

Letter from the Executive Editor

Dear Reader,

What is particularly exciting about this issue of the journal is that contributors come from around the world. As our small world becomes smaller because of social networking—thank you, J. L.—a multitude of new opportunities emerge for us to share expertise, knowledge, and theories and to collaborate in growing psychodrama, sociometry and group psychotherapy globally.

Rene Marineau gets us off to a great start in the Theory and Research Section with his article, “Integrating J. L. Moreno’s Heritage.” Rene, who is psychodrama’s master historian, points the way to our future by tying past and present together to propose areas for development of our field. He takes seriously J. L.’s assertion that “a truly therapeutic procedure can have no less an objective than all of mankind” and discusses four specific directions that our work might take to move us fully into the 21st century. He suggests that we (a) reflect on the scope of our discipline, (b) foster research in our field, (c) foster a unity of action, and (d) review our training programs and institutions. This brilliant and articulate article offers tremendous food for thought, discussion, deliberation, and action.

In the second article, “The Psychodrama of Survivorship,” Elena Cherepanov demonstrates that scholars and practitioners are finding new ways to do exactly what Rene recommends. Elena encourages us to ponder the effects that family and culture can have in unconsciously cementing rather than healing trauma. Elena writes of cultural as well as personal trauma. She also points out how a person’s individual trauma can be affected and become resistant to treatment when generational trauma is present as well. She proposes utilizing a survivor genogram to create a new and more inspiring way in transforming trauma into the experience of surviving and thriving. Using case examples, she demonstrates how to conduct the genogram and integrate it with psychodramatic action.

The third article is written by Ray Naar. In his article, “Touching, Encounter & Group Psychotherapy; Personal Memories of an Old Therapist,” Dr. Naar explores and reflects on the use of touch in therapy deriving his perspectives from his 43 years as a therapist. The article includes empirical findings regarding patients’ attitudes toward touching, practical guidelines, and case studies. Neuroscience has given validity to our understanding that while disconnection and rupture occur in the body as well as the mind, so does healing. Touch, therefore, might be easily seen as part of the natural progression of psychodrama, at least among group members. Ray discusses the therapist’s role in touch as well. Although touch is a tricky subject when it comes to therapy, he argues that to ignore it or even to reject a client’s vulnerable attempt at connection through touch can have “as detrimental an effect as to engaging in it without the client’s invitation.” Dr. Naar provides very

thoughtful guidelines as to when touch might move the process forward and, most importantly, the questions that a therapist needs to answer for himself before engaging in touch.

The fourth article, “Sociodrama in the Training of Social Educators,” is written by Sofia Veiga, Ana Bertão, and Vitor Franco from Portugal. It’s exciting to see that research is again being done on sociodrama and its effects, since the modality can be used in virtually any setting, while psychodrama cannot. As we see through this article, sociodrama provides a way to foster positive sociometry in culture at large. The authors’ qualitative research charts three years of training future social educators and provides many helpful insights about the uses of sociodrama in education. It’s particularly hopeful that the authors used sociodrama to teach students who are training to be social educators, thereby bringing interactive skills to the broader community outside university life.

The fifth article, “The Caring Observer: Creating Self-Compassion through Psychodrama” by Connie Lawrence, takes us into the fascinating and powerful landscape of internal sociometry. She poetically and beautifully describes a model for Caring Observer—a role that many practitioners currently use by other names—that she has developed for use with the therapeutic spiral model. Connie points out how essential it is to find a voice and role that can be a powerful resource in combating and neutralizing the inner critic role. She notes that most of us can show compassion and empathy toward others and would do well to turn some empathy and compassion toward ourselves. The Caring Observer gives an opportunity to send loving kindness inward. Connie also notes recent research that indicates “kindness from the self activates the same circuitry as loving kindness from another.” What is especially wonderful about this article is that Connie gives a rationale, research findings about self-compassion, and many valuable suggestions for how to concretize the model in psychodramatic action.

In the Practitioner’s Corner Section, Marvin Knittel presents a clear and compelling look at “Working with Life Scripts: Spontaneity, Surplus Reality, and Personal Change.” Through a case example, Marvin guides us through the steps taken to profoundly shift the life script of a young woman. He explores both how spontaneity and the astute use of surplus reality heal and how the surplus reality of role training after catharsis can have a markedly positive effect in changing the unhelpful scripts we inhabit.

In the second article in this section, “Modified Sociometric Technique Facilitating Group Psychotherapy: Using a Sociogram with Sharing and Reverse Sharing in a Process Group Psychotherapy Session,” Shelly Korshak presents how to insert action into a normally psychoanalytic group format. She suggests using sociograms and feedback to encourage group members’ covert judgments to surface so that the judgments can be addressed and worked through.

For the final article of this section, Tian Dayton, a gifted theorist and clinical interventionist, presents her “Trauma Time Line.” This is such a wonderful and powerful intervention that Tian describes with great clarity. I first saw Tian present this at a conference years ago, and I have been using it ever since both clinically and in training new psychodramatists. I’m so glad she has written down the steps so we all can follow them. Additionally, Tian makes a case for the power and depth

available in the vignette, an intervention I like to think of as the laser surgery approach to practice.

To conclude this edition, we have reviews of five new works: Adam Blatner gives a mixed review to *Jung and Moreno: Essays on the Theatre of Human Nature*, edited by Craig Stephenson. He finds the ideas of integration fascinating while deploring the apparent lack of awareness of recent practice.

Adam also reviews John Nolte's *The Philosophy, Theory & Methods of J.L. Moreno: The Man Who Tried to Be God*. Adam points us toward additional contributions to psychodramatic theory and practice that John posits in his book as he explores Moreno's prodigious imagination. Adam takes issue with the latter half of the title, and continues the fascinating discussion about Moreno the man, his personal sociometric challenges and their potential causes.

Mario Cossa offers a glowing review of *Healing Eating Disorders with Psychodrama and Other Action Methods: Beyond the Silence and the Fury* by Karen Carnabucci and Linda Ciatola. He finds the authors' breadth and depth of knowledge and experience to be prodigious, as is their generosity in sharing them. Grounding their practice in evidence-based research, the authors discuss all aspects of eating disorders and some possible connections to trauma and familial history. They also present techniques for neophyte and experienced psychodramatists on the various manifestations of eating disorders throughout the life cycle: with children, both male and female adults, and older adults.

Anna Schaum reviews Ann Hale's *Three Cyclical Models Which Enhance Interpersonal Connection*. This monograph treats us to a compilation of Ann's theories and practice from more than a 28-year span. Ann has been a powerful force in our community in fostering the connection of sociometric understanding and the practice of psychodrama, sociodrama, and group psychotherapy. Because she combined all three models in a single monograph, we see in one place the integration, development, and direction of her thinking.

In the last review, Michael Silverman applauds Rosalie Minkin's *Sociodrama for Our Time*. Rosalie, who has been a longtime trainer and practitioner of sociodrama, has written a how-to manual to assist future practitioners in navigating a sociodrama session. Michael points out the book's positive value for those who work in industry, education, and psychotherapy.

As you read these wonderful articles, we hope they will inspire you to join the ranks of scholars and writers our community needs so that we can progress. Perhaps you've got an idea for a piece of research that you're itching to put in motion. We encourage you to utilize the ASGPP listserv to search for collaborators in your process. We also welcome suggestions for improving our journal and are particularly happy if you are willing to participate in its improvement. As we all know, it's easy to see what's wrong and what others should do to fix things, but the changes we wish for are more likely to occur if we take an active part in the process.

Wishing you joy and inspiration in reading this issue of our journal.

Warm regards,
Nina Garcia, LCSW, EdD, TEP, RDT/BCT
Executive Editor