capacity upon the group. The forces underlying sociometric status are of a dynamic character. They cannot be pushed aside by mere discussion and persuasion, and even if a group has been sold to that person of greater capacity, the resistance coming from the "grapevines" may persist to disturb the functioning of the council unofficially. It may be often indicated to choose the lesser of the two evils--to place in the official leader position the individual whose sociometric score shows highest acceptance. The person of greater capacity, but of lower sociometric status can be delegated to function as professional adviser or consultant, the power behind the throne.

Clarice Watson, Instructor
Oklahoma A. and M. College
Stillwater, Oklahoma

"When asked to make a selection for a dinner-partner, I debated whether or not I should name two people whom I knew and enjoyed or two whom I would like to know. It was really immaterial to me, but because a decision had to be made, I chose the two whom I did not know. Suppose the other two people whom I considered desirable were not named by anyone in the group on a similar basis as I missed them, in such a case is it significant that these

⁸George A. Lundberg, "Social Attraction Patterns in a Rural Village," *Sociometry*, Volume 1, Number 1 and 2, 1937.

⁹F. S. Chapin, "The Social Status Scale," University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1933.

¹⁰J. L. Moreno and Helen Jennings, "Statistics of Social Configurations," *Sociometry*, Volume 1, Number 3 and 4, 1938.

two were isolated? Could not the reason given for making a preference be equally significant as the decision itself, in interpreting the social feelings of both the person making the decision and of the people from whom preferences were made?"

The motivation of choices is closely related to the way a sociometric test is constructed. Several aspects of the test have to be modified according to the situation to which it is applied. A question which always comes up is: How many choices or rejections should be permitted to a subject? One way of determining the number of choices is a simple analysis of the situation. If children are grouped in a classroom in such a fashion that every pupil is seated between two neighbors, then it is logical to the subject if he is asked to make two choices. The structure of the classroom dictates then the number of choices. If however, the situation is a dining-room and the guests are seated around tables which cannot hold but four, then the structure of the dining-room would suggest that every subject should make three choices of the three people with whom he would like to sit at the same table. Another way of approaching the problem of the number of choices permissible, is to base it upon the inner situation of the subject, f.i. upon his spontaneity, instead of the social situation in which he is placed. Then the number of choices permissible to an individual is unlimited. In practice however, there is a fading out observable after a number of choices have been made.

The choices and the motivations given vary greatly from case to case. Their significance depends upon the criterion of the situation to which they refer. Choosing a table-partner may be a rather casual matter compared with choosing a marriage-partner, a business-partner, or even a dance-partner. Consequently, remaining unchosen as dining partner may be insignificant for the actual sociometric status of the individual. There are dozens of situations in which he operates and which may show a different picture of his status. Every choice however, is a decision. Some people are found who are unable to give any motivation for their choice--they are mute. Others are found who could write a book about the same type of choice and the same type of situation. It is of advantage to sociometric analysis if two sociograms are drawn--one sociogram of the choices, rejections, etc., and the other sociogram of the motivations for them.

Katherine Taylor, Consultant in Family Life Education
Seattle, Washington

"Please describe in detail the possible uses of psychodramatics in high school and adult classes and ways of setting up psychodramatic clinics."

The only educational set-up which can be considered as a psychodramatic clinic in an embryonic fashion is the nursery school. I say "embryonic" because even nursery and kindergarten teachers are just beginning to appreciate the significance of sociometric and psychodramatic concepts, like the auxiliary ego, sociometric status of a child in a nursery, assignment techniques, guided spontaneity and spontaneity training. When they will be fully understood and fully applied nursery and kindergarten schools will be revolutionized in their procedures. It is however most deplorable that even these rudiments of psychodramatic education are cut off branch and root, the instant the child enters grade school, high school, college and university, and it can be noticed that the psychodramatic implications in the educational process vanish the higher up the pupil moves in his academic studies. The result is an adolescent confused in his spontaneity and an adult barren of it. A continuity of the kindergarten principle throughout our whole educational system, from first grade to the university, can be secured by the psychodramatic approach to educational and social problems. Every public school, high school and college should have a psychodrama stage as a guidance laboratory for their everyday problems. Many problems which cannot be adjusted in the classroom itself can be presented and solved before the psychodramatic forum especially designed to such tasks.

Psychodramatic work has to be graded in accord with the maturity level of the participants. Standardized life situations and imaginary situations which are fitting for a pupil of second grade public school may be out of order for pupils in the second year of college.

The establishment of psychodramatic units within educational institutions is not only feasible but imperative at this moment. The world-wide crisis in which the entire nation is enmeshed, affects the younger generation more gravely than any other part of the nation. The methods of interview, indeed of all verbal semantics, are only rarely fully effective in the adjustment of the problems of the child and the adolescent. The relief, coming from interview, has to be replaced by the catharsis of action, working out their problems as their own

actors on the stage, or by spectator catharsis, and a staff of auxiliary egos mirroring the problems which the pupils have by means of dramatic presentation. Analysis and discussion precedes and follows every psychodramatic session. The life-situation in which the results of the treatment is put to a test is nothing but a step in a series of situations--a revolving psychodramatic process.

Another phase in psychodramatic work is the process of spontaneity training, of educational subject matter as well as a method for personality development. The various procedures used in a theatre for the psychodrama culminate in its group approach--the fact that the pupils are treated as individuals in the midst of a group, resembling the situation which they will encounter in the world at large.¹¹

¹¹Due to limitation of space the balance of questions will be answered in a later issue of Sociometry.

Sociometry in Action

J. L. Moreno

Sociometry, Vol. 5, No. 3 (Aug., 1942), 298-315.

Stable URL:

<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0038-0431%28194208%295%3A3%3C298%3ASIA%3E2.0.CO%3B2-L>

Sociometry is currently published by American Sociological Association.

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/about/terms.html>. JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use provides, in part, that unless you have obtained prior permission, you may not download an entire issue of a journal or multiple copies of articles, and you may use content in the JSTOR archive only for your personal, non-commercial use.

Please contact the publisher regarding any further use of this work. Publisher contact information may be obtained at <http://www.jstor.org/journals/asa.html>.

Each copy of any part of a JSTOR transmission must contain the same copyright notice that appears on the screen or printed page of such transmission.

JSTOR is an independent not-for-profit organization dedicated to creating and preserving a digital archive of scholarly journals. For more information regarding JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

