

their training. But apart from this point of departure, I feel greatly relieved that someone has finally written a book to serve as an anchor to anyone who wants a clear statement of what psychodrama is about.

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Psychodrama: Creative Therapies in Practice, by Paul Wilkins. London: Sage, 1999.

This book is one of a series on creative therapies in practice, of which Paul Wilkins is the series editor. The author intends the book to be “a comprehensive overview of theory and practice,” drawing “on case material to demonstrate methods and techniques.”

A glance at the titles and content of the nine chapters (excepting the first and last chapters) leaves the impression that this is one more introductory book on how to conduct a psychodrama, but that is not the case. Chapter titles, such as “Setting the Stage” and “Warming Up,” operate on a meta-level and are figures of speech, rather than literal labels of content. Wilkins explains all of that in his preface, and in chapter one he writes about the birth of psychodrama, its locus, matrix, and *status nascenti*, including key concepts. Throughout the book, key terms are in boldfaced type, and examples and illustrations are in italics, which makes them easy to identify.

Chapter two is about instruments, techniques, and essential elements. Chapter three is about starting a practice, training, and working with clients. Chapter four is about running beginning group sessions. Chapter five is about encounter, warming up, selecting a protagonist, choosing a director, moving into action, and using auxiliaries and doubles. (To my way of thinking, a double *is* an auxiliary.) Chapter six is about directing a drama, including the use of doubles and role reversals. Chapter seven is about the role of the audience, achieving closure, and sharing. Chapter eight is about the infrastructure of the worldwide psychodrama community. Wilkins includes information about processing, which is used in training groups but not therapy groups. He offers information about joining a group, working as psychodramatist, and finding out more about the method or the people who use the method. He provides useful Web site addresses.

The final chapter contains a critical—not to be confused with negative—view of psychodrama as a therapeutic modality, an explanation of the resistance to J. L. Moreno by the behavioral science community, and criticisms of psychodrama as a method. The author’s tone in the book seems even handed,

viewing Moreno neither as a deity nor as a mad man, with his flaws identified as readily as his brilliance. The whole book is compact, only 145 pages long, including glossary, index, references, and recommended readings. At first glance, the book seems to be a beginner's book, one for someone with a newly discovered interest in psychodrama; however, it is not that. The book is more about how to take on the role of a professional psychodramatist. For the next printing, I suggest that the author move the section on where to find a psychodramatist, which seems out of place in chapter two, to chapter five, where it more logically belongs.

Wilkins's work can be seen as a third-generation psychodrama book and, as such, has greatly benefited from the earlier generations. He has had the advantage of drawing on the works of Blatner, Fox, Hare, Karp, Kellerman, Marineau, Sacks, and Williams, among others. I greatly appreciated that instead of copying Blatner on techniques, he simply referenced him. I recommend that all psychodramatists in training read the section (pp. 130–132) on the criticisms of the method identified by Blatner in 1968 and the 1996 rejoinders to those criticisms by Hare and Hare, because those are questions that those students will eventually have to respond to themselves—and they will appreciate that someone has already done some of their work for them.

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