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J. L. Moreno's Concept of Ethical Anger

Zerka T. Moreno

The expression of anger in our society is normally frowned upon. The therapist has to deal with anger in his everyday practice. There is a form of anger that J. L. Moreno described as "ethical." This article deals with some of the ways in which anger can be viewed as having an ethical basis.*

The German poet Goethe said that the greatest happiness of mankind is the personality. Personality is constantly in formation during our lifetime. Among the endowments of the human personality are the emotions and our ability to express them. The expression of love has usually found support in our Western societies, whereas the expression of anger has been looked upon with disfavor.

Perhaps primal scream therapy was a rebellion against the repressiveness of our culture; but it could have been the need of the therapist rather than that of his clients.

The wave of humanistic psychology, particularly certain forms of gestalt therapy, have invested much energy in getting clients to express anger. This became an end in itself and was supposed to be the aim of therapy. What often resulted was that patients could not get beyond the anger. They were not getting purged, which was assumed to be the positive outcome; they were merely learning to be angry. There are no rewards for this type of learning. An extreme case I came across was that of a young man who had been treated in this fashion. Thereafter, whenever he met situations in life that upset him, he needed to run

*This article was adapted from a speech given by Zerka Moreno at the 1985 International Encounter of Psychodramatists and Group Psychotherapists in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

away, to go somewhere where he could scream—hardly either a creative or new or adequate form of expression, or one that serves interpersonal contact. In psychodramatic terms, he was stuck in this warm up of screaming, unable to lift himself out of that track. It took a good deal of hard work to get him out of it; his first session dealt entirely with his expression of impotent rage at the former therapist.

This article deals with a special kind of anger, a concept postulated by Moreno, which he called "ethical anger." This concept points to the fact that there are not only many sources for anger but also many different forms. The literature on anger has not dealt with "ethical anger," which is that kind based on a value system that has been affronted in the individual. It may arise out of a collective situation or a personal one. In this country, for example, we are confronted with issues such as the mother's right to end a pregnancy by abortion vs. the child's right to live, maintenance of life after brain death vs. the right to die, the right to possess arms vs. gun control, the idea that homosexuals are unfit for public office vs. equal employment opportunities for all, the right to consume alcohol before age 21 vs. the enactment of laws to prohibit it, the superiority of the white race vs. the idea that all human beings, given the same opportunities, are potentially able to reach similar levels of achievement, and so on. One can create more items for this list. There are those who would deny us the right not only to speak out, but even the right to carry ethical anger when others are being denied privileges or rights that we deem to be the lot of all. I am not referring to righteous indignation. I am indicating how ethical anger is able to resist the corrosion of our value system.

We are all aware that there are circumstances in which the expression of anger, no matter how justified, will seriously damage a relationship or wound another person so as to do other kinds of damage, sometimes irreparable.

We deal openly with such situations in all forms of therapy. Psychodrama is especially suited to allow expression of this type because it provides a lifelike but safe setting, with auxiliary egos present, not necessarily the original target. The advantage over scream therapy is that it is not directed to a nonpresent shadow figure or a symbol, but to a real person, with the additional factor of a chance to reverse roles, the protagonist becoming the recipient of this anger, to learn from this more than is possible by remaining in his own role. This is done especially when there is strong need to repair a relationship. Several outcomes may result: The protagonist has been given the desired relief and now finds it unnecessary to replicate the expression of anger in life itself; or the protagonist realizes that this behavior is unacceptable or

destructive and wants to practice in action alternative ways of handling the conflict; or the protagonist realizes that there is no possibility for repairing the rift and decides to let the relationship end; or the protagonist may be ready to accept a scene of healing, with the offender making up for his transgression. Sometimes a blending of several of these outcomes takes place. Subsequently the protagonist can be guided into, or personally find, alternative ways of dealing with the situation in life itself.

There are occasions when the release of anger will be of benefit to all concerned, but it is difficult to determine in advance what the outcome will be. Testing it out in a neutral setting is one way we can assess it to some degree, by having the protagonist enact not only his own role, but also that of all the others involved who are going to be affected.

The problem is often: Whose idea of justice are we promoting? Are there certain standards? The *Random House Dictionary of the English Language* defines ethical as "pertaining to or dealing with morals or the principles of morality; pertaining to right and wrong in conduct." There is usually a fairly broad consensus that some social conduct is wrong; but the idea of ethical anger may have to be applied to circumstances of which we have either not been aware or to which we have given insufficient thought or attention.

Now what did Moreno mean by ethical anger? It was not a cold, dispassionate kind. No, indeed. A striking example he was fond of giving was that of Christ's action in chasing the money changers out of the temple courtyard. This is, obviously, a far cry from turning the other cheek.

We can explain these two opposite positions in terms of man's multiple role repertoire in which some roles may lie dormant for a time until they are challenged to come forth, pushing themselves into the foreground. When this awakening comes, actions may take place that appear to be in contradiction to previous behavior. There are actions and interactions that are suitable in one context and totally unacceptable in another.

Moreno's (1946, 1959) concept of ethical anger gives us a new category for understanding as well as for behavior itself: namely, that there are moments in life when we are justified to be angry, and that not all anger is pathological or in need of treatment. Such moments are those in which things occur that our conscience cannot allow and in which we act upon its prompting. At such times we are, in fact, role models for others to think about and possibly to emulate in some fashion.

We do not know what words, if any, Jesus used in the action quoted above, but we have found that the expression of ethical anger is often most effective when done nonverbally. Childhood and adolescence are

periods in our lives when we are acutely sensitive to injustice; we are often made hot under the collar when encountering it. Early indoctrination frequently inhibits expression and, in addition, we develop thicker skins as we get older. But when children are able to convey their feelings to adults, and when they listen, the children feel affirmed. Often the adults are able to learn much from such interchange, but regrettably, more often they resist and resent such confrontations.

Inspired by the young, let me report several psychodramatic explorations of problem situations they have experienced. A third grade elementary school teacher wished to introduce social learning by role playing. The children were asked to volunteer situations with their peers that they found difficult to handle. The problem chosen by the children from among several presented was that of a little girl who, practically in tears, told how she had been snubbed recently by another girl whom she had considered one of her dearest friends. What more threatening situation is there for anyone, young or old, than to be rejected for no spoken or even apparent reason? The situation was re-enacted as it took place with the girl in question choosing a classmate, a stand in, for the real friend, who was not present. If she had been, it is doubtful that the protagonist would have been able to bring up the scene at all. The teacher, realizing its importance because it had been chosen as a central concern by the students, asked who had an idea how to handle this situation, as the protagonist herself was unable to mobilize her own energies to redo the scene. She suggested to the protagonist that she sit down and watch how others might have handled it. She was thus employing the mirror technique. Children make remarkably good improvising actors and several students were eager to confront the one representing the offending person, who, by the way, was thoroughly enjoying her role. Clearly, she, too, had met such interactions and was getting her own catharsis in this manner. Some of the new protagonists became quite verbal and aggressive. The teacher asked if there were perhaps other ways to handle such a painful scene. A tiny girl shyly put up her hand. This little one, in encountering the offending friend, stood and looked at her for a moment, tossed her head up in the air without a word, and walked past her. Her performance was voted by all odds the most powerful of all. This is truly a nonverbal psychodrama. What power was in that little slip of an eight-year-old, what wisdom and depth! And how could one teach this type of superior behavior without seeing it in action? Several of the more verbal protagonists got into the act by trying it out for themselves. Without the courage and spontaneity of the original actor this learning could not have taken place.

Certainly all of us have experienced situations of this sort, in which we ourselves or someone else was a striking example of behavior that was either in accord or discord with the demands of ethical anger.

Another example of how to handle anger also came out of a social learning class with fifth grade children, mostly ten years old, in which another nonverbal example was presented by a girl. Possibly these incidents teach us something about handling constricting situations, namely, that nonverbal behavior may be more telling than pouring out a plethora of words.

The scene is a park where the children go to play after school; the usual cliques of boys and girls are there. Nina, the protagonist, comes to the park and finds her usual afternoon companions there. But instead of welcoming her to join in their game, the girls, all five of them, scurry like mice away from her towards each other, and, as if by pre-arranged signal, link arms and march from her in a straight line. One of the girls is especially well known to Nina as she lives across the street from her. This girl has been an indoor playmate on days of inclement weather. They have played in both their homes and there has never been an angry exchange between them. Nevertheless, Nina, a sensitive and intuitive child, senses that this particular girl is the instigator of this group behavior as she is the one closest to her in relationship. In the re-enactment Nina is asked to soliloquize out loud what she feels while the auxiliary egos are representing the offending rejection and how she accounts for it. Nina now recalls that this girl's mother always praises Nina herself loudly when she comes to the house and poses her as a model to her own daughter. She realizes at this moment that her friend may be suffering from unjust behavior by her mother. Nina is in a true quandary at this point and recalls that this is not the first time that this friend has set other playmates against her. This last incident, however, is the most open rejection. Nina feels ethical anger towards her friend's mother for doing this to her child, as well as anger towards her friend for taking it out on her, an innocent bystander observing that difficult mother-child relationship. She knows that there are no words to defend herself adequately and surmises that her friend would deny the underlying situation if she presented it to her. So she takes a brave step, runs to catch up with that forbidding row of walking girls who snicker among themselves. She manages to reach them and links her arm into that of one of the end girls who is not her offending and offended friend. This girl may not be so involved in the situation as she is at the end of the line, whereas the co-protagonist is in the center. In any event, she does not pull away from Nina, perhaps also because she is amazed and taken by surprise. There are a few tense, silent moments

during which Nina continues to march with the others, silently, pretending not to have noticed the previous rejection, until the middle of the line breaks up and a new game is organized in which all are active, Nina included. This is how the original scene took place. The psychodramatic enactment went further as Nina was asked to reverse roles with each of the individuals involved to explain how this scene developed into the rejection she experienced. Especially in the role of her chief adversary, she found her earlier interpretation confirmed and the feelings of this girl deepened, enabling Nina to shift her set of perceptions about this girl and their relationship so that future contacts would be more mutually satisfying. It also was an affirmation of how well she handled what could have become a very explosive and damaging situation.

Sometimes ethical anger can lead a human being to death, as for instance in the case of resisting massive injustice. This is the altruistic side. I recall the story, after the horrors of the Second World War, of one of my closest Dutch-Jewish friends. The Germans were in Holland, conducting their nightmarish persecutions in rounding up the Jews. Robert, my friend, was himself in the underground and was saved innumerable times by his boss, a non-Jew who risked his neck to cover for him and get him out of trouble. Robert had a former classmate from high school, who became involved in the underground network that expedited Jews or obtained false identity papers for them. He had recently married and become the father of his firstborn child. His mother pleaded with him to cease his dangerous activities, stating that he now owed loyalty and support and care to his young family. "Mother," was his response, "I cannot stop; I go to bed at night and see the suffering eyes of all the Jewish mothers in the world and I am bound to continue for I cannot go on living otherwise." This noble young man was caught by the Nazis, with the inevitable result. Robert suffered not only severe trauma at his friend's death but also obtained a totally new vision of this particular young man. "You know," he told me, "he was very unremarkable while we were at school together. I would never have been able to guess at the depths within him." There are many, many others, all over the earth, about whom we know very little and who are capable of such noble actions when put to the test and are, in fact, behaving this way.

What is novel about the concept of ethical anger is that in the Christian tradition, anger is considered the very opposite of love. It is clear from the example I gave above of Christ's action in the temple courtyard that he would not have agreed with this interpretation. He was not the first teacher, nor will he have been the last, whose meaning has been misunderstood and distorted.

Our own early indoctrination, against which we struggle all our lives, is that anger is *a priori* a bad thing to have, to carry, and to act upon. Anger based on an ethical principle is of a totally different order and must be recognized as such. It is an outgrowth of the twin principles that undergird Moreno's thinking, namely spontaneity and creativity.

Spontaneity derives from the Latin *sua sponte*, from within the self. The philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce (1931) described spontaneity as having "the character of not resulting by law from something antecedent. . . . I don't know what you can make out of the meaning of spontaneity, but newness, freshness, and diversity." Moreno coupled spontaneity with the principle of creativity. The Random House dictionary defines to create as: "to cause to come into being, as something unique that would not naturally evolve or that is not made by ordinary process, to evolve from one's own thought or imagination, to make by investing with new functions, rank, character, etc."

Moreno defined spontaneity as: "a new response to an old situation, or an adequate response to a new situation, with creativity adding the element of inventiveness." Note that all three speak in terms of newness.

Ethical anger, then, is of a passionate nature, a new experience, meant to challenge and arouse. It upsets actions of persons who offend values we hold dear and which are evident to us. Under such circumstances we must ask ourselves whether we can allow our standards to be violated.

There are two poles to the experience of ethical anger: the first is its open expression and subsequent action when ethical anger is experienced by the protagonist or observer; the second is when one becomes entangled in a situation in which one is the innocent target of ethical anger that cannot be disposed of directly. The handling of both these poles is a delicate matter and certainly calls for spontaneity and creativity on the part of the persons so involved.

Willard Gaylin (1984) refers to Ernest Becker, writing in a symposium entitled *Emotions: Their Parameters and Measurement*: "The person reacts to assert himself, to show and feel that he is someone to reckon with. Anger generally has this function for the person, as a way of setting things in balance again."

Gaylin also remarks that

Freud failed to deal with anger and aggression and that this was one of the major deficiencies in early Freudian theory. As a theoretician who placed the Oedipal conflict at the center of all problems Freud cannot have been unaware of competition, but he never adequately incorporated the dynamic role of the emotions into the theory of psychoanaly-

sis. . . . Since Freud dealt only periphally with emotions, conventional psychoanalysis also ignored them. (p. 81)

If the opposite of anger is not love, what is? I would state, as have many others, that it is indifference. And, indeed there has been some growing evidence in a number of quarters that we are shielding ourselves from too much pain in this manner, by becoming indifferent, partly because we feel unable to change the overwhelming amount of pain experienced around the globe, partly because there are immediate demands on our energy, which comes in limited amounts.

Anger is defined by Aristotle as "an impulse attended with pain to avenge an undeserved slight openly manifested toward ourselves or friends." He considered that persons who show insufficient anger are morally blameworthy, and that it is slavish to tolerate contemptuous treatment.

One expert on anger, R. F. Richardson (1918), feels strongly that one should have a working residue of anger on tap for when it is needed. "Good healthy resentment is at times a good thing and should be kept alive." He also quotes Goethe as saying, "With most of us the requisite intensity of passion is not forthcoming without an element of resentment, and common sense and careful observation will, I believe, confirm the opinion that few people who amount to anything are without a good capacity for hostile feelings upon which they draw freely when they need it." And again, Aristotle (1974) observes that the only constrictions on anger are that it be "at the right time, place and right degree and duration." To which I would add that it should be directed at the right target.

Ethical anger, then, must be distinguished in its form, content, value, target, and purpose from other kinds of anger we deal with in therapy and should be recognized as dealing with conflicts of values, personal and extrapersonal.

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Zerka T. Moreno is president of Moreno Workshops and a certified trainer, educator, and practitioner of psychodrama.

Date of acceptance: September 17, 1985

Address: Zerka T. Moreno
259 Wolcott Avenue
Beacon, NY 12508

Identifying a Protagonist: Techniques and Factors

V. Krishna Kumar
Thomas W. Treadwell

The article describes five methods of identifying a protagonist: (a) volunteering, (b) action sociometry, (c) paper-pencil sociometry, (d) social atom, and (e) information revealed during sharing or integration phase of psychodrama. Furthermore, the article discusses six factors that are significant to the selection of a protagonist: (a) type of group, (b) size of group, (c) time available, (d) types of conflicts, (e) characteristics of potential protagonists, and (f) director's preference.

A major concern for any psychodrama director is to facilitate the emergence of a suitable protagonist. Any group member is a potential protagonist. Consequently, a director's task is to stimulate group processes that aid the emergence of a protagonist who is acceptable to both group members and director.

Although there are several excellent textbooks on psychodrama, there appears to be little specific information written on the subject of identifying a protagonist. The textbooks generally focus on describing the stages of psychodrama, defining various terms such as "a double," and giving detailed descriptions of selected episodes. Many students in our training groups have expressed concern about the lack of literature on how a director selects a protagonist. Typically, a type of mystique surrounds this selection process. It is not uncommon that students, in the post-discussion phase, inquire from the director about the rationale of selecting a particular member as a protagonist. It is to fill this need that this article proposes a framework by which a protagonist may be identified.

The article will focus on two aspects of the selection process: (a) What are some of the techniques that facilitate the emergence of a protagonist?

and (b) What are some of the factors that the director needs to consider in the screening of a member to serve as the protagonist?

The framework developed in this article is based upon the authors' experiences both as group members and as directors. As the framework derives from personal experiences and not empirical research, it is to be evaluated for its heuristic value rather than any set procedures that guarantee particular solutions. This presentation may stimulate the refinement of some ideas, the generation of new ideas, and possibly some needed research in this area.

Techniques of Selection

Although there is potentially an infinite number of ways a director can select a protagonist, we will detail here five approaches that are commonly employed: (a) volunteering, (b) action sociometry, (c) paper-pencil sociometry, (d) social atom, and (e) utilizing information revealed during sharing or integration phase of psychodrama.

In the use of any technique (or a combination of techniques), it is important to recognize that both the group members and the director play different, but complementary, roles in the selection of a protagonist. The director provides a stimulus (technique), and the group members respond; then both the director and the group members evaluate the results, and the director then provides a new stimulus. It is this continued interaction that provides the necessary information to the director in deciding who might best serve the interests of the group in the role of a protagonist.

Volunteering. This method is most direct in approaching the group members in regard to their intent. Putting a simple question to the group (e.g., "Who has a conflict to share with the group?") may call forth a volunteer. If more than one member comes forward, a simple voting procedure can be employed by asking members to line up behind the individual "whose problem they identify most with." If the group is very large (20 or more), a show of hands might be appropriate. If time permits, it may be possible to work with several protagonists in a single session.

The volunteer method is most useful when working with (a) large groups, (b) group members who have had previous experience with psychodrama, regardless of the size of the group, and (c) short sessions (less than two hours), regardless of the size of the group.

Action Sociometry. This method involves asking group members to respond to sociometric or near-sociometric questions. The responses of the group members to these questions highlight the criteria leading to

their choice of one person over another. The group members are asked to touch a person's shoulder with their right hand, if first choice; with their left hand, if second choice.

An action sociometric question is characterized by three features: (a) It taps feelings (positive, negative or neutral) of group members towards other members, (b) it uses a specific criterion, and (c) it is usable immediately to facilitate group functioning (Moreno, 1953). For example, "Select a person in the group with whom you would spend the next ten minutes discussing a problem you are currently struggling with." After group members display their first choices, and then their second choices (if need be), the director uses this information to form small subgroups (dyads, triads, quadrads) for actual discussion purposes. After ten minutes, a member of each subgroup summarizes in the presence of the entire group the subgroup member's conflict. The director can then ask the group members to select the one person whose conflict is most appropriate for further exploration by psychodrama. The "star" of this selection would be the most obvious choice to serve as a protagonist. In case of a tie (or multiple ties), one or more protagonists may be employed, given sufficient time. Alternatively, the group members may display their second choices. Sometimes, the second choices may reflect more valid patterns than the first; consequently, a director may choose to go with the second choices rather than the first. The director may also try to make use of data from both choices (e.g., by averaging the number of choices for each person) in selecting a protagonist.

Knowledge (on the part of both group members and the director) of group structure, in terms of "who chose whom" patterns (dyads, triads), may also be extremely useful in identifying auxiliary egos to facilitate the action component of psychodrama.

A near-sociometric action question differs from a sociometric question in two ways: (a) It employs an ambiguous, abstract, or projective criterion, and (b) it may or may not be immediately usable to facilitate group functioning. For example, "Who in the group appears to have the greatest amount of empathy for you?" (see Moreno, 1953).

Nonthreatening sociometric and near-sociometric requests (e.g., "Select a person to share a coffee-break") are particularly valuable in getting a group started. More direct questions pertaining to the selection of a protagonist (e.g., "Select a person in the group to serve as a protagonist") should be postponed until the group has demonstrated some degree of warm up and integration. It is our experience that about three or four questions are necessary for the group members to warm up to each other and the director to warm up to the group

members. In fact, after the first one or two questions, the group members may be asked to propose more questions. Using several questions helps the integration of the group as different people are chosen for different questions; isolates on one question achieve star status on another question and vice versa. Furthermore, any subgroups that may exist may also be diffused by using several questions.

Members who retain star status on several questions are sometimes referred to as leaders. Such individuals can be spotted quickly by using a number of action sociometric and near-sociometric questions in the warm-up phase of a session. Leaders and stars on individual questions are excellent choices to serve as protagonists especially in the initial stages of an ongoing group. They serve as role models for other members and convey to the group that it is "O.K. to take risks." Leaders can be especially useful as auxiliaries (e.g., brother, father, spouse) as they are most acceptable to the group on a variety of criteria.

It is important to note that stars and leaders do not always make the most appropriate protagonists. Sometimes it may be more important to choose an isolate, who may be powerful in negative ways in the group, as a protagonist. It is only in the early stages of an ongoing group that stars and leaders may be more helpful as protagonists to get the group going. It is particularly important to pay attention to persistent (over time and many questions) subgroups as they pull the group in different directions. A badly fragmented group may require direct intervention by the director to investigate why such fragmentation exists, and then either a sociodrama or working with multiple protagonists is necessary to crystallize the conflict(s) to bring about group cohesion.

The usefulness of sociometric and near-sociometric questions may be enhanced by asking group members the reasons behind their choices, soon after the choices have been made. Verbalizing reasons helps the warm-up process by reducing the mystery behind choices, thereby facilitating the building of trust among the group members. Furthermore, verbalization of reasons provides the director valuable information about individual members in the group. Verbalizations not only help generate further sociometric and near-sociometric questions spontaneously (on the part of both the director and group members) but also give important clues about individual members' areas of concern. The director can use the information revealed and approach a group member to serve as a protagonist by saying, "You stated that. . . . Perhaps you might like to explore further this area of concern to you."

If the member is willing to pursue this concern further, then it is important to clear this choice with the entire group by asking, "Does any one have objections to John being a protagonist?" If there are objec-

tions, then the objections voiced may have to be dealt with first before proceeding with the psychodrama. Sometimes, it may be necessary to ask more sociometric questions to make a fresh selection. (See Kumar & Treadwell, 1985, for more examples of sociometric and near-sociometric questions and details on their applications to psychodrama.)

Paper-Pencil Sociometry. This method is most useful in the context of an ongoing group, where data collected from one session can be used in a later session. Typically, group members write on a sheet of paper their choices for each question. The primary purpose of paper-pencil sociometry is to record group members' choices for various questions to plot sociograms. (See C. Hollander, 1978, and Kumar & Treadwell, 1985, for details on plotting sociograms.) The sociograms are helpful in identifying stars, leaders, isolates, mutual choices, and other relationships in the group.

The sociograms of a session can be displayed in the subsequent session and a group member may be asked to discuss the results. These discussions are helpful in stimulating further action sociometric and near-sociometric questions that can be implemented as explained in the previous section for selecting a protagonist and other supporting auxiliaries.

The sociograms are useful in understanding the structure of a group and the changes that occur as the results of sociometric and psychodramatic episodes over many sessions.

Social Atom. Sharon Hollander (1974) identified three types of social atoms: (a) psychological, (b) collective, and (c) individual.

The *psychological* social atom is the smallest number of people (e.g., family members, friends, teacher, counselor) needed to make the person feel a sense of sociostasis (social equilibrium) or completeness. These individuals in the social atom play significant roles in a person's feeling of well being, and without them life may not be meaningful. The *collective* social atom refers to the smallest number of groups or organizations (e.g., YMCA, church, kennel club) that a person needs to belong to in order to feel complete. The *individual* atom consists of those significant individuals in the various collectives that a person belongs to. There are other possible types of atoms in a person's life, for example, object atom and food atom (see Moreno, 1947).

Based upon Sharon Hollander's work, Kumar and Treadwell (1985) have developed an instrument, the Triadic Circle of Interpersonal Relationships, to gather data on the three types of social atom. The instrument consists of three concentric circles, divided in three parts for each atom. The group members locate (in the designated areas of the circle for each atom) their significant others, in reference to themselves. The

center of the innermost circle is represented by a dot, which stands for the responding member. The responding member then is asked to locate individuals (by placing numbered dots) in reference to this center dot; the further away a person (or a collective) is placed the less significant the person (or the collective) is for the responding member. For the *psychological* and the *individual* atoms, members are instructed that the significant others may include pets and deceased people. The group members are asked to place an "X" through the dot for a deceased person, and write a "P" next to a dot that stands for a pet. Then, on accompanying sheets (one for each atom), members are asked to indicate sex and the relationship of the significant other (e.g., uncle, brother, girlfriend) for the *psychological* and the *individual* atoms; for the *collective* atom, members are asked to identify the collectives on an accompanying sheet.

As these different social atoms depict a person's networks of relationships, they contain valuable data concerning a person's conflicts that can be further explored psychodramatically. A person who indicates only three significant others or only pets in the social atom is possibly alienated from society. Distances from the self-dot might be suggestive of problems in relationships; for example, mother is placed in the outermost circle, but a cousin is placed in the innermost circle; or, one of the parents may be simply left out of the atom. A careful look at these social atoms, combined with a discussion of possible interpretations with the responding member, can help a director select a protagonist.

Social atoms are best used in ongoing groups, where such data can be collected in the second or third session. The director can study these data carefully at leisure and select individuals as possible protagonists for later sessions. Social atoms can also be employed in all-day sessions where there is enough time to fill them out and to give the director the opportunity to look them over. In limited time sessions, social atoms can be acted out by individual members on a voluntary basis, using other group members to represent their relationships. Filling out the social atoms can also serve as a warm-up technique, by having people think about their relationships. In our experience we have found that as they fill out the social atom form, group members report feelings of guilt that arise from excluding someone from the social atom or placing a parent in the outermost circle. Discussion of the content of the social atom can be followed by action sociometry for the selection of a protagonist.

Kumar and Treadwell (1985) have developed a simple variation of the above instrument, the Triadic Circle of *Intimate* Relationships, which gives more direct information about a group member's conflicts in relationships. The instrument consists of three concentric circles,

each divided into three parts as with the previous instrument. As before, the center dot represents the self, and, with reference to this self-dot, group members are asked to place in one section those people with whom they have significant intimate relationships *currently*. In the second part, they are asked to indicate what current relationships they would like to *terminate*; in the third part, they are asked to indicate those people with whom they would like to *initiate* or *intensify* relationships. As before, the closer another person is located to the self-dot the more important that relationship is to the responding member.

Information Revealed during the Sharing Phase. The sharing phase of a psychodrama episode is a significant source for spin-off psychodramas to emerge. Individual members moved by the psychodrama episode reveal a number of important concerns about their personal lives. Although it is not necessary to put these concerns into action immediately to achieve closure for individual members or the group, the wealth of self-disclosure can serve as a significant source for identifying potential protagonists for later sessions. Sometimes the feelings expressed by a group member are so strong that a director may have to give immediate attention to the person during the sharing session, by going through what may be called a “mini” drama or vignette.

Factors in Selection

Typically, directors go through a screening process even when voluntary protagonists are sought. From our experience, we have identified five factors that affect the process of selection of a protagonist: (a) type of group, (b) size of group, (c) time available, (d) types of conflicts, (e) characteristics of potential protagonists, and (f) director's preference.

Type of Group. Is the group meeting for the first time? How familiar are the group members with psychodrama and related concepts? Do group members know one another? Who is in the group? Will the group meet only once or over several weeks? Consideration of these questions will help identify some of the techniques that are likely to work. Clearly, if the group members have had no experience with psychodrama, then some elementary work needs to be done, such as, explaining the basic concepts, and stressing the significance of confidentiality of disclosed information. Warm-up techniques (particularly action sociometry) that lower the resistance of group members might be valuable for an inexperienced group. If, on the other hand, group members are experienced, one can do away with some of the elementary procedures, even the use of extensive warm-up techniques. In

ongoing groups, directors have the benefit of accumulating information about group members that may help in the selection (or rejection) of particular members as protagonists.

It is important to consider who is in the group. Are there married or unmarried couples? Are there bosses and subordinates? A director needs to be sensitive to the presence of particular people in the group in choosing a protagonist. There is no rule, etched in stone, that prevents a director from working with one spouse in the presence of the other, but a sensitive director will be careful in selecting the nature of conflict to work on.

Size of Group. Psychodrama groups can vary anywhere from 5 to 200 members. The typical size may be between 15 and 20 members. Some directors are extremely skillful in working with very large groups, others are more comfortable in small groups. However, regardless of the size of the group, selection of a protagonist may be a difficult task. We have observed directors taking as much as 30–45 minutes (in small and large groups) before they settle on a protagonist. This is despite the fact that there are fewer potential protagonists in a small group. While action sociometry methods may be more appropriate in small groups, in very large groups the volunteering method combined with voting by the group members might be more appropriate.

Time Available. Duration of a session is important in considering what selection techniques might be employed. The average duration appears to be between 2 and 4 hours. In longer sessions (3 hours or more) action sociometry may be employed effectively. In shorter sessions (2 hours or less) the volunteering method might prove most efficient in selecting one protagonist.

Types of Conflict. Each member brings to the group some type of conflict. A member's conflict may be idiosyncratic or may be common to many group members. It is usually a good idea to choose a member whose conflict appears to be shared by many group members because it will be meaningful to almost all members. There are times when a director may choose to work with a member whose conflict is idiosyncratic. This type of conflict is best handled in an ongoing group, where the individuals with conflicts need to be incorporated. All concerns are equally deserving of consideration (attention?) by director and group members, who determine their relative importance to the group as a whole. If members with idiosyncratic conflicts are constantly ignored in an ongoing group, they might become disruptive.

It may be a good idea to avoid working on problems that involve serious issues such as murder and rape in short sessions. These are best handled in ongoing group psychotherapy sessions and preferably when

the director has a back-up staff. (Of course some directors specialize in these issues, and the foregoing comment may not apply to them.) Probably issues most effectively handled in limited time sessions involve everyday conflicts of relationships (e.g., with a spouse, any family member, lover, friend, or boss), loss of relationships by death or divorce, and conflicts with oneself (e.g., feelings of inferiority). If a person has recently (within a month) broken a significant relationship, it may be better to postpone working with such a person until a later time. When the immediate grief felt has subsided, the person can work on the conflict(s) with the lost person.

Characteristics of a Potential Protagonist. Some individuals are easily warmed up to being a protagonist, other members need much prodding. Some have deep conflicts but would rather be left alone completely. Some demonstrate a great amount of eagerness to be a protagonist. Some idea of these characteristics of members can be observed during action sociometry, when they interact with other group members.

It is important that no member be forced into a protagonist's role or any other role. In short sessions, it is better to avoid a member who gives too strong or ambivalent signals about being a protagonist. In an ongoing group, initially resistant members may show greater likelihood of accepting a protagonist's role after they have participated in several different roles in the group. Although members who show a great amount of eagerness to be a protagonist might be acceptable, it is important to recognize that their conflict may not be significant to the group. Such individuals may be too scripted to be spontaneous. It may also be that they as individuals may not be acceptable to the group. Action sociometry might be useful in screening out highly eager members, as then the onus of selection shifts from the director to the group.

Director's Preference. It is important that directors exercise their preference in the type of people or even the type of conflict they feel most comfortable in working with. Generally there is no need to state this preference publicly, but faced with a highly eager member who demands to be the protagonist, a director may need to state his/her preference to the group, perhaps by saying that the conflict is too difficult to work on because of limitations of time or his/her own lack of experience with such conflicts.

Application of these techniques will facilitate the process for selecting the protagonist of the psychodrama in a therapy group.

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V. Krishna Kumar and Thomas W. Treadwell teach in the Department of Psychology at West Chester University.

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Address: V. Krishna Kumar
Thomas W. Treadwell
Anderson Hall, Department of Psychology
West Chester University
West Chester, PA 19383

Teachers' Perceptions as They Relate to Children's Current and Future Sociometric Status

Jay Gottlieb
Yona Leyser
Liora Pedhazur Schmelkin

Subjects in this study were 762 elementary school children who were pretested on teacher, peer, and self-report trait rating scales. Sociometric ratings of these children and their classmates were also obtained at that time. Sociometric questionnaires were administered five years later to almost half the original sample. Canonical analyses revealed that pretest sociometric rating can be predicted by peers' trait ratings. Other canonical analyses revealed that pretest sociometric ratings predicted a small but significant amount of variance in posttest sociometric ratings. The inclusion of pretest trait ratings substantially improved the prediction of posttest sociometric status. Sociometric pretesting predicted only a small percentage of variance, and most sociometric status shifts that did occur were not marked, with initially unpopular or popular children occupying average status upon posttesting.

Although the study of children's friendships has been of concern to psychologists and educators for many years, it has taken on even greater significance in recent years as a result of two factors. First, data have accumulated on the long-term adverse effects of social rejection during childhood. Social rejection during childhood has been related to psychiatric problems during adulthood (Cowen, Pederson, Babijian, Izzo, & Trost, 1973; Strain, Cooke, & Appoloni, 1976), juvenile delinquency (Roff, Sells, & Golden, 1972), bad conduct discharge from the military (Roff, 1961), and dropping out of school (Ullmann, 1957).

A second reason for the invigorated interest in children's friendships is that, as a result of federal legislation, namely the Education for All

Handicapped Children Act of 1975, eligible handicapped children are being educated in regular classrooms with nonhandicapped peers. Many handicapped children are likely to be either socially rejected or isolated by their nonhandicapped classmates (Simmel, Gottlieb, & Robinson, 1979). We are thus confronted with a situation in which many children are being enrolled in classrooms where the likelihood of their social rejection increases. This experience is associated with a variety of adjustment problems during adolescence and adulthood.

Attempts to reverse the social rejection, which often occurs early in the child's school career and continues over time (Gronlund, 1959), would be easier if the children could be identified quickly. The identification of socially rejected children is often accomplished by asking children's teachers and/or peers to indicate which children possess undesirable traits. Research is available which has indicated that teachers—as well as peers—are able to identify and differentiate between socially accepted and socially rejected children (Gottlieb, Semmel, & Veldman, 1978). Yet Eaton, Bonney, and Gazda (1978) reported in their study that teachers were poor predictors of sociometric status, although they did make more accurate predictions of pupils with low status than of those with high status.

The majority of research, however, on peers' and teachers' ability to identify socially rejected children has focused on the rejected children's *current* sociometric status; far fewer studies have related peers' and teachers' perceptions to children's *future* sociometric status. The closest research in this area has been done by Cowen et al. (1973), who reported not only that early sociometric rejection was related to appearance on psychiatric registers during adulthood, but also that 8- and 9-year-old peers were better predictors than their teachers of later psychiatric difficulty. That peers were more accurate than teachers at identifying children who would have adjustment problems later in their lives is surprising in view of other data that indicated that teachers were more sensitive than children at identifying the reasons for children's current sociometric status (Gottlieb et al., 1978; Yellot, Liem, & Cowen, 1969). The present investigation was intended to replicate the study by Cowen et al. (1973) and to extend it by indicating specific behavioral domains in which teachers' and peers' perceptions predict current as well as future sociometric status. That is, it is not enough to indicate that teachers or peers are better predictors of the current and/or future status of children with low sociometric status. We wished to isolate teachers' and peers' perceptions of behavioral traits that may be associated with future sociometric status.

The second purpose of this research was to examine the stability of

children's sociometric position over time. Although previous data indicate that sociometric status is relatively stable over time (Gronlund, 1959), little information is available on the degree to which children shift markedly in their sociometric positions. We were interested in the extent to which children who are initially popular become unpopular, and conversely, the extent to which children who are initially unpopular become popular.

Method

A: First Testing

Subjects

The sample for this investigation consisted of 762 children enrolled in 65 classrooms in two small midwestern towns. Children were about equally divided between high, average, and low sociometric pupils using the procedures indicated below. At the time of the first data collection in 1974, all subjects were enrolled in third through sixth grade classrooms in 12 different elementary schools. The vast majority of subjects were white and came from lower, upper lower, and lower middle-class families.

Instruments

Sociometric scale. A sociometric questionnaire was administered to about 1,900 students in 65 classrooms during the spring. On this questionnaire, students were asked to nominate three classmates with whom they would most and least like to sit, work, and play. The number of choices each class member received on the three positive questions and on the three negative questions tallied. These scores were then converted for each pupil into three indices:

- *a choice status* calculated as

$$\frac{\text{No. of persons choosing within the class}}{N-1} \times 100$$
- *a rejection status* calculated as

$$\frac{\text{No. of subjects rejecting within the class}}{N-1} \times 100$$
- *combined score*, i.e., choice minus rejection status.

On the basis of the combined score, 4 high status (popular), 4 medium status (average), and 4 low status (rejected) children in each of

the 65 classrooms were identified. In 6 classes, with smaller enrollment, 3 high, 3 medium, and 3 low status children were selected. High status children were those who received the highest combined scores, i.e., the most positive choices from their peers and the fewest negative choices. Low status pupils received the lowest combined score, i.e., the most negative choices and the fewest positive choices. Medium status children received combined scores approximately in the middle of the distribution.

Peer nomination test. In addition to completing a sociometric scale, every child in each of the 65 classes completed a peer nomination test that was adapted from Tryon (1939) and which has been used extensively by other investigators (Cunningham, Elzi, Hall, Farrell & Roberts, 1951; Sears & Sherman, 1964). The scale consisted of 13 pairs of bipolar adjectives. Each class member was asked to indicate the three class members who best fit each adjective. As an example, class members were asked to indicate three children who were *friendly* and three children who were *not friendly*. Other adjectives included popular, happy, shy, bossy, and so forth. Scoring for this instrument was the number of choices a child received to each positive adjective minus the number of choices he or she received to the opposite or negative member of the adjective pair.

The scores were then converted into percents by dividing the score each child received on each of the adjective pairs, into $N - 1$ (N = number of pupils in the classroom) and multiplying by 100. In this fashion a child received 13 scores (percents): his or her classmates' ratings of each pair of bipolar adjectives.

Teacher rating scale. Each of the 65 classroom teachers was asked to complete a 14-item Likert scale for each child in the class. Thirteen of the 14 items had the same content as those completed by the classmates on the peer nomination test. That is, teachers were asked to indicate independently the extent to which they agreed that a child was popular, friendly, bossy, and so forth, thus enabling us to determine the level of agreement between peer and teacher ratings. Scoring was done for each item on a five-point basis with the high score reflecting the item name. In the case of negative adjective traits, the scaling was reversed.

Self-ratings. All students in each of the 65 classrooms were asked to complete a questionnaire consisting of the same 13 pairs of adjectives as the ones on the Peer Nomination Test. This time, however, students were asked to indicate the extent to which they perceived themselves to be bossy, shy, friendly, and so forth. A student received a + 1 on a pair for friendly and a - 1 for not friendly. The total score on the question-

naire was the arithmetical summation of the positive and negative scores on all 13 pairs of adjectives.

B: Final Testing

Subjects

During the spring of 1979 a follow up of those pupils identified in the 1974 phase was conducted. With the cooperation of the two school districts an effort was made to locate the whereabouts of eight pupils in each of the 65 classes who were now enrolled in grades eight through eleven in six different junior high and high schools in the same two school districts. Of the eight children per class who were identified, four had been initially unpopular, two had been average in their popularity rating, and two had been popular.

Because of absenteeism, uncertainties about first and last names on tests, and movement out of the districts, data on the posttest sociometric test were now available for 136 children classified earlier as popular, for 108 children classified earlier as rejected, and 129 children classified earlier as average, making a total of 373 children from the total original group of 762 children (49%) and 73.4% of the 508 children who were identified for posttesting. A chi-square test indicated that there was no significant difference in subject attrition as a function of initial sociometric status ($X^2 = 3.84$).

Procedure

The sociometric instrument was the only one administered during the final testing. The instrument was similar to the one employed earlier. Subjects were asked to name three students in their grade level with whom they would like to sit and socialize and three with whom they would rather not sit and socialize. Approximately 250-300 children were enrolled in each of the grades.

Rather than identifying all the children who could be classified on the posttest as popular, average, or rejected, as had been done on the pretest, our focus now was on only those children for whom we had pretest data.

Results

Statistical Analysis

The analysis proceeded in two stages. First, in order to determine the nature of the relationships between the various rating scales and in-

itial sociometric status, a canonical correlation analysis was conducted with the 40 first testing ratings (14 teacher ratings, 13 self-ratings, and 13 peer ratings) comprising one set of variables, and first testing choice status and rejection status comprising the other set. Second, canonical correlation analyses were done using the first testing data as one set of variables and the final testing data as the second set in order to study the stability in the social position of the children during the five-year period between first and final testing.

First Testing

For the purposes of initially identifying subjects for inclusion, a single combined sociometric score was used, as defined previously. Subsequent analyses, however, utilized both the actual choice status and rejection status score. Thus, the canonical correlation analysis for the first testing data was based on 40 variables in Set A (all of the ratings) and 2 variables in Set B (choice and rejection status). Table 1 presents the results of this analysis that yielded two significant canonical correlations ($p < .001$). Each is discussed and interpreted separately.

Canonical correlation I (Table 1, left column). The first canonical correlation accounted for approximately 78% (i.e., $R_{c_1}^2$) the variance shared by the linear composites of the Set A and Set B variables. An examination of the standardized coefficients (not presented in the table) indicates that the composite of the rating scales is dominated by relatively few variables, while the two sociometric scores are about equally weighted on their composite. Because of the intercorrelations among the variables, however, substantive interpretation of the nature of the relationships can be made more meaningfully by examining the structure coefficients or loadings (i.e., the correlations of the original variables with the canonical variates). Looking first at the various rating scales, these reveal that 11 of the 13 peer ratings have meaningful loadings ($> .40$), the most important being popular, showing leadership, being tidy, friendly, fair, and full of fun. Of the teacher ratings, 9 of the 14 have meaningful loadings, although for the most part they are of a lower magnitude than the peer ratings. Teacher ratings of popularity, however, are one obvious exception. With the exception of self-rating of popularity, none of the self-ratings have meaningful loadings. It appears, therefore, that the nature of this composite can best be described as popularity and its correlates. The structure coefficients for the sociometric scores (the variables of Set B) indicate that both choice and rejection are highly meaningful and of about equal importance, although inversely.

Canonical correlation II (Table 1, middle column). The second canonical correlation accounts for approximately 17% (i.e., $R_{c_{II}}^2$) of the

Table 1—Canonical Analysis of Ratings with First and Final Sociometric Status

	Structure Coefficients		
	First Testing		Final Testing
	Canonical Correlation I	Canonical Correlation II	Canonical Correlation I
<i>Teacher Ratings:</i>			
Popularity	0.744	0.172	0.588
Friendliness	0.610	- 0.269	0.440
Leadership	0.542	0.363	0.386
Active in games	0.291	0.288	0.123
Helpfulness	0.587	- 0.021	0.419
Fairness	0.580	- 0.323	0.363
Happiness	0.490	- 0.136	0.391
Tidiness	0.547	- 0.091	0.455
Bossy	- 0.164	0.505	- 0.122
Talkative	- 0.115	0.433	- 0.096
Quarrelsome	- 0.428	0.526	- 0.379
Show off	- 0.306	0.521	- 0.475
Fighting	- 0.419	0.412	- 0.422
Shy	- 0.033	- 0.455	0.138
<i>Self-ratings:</i>			
Friendly	0.067	- 0.217	- 0.092
Not talkative	- 0.007	- 0.076	- 0.102
Leader	0.120	0.192	- 0.070
Not quarrelsome	- 0.012	- 0.060	- 0.027
Not bossy	0.045	- 0.180	- 0.073
Tidy	0.113	- 0.062	0.165
Doesn't fight	0.102	- 0.037	0.076
Not bashful	0.057	0.088	0.118
Popular	0.407	0.096	0.362
Not a show off	- 0.003	- 0.204	- 0.114
Fair in games	0.039	- 0.081	0.061
Full of fun	0.158	0.027	0.393
Active in games	0.183	0.331	0.133
<i>Peer ratings:</i>			
Friendly	0.779	- 0.235	0.693
Not talkative	0.279	- 0.595	0.216
Leader	0.872	0.146	0.637
Not quarrelsome	0.668	- 0.426	0.509
Not bossy	0.563	- 0.460	0.423
Tidy	0.848	- 0.057	0.681
Doesn't fight	0.602	- 0.415	0.492
Not bashful	0.135	0.548	0.117
Popular	0.938	- 0.034	0.721

(table continues)

Table 1—Canonical Analysis of Ratings with First and Final Sociometric Status

	Structure Coefficients		
	First Testing		Final Testing
	Canonical Correlation I	Canonical Correlation II	Canonical Correlation I
Not a show off	0.506	– 0.441	0.451
Fair in games	0.773	– 0.222	0.583
Full of fun	0.709	0.305	0.569
Active in games	0.468	0.630	0.283
<i>First Testing</i>			
Choice status	0.876	0.482	0.597
Rejection status	– 0.880	0.475	– 0.651
<i>Final Testing</i>			
Choice status			0.736
Rejection status			– 0.715
<i>N</i>	731		359
Rd^a	.603	.039	.147
Rc^b	.885	.412	.527
Λ	.181	.831	.612
X^2	1213.002*	131.676*	164.960*
<i>df</i>	80	39	84

Note. First Testing: Set A = Teacher Ratings, Self-ratings, and Peer Ratings; Set B = first testing choice status and rejection status. Final Testing: Set A = first testing choice status, rejection status, Teacher Ratings, Self-ratings, and Peer Ratings; Set B = final testing choice status and rejection status.

* $p < .001$.

^aRedundancy of Set A given Set B.

^bCanonical correlation.

shared variance in the second pair of linear composites. Meaningful structure coefficients emerged for ratings that reflect more specifically the type of social interaction involved (e.g., bossiness, talkativeness), while both choice and rejection status are about equally important.

Since the sociometric scores can be viewed as criterion measures, the redundancy coefficients for Set B given Set A (i.e., the proportion of variance of Set B that is predictable from Set A) were calculated. The overall redundancy (the sum of the two separate ones) indicated that 64% of the variability in choice and rejection status can be predicted from the ratings, with the bulk of this (60%) attributable to the first canonical correlation.

Final Testing

Two separate analyses were conducted on the final testing data. In the first, the first testing sociometric scores (choice and rejection) served as the predictors, while the final testing sociometric scores constituted the criterion variables. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 2. Both canonical correlations (i.e., $R_{cI} = .361$, $RC_{II} = .139$) are significant ($p < .01$), although only the first can be considered meaningful, accounting for 13% of the variance (i.e., $R_{cI}^2 = .361^2 = .130$). The structure coefficients associated with the first canonical correlation indicate that the variables that are important in Set A and Set B are first testing choice status and final testing choice status, respectively. The redundancy coefficient is very low, indicating that only 7% of the final testing sociometric status is predictable from first testing sociometric status.

In order to investigate whether the inclusion of the first testing ratings improves predictability, an additional analysis was performed. The results of this analysis are presented in the right column of Table 1. Set A variables in this analysis consisted of the first testing ratings

Table 2—Canonical Analysis of First Testing Sociometric Status with Final Testing Sociometric Status ($N = 371$, with incomplete statistical analysis data on two subjects)

	Structure Coefficients	
	Canonical Correlation I	Canonical Correlation II
<i>SET A: FIRST TESTING</i>		
Choice Status	.887	-.461
Rejection Status	.134	.991
<i>SET B: FINAL TESTING</i>		
Choice Status	.989	.146
Rejection Status	-.206	.979
Rd^a	.067	.009
Rc^b	.361	.139
Λ	.853	.981
χ^2	58.580*	7.139**
df	4	1

* $p < .001$.

** $p < .01$.

^aRedundancy of Set B given Set A.

^bCanonical Correlation.

and first testing sociometric scores, while Set B consisted of the final testing sociometric scores. Only the first canonical correlation (i.e., $Rc_1 = .527$) is significant ($p < .001$), with the first composite pair sharing 28% of the variance.

Although somewhat smaller in magnitude, the structure coefficients for the ratings (presented in Table 1, right column) reflect a pattern similar to those previously presented. Moreover, the coefficients for the first testing choice and rejection status are also meaningful. Once again, the loadings for final testing choice and rejection status are of about equal magnitude. Apparently, measures of initial popularity are related to follow-up status. The redundancy coefficient indicates that approximately 15% of the follow-up choice and rejection status is predictable from initial measures. This small percentage, nevertheless, is an improvement over the redundancy of .07 when only the first testing choice and rejection status were included as predictors.

Another way to investigate the relative stability of sociometric status is to inspect the patterns of change in status from first testing to final testing. This inspection has revealed that of the individuals initially classified as popular, 42.5% could be classified as popular on the follow up, 41% as average, and 16.5% as rejected. Of those initially classified as rejected, 53% could be classified as rejected on the final testing, 34.6% as average, and 11.5% as popular. The initially classified average group was more or less evenly divided on the follow up with 30.1% being popular, 33.3% being rejected, and 36.6% average. Thus, while shifts can be seen, for the most part they are to or from average status with few extreme shifts occurring.

Discussion

The results of this investigation reveal that the combination of peer, teacher, and self-ratings yields two composites, one dealing with a general measure of popularity and the second dealing with manifest social skills. Of the two composites, the former correlated more highly with traditional measures of sociometric status that are also measures of popularity. Interestingly, peers' ratings of traits correlated more highly than did teachers' ratings with sociometric status. These data contradict to some extent prior findings that teachers' ratings were better predictors than peers' ratings of sociometric status among children (Gottlieb et al., 1978; Yellot et al., 1969), but replicate those of Cowen et al. (1973). A major distinction between the research here and that of Gottlieb et al. (1978) was that in the prior investigation, teachers and classmates knew that the children they were rating had been classified by the schools as educable mentally retarded (EMR), and this fact may

have had some influence on the trait and sociometric ratings of the target children.

The importance of peers' and teachers' ratings can be estimated from the second set of analyses that were conducted on sociometric status five years later and its relation to initial trait ratings. A relatively small (7%) percentage of posttest variance in sociometric status was predictable from a knowledge of only first testing sociometric position. When trait ratings gathered during the first testing are added to the equation, a total of 15% of the variance in posttest sociometric status is predicted. This finding indicates that the sociometric status at the first testing, coupled with initial ratings, can account for a meaningful, albeit small, proportion of the variation in later sociometric status. Although these sociometric data were not especially stable over time, the fact is that they were collected in different school settings, elementary school and high school, and this difference may have contributed in part to the lack of stability of the sociometric scores.

The sociometric shifts that did occur were primarily from popular to average or from unpopular to average. There were relatively few extreme shifts in sociometric status; few initially unpopular children became popular five years later, and similarly few popular children became unpopular as adolescents. Thus, although the data indicate that sociometric final testing scores cannot be predicted very well from knowledge of their first testing scores alone, the shifts in sociometric position that did occur were not marked or extreme shifts. Because we were unable to administer the trait rating scales during final testing data collection we have no way of knowing whether the shifts in sociometric position that did occur coincided with corresponding changes in trait ratings by teachers and peers.

The importance of being liked during childhood, or at least not actively disliked, has important long-term implications for children's future life adjustment, as we illustrated earlier. Our data do not suggest that children who are initially unpopular are destined to remain that way. Furthermore, given the increasing amount of recent literature demonstrating the success of various techniques at achieving increases in children's sociometric status (e.g., Ballard, Corman, Gottlieb, & Kaufman, 1977; Leyser & Gottlieb, 1980), there is an increased likelihood that over time some of these techniques will find their way into the elementary school curriculum, enabling unpopular children to increase their sociometric position within their peer group. To the best of our knowledge, the students in our sample were not involved in any systematic intervention that was designed to improve their sociometric status. The significant relationships we observed among ratings of

traits associated with social skills provide additional support for this approach to improving children's being liked by their peers, a sizable literature for which has already appeared (Gresham, 1981).

A final point for consideration is the serendipitous finding that all children ($N = 8$) who were sent to special education classes during the interval between pre- and posttesting were from the group that was initially rejected. Although this is not an especially surprising finding, given that special education youngsters often occupy inferior positions in the peer-group hierarchy, these are the only data of which we are aware that identified the sociometric status of children in naturally occurring circumstances prior to their entry into special education. The issue of who gets referred to special education is an increasingly important one as the special education rolls swell while the regular education rolls decline. School systems are actively searching for criteria on which to make a determination that a child requires special education. Possibly, one factor that should receive more attention than it has to date is the extent to which the child is actively rejected by the peer group.

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Jay Gottlieb is professor of educational psychology at New York University. Yona Leyser is associate professor in the Department of Learning, Development and Special Education of Northern Illinois University. Liora Pedhazur Schmelkin is associate professor in the Department of Counseling, Psychology, and Research in Education at Hofstra University.

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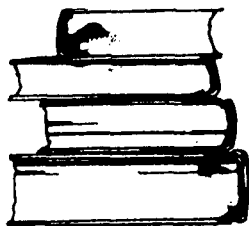
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School of E H N A P—New York University
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New York, NY 10003

Yona Leyser

Department of Learning, Development, and Special Education
Northern Illinois University
DeKalb, IL 60115

Liora Pedhazur Schmelkin

Department of Counseling, Psychology and Research
in Education
Hofstra University
1000 Hilton Avenue
Hempstead, NY 11550



Book Reviews

Title: Interpersonal Psychotherapy of Depression
Authors: Gerald L. Klerman and Myrna Weissman
Publication date: 1984
Publisher: Basic Books, New York
Price: \$21.95

The reader's initial reaction to *Interpersonal Psychotherapy of Depression* alternates between "Ho hum" and "So, what is new?" and this reaction persists until the end. This book offers great insight neither from a clinical nor from a research point of view. It is more remarkable by the promise it holds than by what it conveys.

The book begins with a history of depression as a diagnostic category, including a differentiation between clinical and normal depression. A review of the interpersonal approach is followed by a rather dubious attempt at linking depression with a disturbance of interpersonal relationships.

Part II deals in detail with how to conduct interpersonal therapy of depression including diagnosing the condition and evaluating the ways in which interpersonal relationships are affected and terminated. It discusses the differences between the initial interview and the middle of therapy, and provides guidelines on how to conduct each stage. Descriptions alternate with brief vignettes and Part II ends with an integrative and fairly lengthy case example. Part II is thorough and leaves little to one's imagination. This makes for both its strength and weakness. A beginning therapist would certainly derive a sense of security from adhering to the guidelines. The rather rigid structure decreases the possibility that an insensitive therapist will harm patients. Many will argue that no more can be expected from any kind of therapy. For experienced therapists who do not share this pessimistic view of therapy, the practice of IPT can be experienced as almost suffocating. Both theoretically and clinically, it narrows the range of how a therapist can conceptualize a patient's condition and endeavor to improve it.

Part III discusses the combining of psychotherapy with pharmacotherapy, problems encountered in therapy, and the training and

evaluation of IPT therapists. The chapter on combining therapy and medications contains some interesting information and begins with what could have been a fascinating discussion of the ambivalence displayed by both patients and professionals regarding the use of medication. Unfortunately, the discussion is aborted with two rather trite vignettes, which hardly illustrate the point. The chapter on problems encountered could have been eliminated altogether since all the problems described are inherent in all kinds of therapy and are familiar not only to experienced but also to student therapists.

Other weaknesses and inconsistencies exist. The link between depression and disrupted interpersonal relationships is weak and I suspect that, with some effort, one can establish the same link between disturbed relationships and cognitive disorders as well. In fact, this extension would enhance rather than diminish the scope of IPT. The authors acknowledge that IPT borrows technically from many other schools such as client-centered therapy, but maintain the uniqueness of the IPT approach. Such uniqueness, however, is at times difficult to distinguish, as in the case of Mary T (p. 100). Another weakness lies in the evidence presented by the authors in support of IPT. Comparative studies compare IPT with drugs. One wonders how IPT would fare if compared with treatment modalities specifically focusing on interpersonal relationships such as group therapy (especially groups using psychodrama), or family therapy when appropriate. Finally, a little bit of hair splitting. The book is co-authored by two writers, a male and a female. They acknowledge that most depressed patients are women. Yet they consistently use the masculine pronoun when generically referring to patients or therapists.

Interpersonal Psychotherapy of Depression has its good points. The diagnosing of depression based on the Hamilton Rating Scale for Depression (included in the appendix) makes for good reading, valuable to all mental health professionals. The three chapters (7, 8, 9) discussing the many ways in which interpersonal relationships can be disturbed or deficient are truly excellent. The book is generally well written and reflects the dedication and compassion of the authors and their respect for the dignity and worth of their patients.

It would be a mistake, however, to dismiss *Interpersonal Psychotherapy of Depression* as another mediocre work with few good points here and there. Indeed, it was stated earlier that this book is remarkable for the promise it holds. The promise lies in the possibility that not only depressive states but also other psychological and emotional disorders can improve as interpersonal relationships improve. It is true that the interpersonal approach is not new. What is new, however, is the

systematic, albeit not exclusive, focusing on interpersonal relationships. To actualize the promise, the authors must initially provide evidence that ITP is at least as effective as other therapeutic modalities dealing with interpersonal relationships. They should also perhaps explore the possibility that there may be two aspects to ITP. One would be the structured set of interventions, which are described in this book and which can be easily used by beginning therapists under supervision. The other would be a therapeutic approach based on ITP theoretical principles but leaving the experienced practitioner the freedom to use and integrate within an IPT framework all skills, knowledge, and intuitions: in one word, the freedom to be spontaneous.

Ray Naar

Ray Naar, assistant clinical professor of psychiatry (psychology) at the University of Pittsburgh, is engaged in the full-time private practice of clinical psychology in Pittsburgh. He can be reached at 6576 Lyndhurst Green, Pittsburgh, PA 15206.

Title: Changes in the Context of Group Therapy

Author: Mary W. Nicholas

Publication date: 1984

Publisher: Brunner, Mazel, New York.

Price: \$27.50

Mary Nicholas has given us a useful book. She has picked out from the many authors she cites those elements that she found of value, mercifully resisting any temptation to attack their errors. The book is at once broad and well researched, embracing a great range of group approaches, and yet forming a cohesive unit. Her style is clear and unpretentious. In fact, Nicholas finally enabled me to understand certain ideas of others that I had never been able quite to grasp in the original. There is little in the field so pithy and knitting together so many apparently divergent points of view.

This latter quality is especially valuable for the psychodramatist who too often feels encapsulated by a theoretical structure. She repeatedly illustrates how ideas of others compare with Morenean concepts that are similar but still distinct. She compares the "corrective emotional experiences" of Alexander and French with the familiar replay of negative psychodramatic scenes in a positive form; the concept of "intimacy" that Berne and many analysts discuss, she compares with "tele"; Rogers's (and, of course, Kohut's) use of the concept of "empathy" is related to psychodramatic doubling; the use of role reversal is cited as a device for facilitating the "feedback" mechanisms emphasized as crucial by numerous nonpsychodramatic authors. But she is at her best in this when she analyzes Morenean "spontaneity" into its elements and shows their relationship to Yalom's group cohesiveness, Bion's "work group," and Whitaker and Lieberman's "enabling solution." It makes a psychodramatist feel like one of the psychotherapeutic community again.

Nicholas's point of view exemplifies some of the best of the humanistic school she represents while leaving behind the pop clichés to which many of them are prone. She is flexible in her methods. She is more likely to do whatever works first and then to figure out why, rather than the other way round. It is certainly more human than being confined by a pre-set orthodoxy. Her eclecticism might not be theoretically elegant, but it is more likely to find the many totally unexpected ways in which people can be helped, and ever so much less likely to harm, than is blind ideology. When she deviates from standard practice, she seems to know why and cites experience to justify it. For example, she allows extra-group contact among her patients and gives some compelling reasons. On the other hand she prohibits sex between members, as do almost all group therapists. What is interesting is that she did not institute the prohibition because of any *a priori* rule learned by rote; indeed, she did not always adhere to it.

Also refreshing is the fact that Nicholas is never so hypersophisticated as to consider a simple way of helping as beneath her. Therapists, for instance, often disdain learning, insisting that they are not mere educators and that they restrict their domain to overcoming unconscious blocks to learning. But Nicholas, the ex-teacher, is aware that there are many things that people can and do learn, despite unconscious blocks or because they were never taught. Many of the communications skills—listening, speaking so as to be understood, absorbing negative feedback without excessive defensiveness, for instance—can all be influenced by simple learning, and she facilitates the learning, usually via modeling by other group members or even by herself.

I saw only one stereotype that slipped into Nicholas's broad range of tolerance. She set up the strawman of the rigid Freudian therapist against whose style she contrasted her own brand of more "democratic" leadership. She disdains the role of " 'neutral' vehicle for the projections of members (the psychoanalytic model)" and prefers that of " 'guide'. . .not confined to objectivity. . . . She [the democratic therapist] demands total authenticity of herself and her clients. . . . She often makes her personal feelings. . .known. . .and clearly displays feelings of empathy, anger, affection and surprise in genuine and spontaneous ways." How is it democratically decided that her feelings are the genuine and spontaneous ones? How democratic does the atmosphere feel to the patient whose therapist is clearly displaying anger toward him? At another point she explains how she would deal with a group that was avoiding sexual feelings. "I will probably become more playful, teasing them gently, being a little flirtatious and encouraging them to be so." The effect of these interventions from the powerful position of the therapist sounds more manipulative and intrusive and less "democratic" than that of the neutral therapist who allows the group to follow its own bent and restricts himself to helping them to understand what seems to be going on.

But it would be unfair to end on a negative note since the whole tenor of the book is certainly democratic enough and genuinely respectful of her patients' autonomy. This is a rare opportunity for any psychodramatist to see our particular discipline so positively and appropriately set in the context of group therapy as a whole.

James M. Sacks

James M. Sacks is the director of the New York Center for Psychodrama Training and is an executive editor of this journal. He may be reached at 71 Washington Place, New York, NY 10011.

**The American Society of Group Psychotherapy and Psychodrama
CALL FOR PARTICIPATION
1986 ANNUAL MEETING**

“Renewal: The Person and the Profession”

**Mount Airy Lodge in Mount Pocono, Pennsylvania
May 8, 9, 10, and 11, 1986**

The 1986 meeting of the ASGPP will have a new focus and format. It is designed for renewal of our creativity and spontaneity both as an organization and as persons and professionals. The last 10 years have seen a concentration of efforts to professionalize psychodrama within the mental health fields. The 1986 meeting will provide role relief from these demands. At this meeting, we will renew our connectedness to each other and the world in which we as a community live and practice. Emphasis will be placed on neglected aspects of Moreno's work, including networking, academic, and conceptual concerns.

We need members to be actively involved in this year's meeting. The following outlines the 4 areas that the Annual Meeting will concentrate on. The methods of presentation will consist of panels, discussion groups, training, and experiential workshops. In addition, we will need group facilitators. Please submit proposals in these areas:

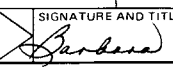
- I Renewal as professionals: theory and philosophy
 - A. Spontaneity and creativity
 - B. Role theory
 - C. Role of psychodrama and therapy in life
 - D. Comparative theories of personality (Moreno, Mahler) and human development
 - E. Recent research
 - F. Management of groups
 - G. Suggestions
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- II Renewal as a person: primarily experiential
- A. Permanent theatre of psychodrama
 - B. Encounter groups
 - C. Creative arts events (dance, movement, Tai Chi, therapeutic touch, art, etc.)
 - D. Sociodrama and sociometry
 - E. Suggestions
- III Renewal as an organization: developing the environment
- A. Community meetings
 - B. Discussion groups (history of ASGPP through sociodrama, leadership skills, ASGPP in action, what's happening now, etc.)
 - C. Evening social activities
 - D. Our image: how is the organization seen by others
 - E. Suggestions
- IV Creating ourselves and our future
- We are aware that there is considerable social fragmentation, abuse and destruction of life, and we need to create new ways of belonging. We invite you to suggest topics in the following areas to help develop healthier relatedness:
- A. Personal—myths, archetypes, fantasies, etc.
 - B. Family—issues of interdependence, etc.
 - C. Community—sociological and political issues

Indicate on the proposal which of the 4 areas you would like to participate in. Submit a first and second choice, if you wish. If you would like to be part of this year's exciting program, submit your program proposals and program ideas, and indicate willingness to be part of the programs, panels, or a group leader and facilitator to ASGPP Program Committee, 116 E. 27th St., 11th Fl., New York, N.Y. 10016.

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