

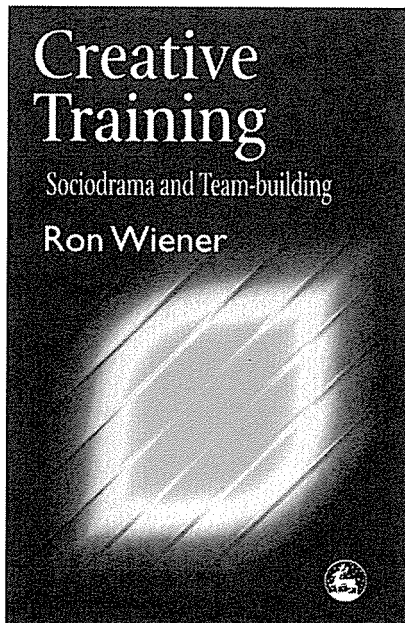
Book review

by Peter Howie

Creative Training, Sociodrama and Team Building

by Ron Wiener

Ron Wiener's book is organised into three discrete parts, each based on an original manual published by the Department of Adult Continuing Education at the University of Leeds. Part One on running staff training groups shows how trainers can use action learning methods, such as role-play. Part Two on 'team doctoring' looks at how teams develop and the strategies a consultant can use to work with stuck or malfunctioning teams. Part Three focuses on using sociodrama in training groups and as a method to explore group, social and political issues.



This is an easily readable book, disarming in its simplicity. I think it will be of most use to psychodramatists invited to work in organisations for their first time. The author's suggestions and remarks are loaded with import and contain the seeds of areas to pay further attention to. For example a short paragraph entitled 'When not to team build' on page 81, contains wisdom gained from long association with difficult organisations. If this paragraph were simply read as a passing suggestion its importance could be lost.

A confident psychodramatist having been asked to work in an organisation or team could imagine that the application of psychodramatic principles and techniques will resolve many things. This book could help an organisationally naive psychodramatist become more aware of some of the potential black holes and swampy areas they could encounter.

The layout builds well – he has an interesting way of looking at organisation work from the perspective of participant or team responsibilities; senior management responsibilities; and the role of the team doctor. Each section is very dense in its real import. He makes suggestions I would enshrine as rules for the new organisation worker. For example, on page 77,

'Unfortunately, not all line managers do what is expected of them and sometimes, either through lack of experience or because they don't want to confront the issue, they delegate the task to the team doctor' – which unfortunately could be a naive psychodramatist.

The book could also be useful for experienced organisational trainers and developers with organisational nous looking for more creative avenues to work with their clients. They would also need a psychodrama trainer or mentor as an adjunct, as the application of psychodramatic principles calls for a type of encounter that is not often demanded in the organisational arena.