in their own application of the Phe–Di P model, but they are unfortunately brief and lack the depth of discourse and explanation of Verhofstadt-Denève's work. As more practitioners make Verhofstadt-Denève's approach their own, perhaps other works will come forth with more detailed examples and with greater depth of explication.

It is truly refreshing and encouraging to find that someone who understands psychodrama and the basic concepts first presented by Moreno has tackled the monumental task of grounding techniques in a theoretical perspective that can inspire creative applications in clinical practice. Although others have focused on theory before, Verhofstadt-Denève provides a philosophical basis that informs theory in a way that can inspire practitioners.

Too often practitioners of psychodrama are inspired by their own inner feelings and intuition, without an organized conceptual framework. That can lead to shallowness and can seriously limit the effectiveness of practice. There is an abundance of spiritual and scientific perspectives that permeate the therapeutic mind-sets of action-based therapists. We believe in many things, from the mystical to the concrete. Our faith is formed in our developmental experience, and that inevitably colors our view of human nature. Most of us are, by virtue of our professional ethics, accepting and open to our clients' positions and interpretations of the powers in their universe. We can usually sense when a client's interpretation of events or feelings begins to enter the realm of the irrational. We can usually distinguish between magical denials of reality and positions of faith-based perspectives. But a methodological approach to the theoretical underpinnings of human self-concept change through psychodramatic technique is rarely a time-consuming focus of practitioners who devote their energies moving from client to client or group to group.

Verhofstadt-Denève prompts us to slow down and take the time to work through the development of our own view of the human self. The truth is in the client. Regardless of how we may feel, what we may observe, or what interpretation, counsel, or direction we may give, the outcome lies in the being of the client.

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What I Heard in the Silence: Role Reversal, Trauma, and Creativity in the Lives of Women, by Maria V. Bergmann. 2000. Madison, CT: International Universities Press.

Readers who notice this book in the bookstore will probably be attracted by its title and by the cover photo of George Segal's "Three People on Four

Benches." The latter seems to link with the title by suggesting silence, perhaps also resignation or loneliness. Is this a group or three strangers lost in private thought? The positioning of each figure suggests emotional distance. The subtitle is slightly misleading; its topics turn out to be linked additively, rather than by strong connective theoretical tissue. This is not a feminist book or even a book about what are often called, albeit vaguely, "women's issues." Trauma does not appear until the third part of the book; much of it is Holocaust-related. It ignores, but is far from inconsistent with, current burgeoning work on the effects of trauma on cognitive processes, memory, and the dynamics of transference/countertransference. The last section on creativity is, although adequate in its own terms, only superficially related to the other parts. I shall return to this last chapter in a moment. Meanwhile, practitioners who use role reversal as a therapeutic action method—psychodramatists, sociodramatists, and so forth—should be alerted that by role reversal Bergmann means children who feel turned into caretakers by inadequate parents with whom they are reversing roles. That is not a technique but pathology. On the whole, I believe that is Bergmann's strongest and most developed clinical issue.

Women and Role Reversal

Despite the French analyst Jacques Lacan's provocative comment, "*la femme n'existe pas,*" Bergmann follows other (now) mainstream psychoanalysts who argued that the little girl is aware that her body is female and that she intuitively knows she has a vagina before the hypothesized comparison with boys, before the Freudian experience of "lack." Her knowledge may therefore be presumed to temper that envy the Victorian founding father of psychoanalysis had wished on her. True, some feminists see a paradoxical value in this difference as a launching pad for rebellion, for questioning binary role definitions, and, sometimes, for indulging eternal paranoia. Bergmann, however, treads a safer middle of the road, where identification with mother is the basis for a stable body, and thus psychological female identity. So we are not talking about girls who are disappointed not to be boys or reject the notions of girl–boy difference but about girls who are glad they are girls and want something else only if there is trouble. One form of such trouble is a family constellation in which mother is needy or rejecting and daughter is used as a maternal substitute. What the little girl normatively does with her dolls is what she then has to do for real: play mother but also lose out on a precious aspect of childhood. "Symbolically, by reversing roles, these little girls became the mothers they never had" (p. 16). As a corollary to that, the girl may seek in the father a maternal substitute and also become a pseudo-erotic partner. So what looks like easy Oedipal victory over the weak mother

ensues, generating serious guilt and conflict when it is time for adult sexuality, to say nothing of parenthood. To quote a Bergmann patient, "I can't have a baby because then I would have to lose my mother. . . . It is as if I had kept her alive by letting *her* be my baby" (p. 26, emphasis in original). Implied here, among other things, is the longing to hold out for a real mother, one with a positive attitude toward the female aspects of her young daughter's body. In the same way, the urge to find a mother substitute in the father may result in the following:

> When I think of getting married, I have the image of a little girl holding the hand of a big man . . . I obviously don't want to have a baby. It seems as though I had always been waiting for Daddy.

To contemporary ears, such a statement may have an aura of Freudian cliché, of a patient trying a bit too hard to reinforce stock patient–analyst roles. However, we should recall that "waiting for Daddy" also means feeling cruelly trapped in a father–daughter fandango in which each must serve as fantasy gratifier of the other's needs. So daughter may feel she lacks the right to express her own differentiated erotic wishes. In the pseudo-democratic, role-blurred family constellation of today, that lamentable result may not be uncommon. As a result of such dynamics, adult sexual expression can remain unconsciously linked with guilt about incestuous tangles, in which the daughter feels like father's partner and mother is their joint project. I believe psychotherapists whose work explores role complementarity, whereby one set of roles implies another reinforcing set, will find Bergmann's ideas here compatible with theirs.

Creativity

Bergmann's discussion of creative block hinges, like her formulations in other chapters, on object relations (relationships) rather than drives. We therefore hear less of Freud's original notion of art as wish fulfillment and as fantasy that may be a culturally influenced modification of drive and more of Winnicott's transitional space or Sandler's internal objects. In Bergmann's view, the artist is unconsciously addressing an "other" who is an internalized parent representation. "If a creative person suffers from work inhibition, . . . it is often the result of an unconscious hostile dialog with internalized parental images perceived as punitive and as disregarding of that person's creative efforts" (p. 195). Ultimately, that may be laid at the door of failure to separate internally from parents. Meanwhile, the analyst may have to intervene as a benign new object "who can be trusted to remain . . . invested and support their creative efforts until an artistic product is completed" (p. 196).

Therapists who use a more interventionist approach than typical psychoan-

alysts may be interested in the fact that Bergmann attended a performance of one of her actress-patients. "I slipped into the darkened theater and recognized immediately that Ellen's affect became flat and unconvincing when she had to express the hostility of an evil and powerful female character" (p. 203). Readers who know J. L. Moreno's ideas about spontaneity training may see points of similarity here. The problem was not Ellen's training as an actress. Rather, her energy in the role was sapped by anxiety about her relationship with her real mother, so she was not adequately present in the new theatrical role until that had been worked through.

One of the interesting issues that Bergmann raises in her discussion of creativity is bisexuality; she seems *almost* to say that the two are linked, but it is hard to tell if she really means it. Her statement, "I believe that successful creative endeavor is achieved by the utilization of integrated bisexual wishes" (p. 85), could mean that someone in touch with bisexual wishes may thereby be creatively empowered, thus perhaps writing books such as this one. Or it could mean that we should all master our Oedipal conflicts, opposite sex *and* same sex, before stepping out on to the high wire. Sometimes *bisexuality* is used to indicate pathology, as in "Emma's bisexuality reflected [internalization of] her mother's lack of feminine sexual identity" (p. 62). At other moments, it seems that bisexuality fosters creative talent—for example, "She knew how to appeal to the homosexual component in fashion-conscious heterosexual men. . . . Her bisexuality and fluctuating gender identity were used in the service of creativity and original artistic self-expression" (p. 56). Is "fluctuating gender identity" a deviation to be straightened or the grain of sand that stimulates the oyster to produce a pearl? Perhaps we will never know for sure, but I think it fair to say that Bergmann has not quite made up her mind. Indeed, psychoanalysts generally, although interested in creativity and working productively with creative patients, have never entirely decided whether such evidently disturbed individuals as Vincent Van Gogh and Edgar Allan Poe were creative in spite of manifest personal suffering or whether manifest personal suffering spurred them to find solutions in art not required of the better adjusted. Again, perhaps we will never know. But maybe, when it comes to creativity, one serious drawback may be too much sanity.

Psychoanalysis and Other Modalities

Overall, the book contains more theoretical discussion than case material. Although the writing is excellent stylistically, a more critical editing of the narrative thrust of its ideas would have helped its flow. At times, Bergmann seems to be going over the same ground yet again or even theorizing a patient's problems from a point of view not consistent with one she had just used. The therapist oriented to experiential techniques may find some of the

text rather dense, and, there are, unfortunately, those "archaic narcissistic fantasies," "deaggressivization of objects," "cumulative traumata," "super-ego lacunae," and "libidinal cathexis" that can cause eyes to glaze over. Analysts write to each other more often than not, so the influence of their insights may be curtailed when clogged with jargon. That is a pity because much of what analysts now publish, which stresses how human beings are invested with multiple states of mind and multiple roles, is compatible with work outside their field. In that sense, the therapeutic encounter can be seen as potentially breaking old roles and the therapist as one who facilitates that as a participant rather than as a remote observer. Although psychoanalysis is edging toward the social, psychodrama seems to be moving into a mystical phase in which change is alleged to occur through an individual's will to assert his or her own higher truth. So, just as analysts are adopting a less authoritarian, more interactive stance, psychodrama may be turning away from the relational world. What a shame!

All therapists could profit from this book, especially if they concentrate on the clinical sections. To oversimplify, Bergmann is writing about the unconscious exploitation by family members of each other, often with good intentions, so that even if the children feel loved, they internalize roles that are damaging. This is as true of the girl seduced into being her mother's mother or father's minder as it is of the child of a Holocaust-surviving family that insists, while maintaining silence about the catastrophic events, that the child's role is to restore, through some exceptional achievement in life, all that has been lost to the parents. To prosper, the child may have to disappoint the family. As Bergmann aptly puts it, only "an intrapsychic act of separation from an imposed fate can free the child" (p. 138). I believe female therapists are sometimes more sensitive to this poignant entrapment than their male counterparts, and I also believe, on the basis of this book, that adults whose struggles can be thus described would find in Maria Bergmann a therapist equipped with skill, empathy, and a dogged ability to "hang in there" with her patient over the long haul. If so, she occupies a worthy place among psychotherapists of whatever persuasion, orientation, or notion of therapeutic effectiveness, who try, day in and day out, to help their patients renegotiate their imposed fate.

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