

BOOK REVIEWS

Psychodrama for the Timid Clinician. by E. Leveton New York: Springer, 1977. xiii + 175 pages.

Of the several books on psychodrama which have appeared in the last few years *Psychodrama for the Timid Clinician* is one of the most recent additions. The book is comprised of 15 short chapters as follows. The first two discuss the issue of the role of the director-therapist, and the issue of the seating arrangement of a psychodrama session. The third chapter describes the warm-up including several examples of verbal as well as nonverbal techniques. The next eight chapters present eight specific techniques; the Double, Role Reversal, the Sociogram, the Empty Chair, Six Characters in Search of a Personality, the Given Scene, the Magic Shop, and Masks. Chapters 12 through 14 address the topics of the advantage of being spontaneous, the handling of resistance, and the closing of a psychodrama session. The last chapter provides two examples of the use of psychodrama techniques; one with a psychiatric ward group, and the other with a couple's group.

The book appears to have three salient characteristics. These manifest themselves in first, the definition of the intended audience, second; in the heavy emphasis on techniques, and third; in the personal approach in which the book was written. The definition of the intended audience is already indicated in the book's title, that is, the timid clinician. The author tells us that at first she applied the term, "the timid clinician" to therapists of the old school "who were eager to try some of the newer techniques but too shy to do so." (p.167). Then she thought it would apply to the novice therapists, the talented newcomers, the new students. In fact, the book seems to address both these groups. The second characteristic of the book lies in its emphasis on techniques. About two thirds of the book describe a variety of techniques. Finally, the book is written in the first person as a personal account of the author's experience with psychodrama. "This book is an account of my experiments. . ." the author tells us, and "My aim is to let you know what techniques I've found useful, and let you know as much as possible about my own experience in using the techniques: my hesitations, my questions, my conflicts." (p.xi). In discussing these issues the author appears very sensitive to the problems that may trouble both the director who uses psychodrama and the protagonist; the recipient of this therapeutic intervention.

Unfortunately, however, the book has shortcomings. The most important one is its limited scope. The author made a deliberate decision to avoid any discussion of theoretical issues. The result is that many psychodramatic principles and the rationale underlying the psychodrama procedure have not been discussed. On the other hand the book discusses techniques, many of them in isolation as if they were independent therapeutic interventions. Furthermore, the information

given in the book is mostly limited to the author's experiences and does not take into account experiences by others as evident from the literature on psychodrama. Indeed, the author makes it clear that the procedure described by her is *her* version of psychodrama, but there is still the danger that the "timid clinician" will misconstrue it as *the* classic psychodrama treatment. In fact, the book does not provide a complete description of classic psychodrama. Even the discussion of techniques is selective. Basic psychodramatic techniques such as the soliloquy, self-presentation, the mirror, and future projection are barely mentioned. There are also several inaccuracies throughout the book. For instance, the Empty Chair technique is incorrectly attributed to Perls, the Magic Shop technique is limited to one, not necessarily the classic, procedure, and the technique described as the Given Scene actually refers to role-training and the technique of the 'Exit Test' without saying so specifically.

One also finds it disturbing that the book was designed with several blank pages and that the bibliography is extremely poor. Of the nine references listed in that bibliography only three pertain to psychodrama.

The book is well written, easy to read, and includes some interesting practical discussions. It is doubtful that the timid clinician who reads it will understand the full scope of psychodrama as a therapeutic modality. He may, however, learn a few action techniques which he can incorporate in treating his clients.

David A. Kipper

Therapy in Motion by Maureen Needham Costonis (ed.). Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1978. xix + 278 pages.

This book is an anthology of collected papers from a variety of diverse sources; it is now presented by an academic press to a highly specialized, but growing interest group. It represents an interdisciplinary reader in dance or movement therapy.

The idea that spontaneity is an essential dimension of the healthy personality and that people might become more healthy by learning to become more spontaneous is not especially new to psychodramatists. Nor is the idea that more than just words are required in the growth and development of the whole person. In the past decade there has been a growing awareness of the importance of the nonverbal aspects of communication to diagnosing the inner state of the individual or to interpreting interactions. Body image is now thought to be essential to self concept and self assessment. Both popular "body language" and careful empirical treatments of this topic have been on the market. Nonverbal messages are believed to provide indicators of the affective domain. If such data is at all valid, then the nonverbal aspects of expression, including posture, movement, paralinguistic cues, and facial expression, are not only ways of describing and under-

standing how humans function, but provide access to ways of doing something about it too. This would include correcting, curing, and making better.

Because of similar assumptions about "human nature" and effective treatment, many psychodramatists are likely to find the ideas in this book compatible with their own, and rightly so. Both theater and dance require doing, moving, and action. Actors may move rhythmically and dancers may perform a story. Both dance therapy and psychodrama have an aesthetic as well as a healing dimension. Both are aimed at a synthesis of significant human experience. Both are concerned with form, pattern and structure. Both involve a right and left brain unity. Both have their prehistorical roots in the integration of mind, body, and spirit through expression. In such times, dramas enacted to ensure a successful hunt or dances performed to make the ground more fertile may also have had a therapeutic impact on a tribal culture and promoted a feeling of completeness and well being.

The point is that both movement therapy and psychodrama have similar purposes and utilize similar modes to achieve similar ends. They can co-exist because they are complementary rather than antagonistic methods. Conflicts about differences ("How much control is exercised . . . ?") are not about questions of kind but about questions of degree. Since "man does not live by words alone," attention to movement is essential. But man does not live by movement alone either. Otherwise, poetry therapy could be expected to achieve no results whatever, and that is not the case. Each method can serve as a resource to augment the other. The patient or client is thereby enriched.

The book is divided into four parts exploring four different themes. The themes are developmental. Each would be understandable in and of itself, but each one also builds on the prior one. For that reason, the book would be an excellent text for a course in dance therapy. The four themes are: (1) communicating through expressive movement, (2) expanding the movement repertoire, (3) enhancing body awareness, and an applied integrative section, (4) the creative interface.

The articles were carefully selected. Some are virtually unavailable except in this volume. Material on social or recreational dance are excluded. Instruments, observational procedures, and analytic techniques included throughout, make this book a valuable reference for a mental health facility. The book ends with a comprehensive bibliography of 400 additional sources which should be valuable to scholars and researchers in the expressive therapies.

Alton Barbour