

## Introduction

WHEN I WAS TRAINING in psychodrama at Beacon back in the 1960s, I recall an evening with J. L. Moreno down at the cottage when he was discussing the transformation of learning. I do not recall his exact words, but the gist was that the result of traditional learning methods, in which the instructor taught and the student passively took in what was said, was essentially the death of creativity. He said something to the effect that this was not education but indoctrination. When I rejoined a university faculty in 1979 after being in a free-standing training institute for nearly 10 years, I found myself very frustrated with the format of teaching that seemed to be what Moreno was describing as indoctrination. After 1 year, I knew that if I did not do something different in my teaching style, I could not survive. I took over an undergraduate course in group dynamics that had been taught primarily from a didactic model. The psychodramatist within me emerged, and I redirected the course, using sociometry and psychodrama methods to enable the content to come alive in a creative manner.

This was hard to do because all classrooms had fixed seating, almost always arena style, or seminar rooms with huge tables surrounded by chairs. I was able to find a large, unused room at the top of the old main building. I transformed the room into a place for an experiential learning course by using moveable chairs, the space in the front for a stage, and tables to create a balcony. For a number of years, my fellow faculty members heard stories about that crazy professor who had people standing on chairs, crawling on the floor, acting out scenes, and generally doing things very different from standard teaching practices. Gradually, however, they came to value the benefits the students gained from the course, and I was frequently asked to give a guest lecture in other courses so that I could demonstrate action learning. Today I teach two undergraduate courses that use psychodrama, group dynamics, and other action methods of learning. They are prerequisites for many other courses in our department, especially those with practical applications.

I am sure that I am not alone in this experience. As more and more of us who are trained in psychodrama teach in academia and as more academics are trained in psychodrama, we will want to use our model within the educational system. At present, very little in the literature describes

the use of psychodrama and its methods within university education or teaching. Kranz and Houser discussed this in their article "A Psychodrama Course for Undergraduates," which appeared in the Fall 1988 issue of this journal. This void led to a call for papers for a special issue on the use of sociometry and psychodrama in university education. In response, some stimulating articles have come not only from the United States and Canada but also from as far away as Brazil.

For this special issue, Nancy Drew provides us with an excellent reflection on the use of psychodrama in nursing education. This article is followed by my paper on the integration of an undergraduate and graduate course using sociometry and psychodrama. Rory Remer, in his paper "Family Therapy Inside Out," shares with us the use of psychodramatic simulations for training graduate students in marriage and family therapy. Marie-Anne C. Thompson presents a creative paper on using action-oriented learning for second-year college French students. Andre Mauricio Monteiro and Esly Regina S. de Carvalho from the University of Brasilia report their university experiences using psychodrama and sociometry. The final paper, a very important piece because it gives guidelines and strategies for developing psychodrama courses within an undergraduate curriculum, was written by Peter L. Kranz and Nick L. Lund.

It is hoped that this issue will stimulate readers to write articles about teaching methods using psychodrama, course outcome evaluations using action methods, or other theory and research articles relating sociometry and psychodrama to the university context.

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