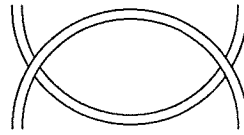


Australian and
New Zealand
Psychodrama
Association, Inc

JOURNAL

No.1, December 1992

Psychodrama
Sociodrama
Sociometry
Role Training
Group Work



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Our New Challenge

A journal, such as this, typically follows a **sequence** of editions and therefore, inherently in this form of publication, an anticipation is created. There is a quiet impression that ideas can unfold and that, over time, this sequence may continue to release greater enjoyment and stimulation.

A greater commitment has been made by our membership to this more extensive publication. Our challenge is to make it a journal of real personal value to ourselves as members of this organisation.

Since that commitment in January 1991 many decisions have been made to bring us to this point where we have a journal 'identity'. One of the guiding ideas in this edition, in terms of journal content, has been to print a range of articles that reflect some of the breadth of sub-groups or interest groups in our organisation so that we

continue to realise how much application of this theory and method is being made by one another. Another guiding idea in this edition has been to value layout and observe how much this affects our enjoyment and willingness to associate with our written word.

Each article here has an individual focus, with the unifying basis of role theory. The thesis article has been included to illustrate what has been considered by the Board of Examiners as a thesis that is of good standard in terms of content, length and format. Also, it is of publishable length for this journal.

Ed.

‘The Story’

An historical account of my path to the idea of ‘Magister Ludi, the Master of Play’ by Francis Batten

This article is an extract from the thesis Francis has written for his qualification as a psychodrama director. He finished the thesis earlier this year (1992) after gathering material over a ten year period. This longer process has therefore influenced the content of the project, making it a highly personal expression of his integration of a number of experiences over time. The paper has developed into a well researched subject through his sustained and dedicated focus within the one subject area.

This portion of the thesis was selected because it reveals something of Francis’ ongoing journey over several years. Through the reading, we may be assisted to realise or re-realise the strength and power that can be inherent in gradually and steadfastly working to achieve long term goals.

The complete thesis is available for reading. The overall focus of the thesis is on a role profile of the ‘Magister Ludi/Playwright’ and its application in the areas of Creativity and Spontaneity Training, and additional professional areas, such as in organisations as the role of the Creative Manager, the Strategic Leader, and within Playback Theatre as the Conductor.

Francis lives and works in Brisbane. He is the Acting Director of the Psychodrama Training Institute of Queensland and the Director and main Trainer of the organisation Action Training and Development. For a portion of each year Francis travels to different parts of the world teaching and training others.

The story.

I am born on January 12th, in England into a family of sea-farers who have ably served a disappearing society. January 1940 is a limbo time that is neither peace nor war – the “phoney war”. I am thus a member of no recognisable generation, neither pre-war, war-baby, or baby-boomer; and am to be educated to play roles in a conserved culture that only

persists in nostalgic illusions of an Empire that no longer exists.

There are positives and negatives to such a limenal birthday. The positive of being born into such a noticeable unreality is that I will have to create my own roles and place to play, perhaps it will also be easier to see the world as a Play and not to swallow hand-me-down realities. The shadow of this will be a nagging sense of anxiety and nomadic rest-

lessness of identity. These are some of the base metals I need to learn how to turn into gold.

So later I become actively interested in the role of co-creator of my life's story. I say co-creator because I move towards consciously wishing to match the needs of my private world with those of the social world in a positive way. My circumstance and environment also influence and co-author my story with me. Within them I will try to create suitable places, and to find appropriate people (auxiliaries) with whom to enact the roles that satisfy my being and the growing of my story.

We are all similarly engaged in our own great Plays, trying to play right, and playwright our own story.

The director or conductor of this play and the intermediary between its various elements I later come to call the Magister Ludi, the Master of Play.

But in my trapped teens in the stagnant 50's in England I become fascinated with the theatre and film. It is like smelling exotic flowers. Exotic because it brings me to the boundaries of gardens no-one has told me of; gardens that I sense but do not yet know how to unlock the latch and enter. These scents are the tantalising and compelling perfumes that intimate alternative worlds beyond those staked out by my native espalier.

I read Plays avidly. Even written they are fresh and exciting; no analysis, no explanations; just the names of the characters and what they say. So much is inferred as relationships are fleshed in the imagination, a bare skeleton upon which muscle and movement is imagined.

Later on I will attempt to "act" by repeating the "lines" laid down by someone else, for someone else, and will find the experience unsatisfying.

My entry point into drama will not to be through the 'conserve', or via the written word, but through moving and making.

Time passes and it is 1959. I am nineteen and Harold MacMillan has been winning elections by telling the English they have "never had it so good". It does not feel right. I try wearing a duffle coat, being an 'existentialist', and marching for unilateral disarmament, but it is not my Play. I want to find another play and alternative identities, so I exit this stage to hitch-hike around the world and look for another.

I lose my passport in Iran; learn I need to rename myself in one syllable in timber mills in Western Australia; and at University in New Zealand discover I am not the fool I had been taught I was at school.

In the early 60's I make alternative starts at being a writer, painter, potter or sculptor; the paths of art historian or an anthropologist also flicker briefly in the firelight. For a while I become a school teacher, but that is not my right play-ground – there is too painful a rift between the educational ideal and the social reality.

The start of the next Act is triggered by seeing the film "Les Enfants du Paradis" (The Children of the Gods). This is a film about Gaspar Debureau, the famous 19th Century Czech Mime. Debureau lived life passionately and as an artist succeeded in translating both the figures of his private life and the public events of his times directly onto the stage in a way that touched so many of his contemporaries from all walks of life. The film contrasts his life to that of his friend and rival, who performed the 'great' literary theatre for 'educated' audiences.

The lead part is played by Jean-Louis Barrault, another man with a poetic spirit, a deep passion for life.

And a loving intelligence. He too believes that the people of the streets are the 'children of the gods', and sees their concerns as of the highest value. "The Gods" is also theatre parlance for the cheapest seats, where the roughest, poorest and least well-behaved used to sit. The seats are the 'highest' in the theatre. This revolutionary licence for the theatre to set things upside down, is one of its strongest attractions for me. That is to say the theatre as a laboratory in which to experiment with alternative realities and explore new worlds.

The theme of the film also embodies elements of immediacy, spontaneity and physicality that inspire me; and especially a belief that theatre is about love of life, empowerment and that it is for everyone.

Both through his theatre work and through his writings on the theatre Barrault is to become one of my inspirers.

And the Mime fascinates me. As a result of seeing Barrault in this film I start to explore and experiment with Mime. I discover I have a gift for it, and I take this doorway into new and wordless worlds of experience and imagination. I also enjoy the disciplines of Mime, a mime needs to look very closely at what is really happening; only then can he or she create the illusions that create a reality.

So it is 1967 and I move on from teaching to explore theatre and the languages of gesture and action. Within a short time I am touring New

Zealand as a solo Mime artist. Soon after that I am studying theatre in the student ferment of Paris 1969, at the Lecoq School.

Ecole Jaques Lecoq, Paris.

1969 and Jacque Lecoq, bless his foxy heart, is usefully ruthless.



FRANCIS BATTEN (right)

For him Mime is not aping the anecdotes of Marcel Marceau but a route to the heart of experience and expression. He writes of his own teaching:

"Often people ask me, 'What is it you do in your school, is it mime?' I always feel that the one who asks the question limits the school to wordless formalism. The word "mime" already is restricting. One sees a performer who does not speak and who makes stylized gestures to show imaginary objects, or makes faces to have you understand that he laughs or cries. Then I answer that I don't do mime, not that kind. For me, the mime to be learned at the school is at the root of all man's expressions, whether gestural, constructed, modelled, sonorous, written, or spoken. That mime

which I call fundamental is the greatest school of the theatre; it is based on movement. It is in the gesture behind the gesture, in the gesture behind the word, in the movement of material objects, in sounds, colours, and lights, that the school finds its origins. Man understands that which moves by his ability to "mimic" it; that is, to identify himself with the world by re-enacting it with his entire being. Beginning in the silent body of man the impulses toward expression take shape – dramatic impulse and then dramatic creation. The fire that I look at blazes within me. I can know that fire by identifying with it in action; I give my fire to that fire. The impressions of the body give life to words. But if, when the words leave the body they wander about, comfortably defined, they then harden and die, bearing only emptiness. Therefore our approach begins with the body."

"Everything moves" Lecoq says; and he teaches me to look for the truth and essence of that movement, be it act or emotion; be it within me, in another, or in nature. How does it stir? "See it as it is", unbarnacled by conventional emblems of meaning. Role reverse and invent new signs to communicate the truth of the other. "The cry searches for its sign".

Lecoq's unerring eye for falsity develops the aesthetic sense in all of us, nothing to do with moral or with rational rights and wrongs. Is what you sense in front of you, or in you, at this very moment truth or sham?

"Un arbre c'est un arbre" is all he has to say one day in class after someone has striven mightily to manufacture a beautified reality. "What's he mean, What's he mean?" presses an Englishman beside me

wanting a translation. "A tree is a tree" I translate rapidly; but it will take me much longer to come to know it; and live it myself.

By 'chance' in a break as I write this I come across a quotation from Herman Hesse in a tree calendar that captures some of the essential simplicity Lecoq taught us to seek out and create.

"For me, trees have always been the most penetrating teachers. I revere them when they live in tribes and families, in forests and groves. And even more I revere them when they stand alone. They are like lonely persons. Not like hermits who have stolen away out of some weakness, but like great solitary (people), like Beethoven and Nietzsche. In their highest boughs the world nestles; their roots rest in infinity, but they do not loose themselves there; they struggle with all the force of their lives for one thing only; to fulfil themselves according to their own laws; to build up their own form; to represent themselves"

Herman Hesse. "Wanderings"
Trees for Life Calendar July '89

'Theatre Action', New Zealand.

In 1971 I return to New Zealand to found The Theatre Action troupe. Jerzy Grotowski, Peter Brooke and a dream of "total theatre" are my catalysts. Grotowsky in "Towards a Poor Theatre" wrote of an untrapped theatre of truth with the actor as shaman; in fact at this time Grotowski is already leaving the theatre for para-theatrical rituals and journeys into 'Self' taking place in the Polish forests. Peter Brooke dreams the new Shakespearian dream of finding a universal dramatic language that will be understood by everyone, every-

where. He and his troupe journey and experiment in France, Iran and Africa. Both Brooke and Grotowski work to escape conserved formalism, and to find immediacy, connection and transformation.



In the Theatre Action group we do whatever we need to do, and by whatever means, style or art-form to reach our audience; and we take our theatre to them where they are, be that in the theatre or street, shopping mall or bar. Twenty years later it will all sound normal enough but in 1971 there is an incredulous look on the face of the Director of the Mercury Theatre in Auckland when I suggest his actors might perform in the new St. Lukes Centre Shopping Mall.

We use the richness of collective creation and research improvisation to develop our own finished works. Sometimes we touch it. Ironically our last performance given at the 'Sonic Circus' in Wellington 1975 is such a moment. It is a strange and surrealist piece, but audience and performers understand each other in this moment. The piece becomes the vehicle for another order of event: a combustible moment of communion and ecstatic jubilation.

We come together.

A moment dreamed of, remembered and waited for through the days spent rehearsing in blackened theatres, planning, writing, arguing, travelling.

But such fragmentary glimpses do not answer the driving questions I have about why I feel drama to be so central to human health and wholeness, and yet current 'mainstream' theatre is so marginal to contemporary society.

Where was Debureau's market place?

Was I looking for it in too literal a way?

I have come to know there were other needs also I sought to satisfy in the theatre. The attraction of the Theatre as a place of escape and licence for example; or as a place in which to express, to create, to be heard; or in which to be idolised and applauded. But even massive doses of applause from many hundreds at 10.30 in the evening does not leave me feeling satisfyingly loved for very long, or answer the question;

why am I here and what am I doing?

That kind of play on that kind of stage never really played-right.

Around this time, 1977, my friend Deborah Pearson tells me about Psychodrama. I overcome my political prejudices about the cost and go to my first Psychodrama workshop which is run by Max Clayton.

I come to respect and love this earnestly stooped, shuffling, idiosyncratic and powerful man; and the power of the method he is to teach me as I move onto my next stage.

This first workshop is a challenge, not that every one since will not be also, but here in front of my nose and in contemporary form is much of what I had been striving for: a popular, profound and participatory drama.

Here is Debureau's market place.

People of different walks of life, ages and cultures meet, and give, and haggle, and love, and harangue, and trade roles.

We swap our stories and we play

a hundred roles within them; we change, and grow and transform ourselves.

We understand ourselves more fully.

We feel less alone as we share our stories and take 'part' and take heart in each other.

I have insight, I am moved, I am changed. I see others change in ways that I know are essential and possible in the theatre but have so rarely experienced.

Here it is.

It is risky and play-full.

Jacob Levy Moreno.

Thus through Psychodrama I encounter its founder J.L. Moreno, (born 1889, died 1974). He was a physician and dramatist. Psychodrama originally emerged from his passion for the possibilities of the theatre, in particular his 'Theatre of Spontaneity' (Die Stegrieftheatre), which built on his early theatrical experiments in Vienna including the 'Living Newspaper', (1921 onwards).

It is interesting that almost ten years prior to this, in 1966, I was involved in some 'living theatre' performances at the Mercury Theatre in Auckland. I think at the time we thought we had invented it ourselves. Anyway it was part of my intensifying search for physical, improvisational theatre; a theatre not of texts but actions; a theatre of the instant that had an immediate relevance to the real life concerns of the audience. So it is exciting at this point in 1975 to discover Moreno as I read his works and experience his philosophy-in-action.

Like children's play the basic design of Psychodrama is beautifully simple: people take parts in a group ritual in which they enact their own story in the group. They and other members of the group themselves

play all the required roles. By swapping, or reversing, roles new perspectives on old situations may be obtained and new solutions can be tried out. The implications are far reaching. I let Moreno speak for himself:

"The playwright of the conventional drama is, in this scheme, replaced by a more complicated mechanism. The community in which the subjects live – they may be mental patients or normal people – it is explored, and by direct interviews or other means the dominating ideologies, emotions, or illusions of the community are determined. The more thorough this preliminary investigation is, the better. In addition, many of the subjects may have been able to supply pertinent material about themselves. All this material is then studied carefully by the auxiliary egos, and the design of one or more psychodramas is worked out. These psychodramas are so constructed that they may reach the depth levels of as large a portion of the subjects as possible. They may even be assisted in this process by some of the subjects themselves. ... The actors of the conventional drama are replaced for this psychodrama by auxiliary egos ...

In contradistinction to the conventional theatre, the spectators of this psychodrama are then witnessing a performance which is expressly intended to relate (and which, in fact, does relate) to their specific individual problems. The reactions of the spectators during and immediately following the performance can be made the basis for individual psychodramatic treatments. Thus is Aristotle's concept of catharsis

brought to its rightful, logical culmination.

*The therapeutic aspect of psychodrama cannot be divorced from the aesthetic aspect, nor ultimately, from its ethical character. What the aesthetic drama has done for deities like Dionysius, Brahma, and Jehovah, and for representative characters like Hamlet, Macbeth, or Oedipus, the psychodrama can do for every man. In the therapeutic theatre an anonymous, average man becomes something approaching a work of art – not only for others but for himself. A tiny, insignificant existence is here elevated to a level of dignity and respect. Its private problems are projected onto a high plane of action before a special public. ... The world in which we all live is imperfect, unjust, and amoral, but in the therapeutic theatre a little person can rise above our everyday world. Here his ego becomes an aesthetic prototype – he becomes representative of mankind. On the psychodramatic stage he is put into a state of inspiration – he is the dramatist himself ...*¹

The gauntlet that Moreno throws down to traditional theatre is that with its emphasis on rehearsal, expertise and perfection it worships an aesthetic of the morgue. It can be made up to look beautiful but it is dead.

In the traditional theatre the work of the Playwright is seen in its completed form, not in the process that lead up to its creation. The recreation of past spontaneity and creativity pre-empt the vitality of the "here and

now". The actors are subservient to a script which they had no part in creating. (In film they are even required to act fragments out of sequence).

Audience members assume the role of passive consumers of the knowledge, beauty or entertainment doled out to them by inimitable experts, whom they are encouraged to idolise. The product may be magnificent but it is by definition "finished".

Moreno proclaims that this kind of theatre overlooks the *status nascendi* – the birth process of an idea, a feeling or an event. This is what is important. Moreno's Theatre of Spontaneity gives primacy to the essential vitality of the creative process:

"It is exactly at this point that our theory of spontaneous creativity is able to take a stand against what Beethoven, himself, did – and probably was trying to do. If we imagine a Beethoven who would remain permanently in that initial creative state – and would not allow that state to weaken – and who would refuse to give birth to musical conserves, a Beethoven, however, who would be just as determined as ever in his efforts to create new musical worlds, then we can grasp the true meaning of pure spontaneous creativity in other spheres – dramatic, cultural and religious.

Man has created a world of things, cultural conserves, in order to produce for himself a semblance of God. When man found himself failing in his struggle for maximum creativity,

¹ From **Mental Catharsis and the Psychodrama, Group Psychotherapy, Psychodrama & Sociometry** 28 (1975), p. 32. Other versions appear in *Sociometry* 3 (1940), *Psychodrama*, Vol.1 (1946); Quoted in *The Essential Moreno*, ed. Jonathan Fox; pp. 58-59.

*he divided from his 'will-to-create' a 'will-to-power' using the latter as a devious means by which alone to achieve the aims of a god. With the eagerness of an eagle which is wounded and unable to fly with its own wings, he grasped the opportunity opened to him by the cultural conserve and machines, with the deification of the crutch as a consequence. The cultural conserve has become, therefore, the expression of a being who has but a limited amount of spontaneity at his command.'*²

With his Theatre of Spontaneity Moreno began a process of creating an environment that encourages and supports "birth process", the bringing to be of the present. There is no script, but what emerges out of the present moment. There are no professional actors, or passive audience, since all who attend are active participants in the action. All contribute and all are part of the group as it warms up to the spontaneity state that first sets in motion a living drama, then explores its dynamics and arrives at a catharsis of growth and healing. Participants go away not merely with answers, ('conserves' and therefore in danger of obsolescence), but with an enhanced capacity to call upon the spontaneity they will need to meet their own life's dramas as they unfold.

I discover that Moreno has also created a form that can reconcile the needs of society with those of the individual.

In his book the "Theatre of the Oppressed" Augusto Boal argues that Aristotle's concept of tragedy is an instrument of social coercion. This is

because, though it is the tragedy of a great hero, this hero has some fatal flaw that puts him outside a social and moral order, and that order *must* be re-established. We experience tragic pity and fear because we have identified with the protagonist, and yet we watch this inevitable restoration of social order over individual deviance, mistake or failing.

Moreno does not take sides, nor is he only interested in the heroism of kingly heroes. I discover in Moreno someone who creates a theatre in which "anonymous, average man becomes something approaching a work of art" and "a tiny, insignificant existence is here elevated to a level of dignity and respect".

By way of contrast at the other, counter-social, extreme to Aristotle, nearer to our own times and one of the seminal inspirers of men like Peter Brook and Jerzy Grotowsky, is Antonin Artaud (1896–1948). He experienced himself as an individual so entombed and suffocated by the mores of bourgeois France that it could only be cut through with a "theatre of cruelty". He saw society as so imaginatively and spiritually moribund that by inversion theatre should be like the plague. Only in the plague-fever remained any vitality.

In his book "The Theatre and its Double" you can find his manifesto on the "Theatre of Cruelty". Cruelty is the closest English word to the French '*cruauté*', which does not mean sadism in this context but rather uncompromising and unflinching reflection of the truth. Cruel because it refused to be flattering. (This is an attribute the Lecoq also had, but without Artaud's fury). Artaud's vision was so raw that he ultimately lost himself in it, and ended his days as an inmate of an

²J.L.Moreno, *Psychodrama*, Vol.1, p.113

asylum rather than a healer.

Up to this time in my life I have tended to play the 'lone wolf' and side against society in this debate. Now Moreno shows me another way.

Moreno physician and dramaturg finds a healing way for the drama of the individual and the group to be explored. In my experience this interaction between the group and the individual is one of the great struggles of our times and with Psychodrama Moreno creates a form strong enough to hold it.

Though he has the passionate spontaneity of Artaud, even some of the 'madness', Moreno exhibits compassion rather than Artaud's rage. He is sufficiently anchored in his experience of the connection between God and man, between man and his society to hold these tensions and create a drama for our times. A drama for the 'Children of the Gods'; our drama.

"We don't do the hospital here" Lecoq would say in class dismissively. It worked for him and it worked for me at the time; but not everyone. There was a 75% attrition rate over my two years in Paris. Moreno does "do the hospital here", right now and right here. He pursues the links between drama and healing, and between the individual and society

further.

Moreno physician and dramaturg finds a healing way for the drama of the individual and the group to be explored. In my experience this interaction between the group and the individual is one of the great struggles of our times and with Psychodrama Moreno creates a form strong enough to hold it.

Other things I come to admire in Moreno are; his dynamic view of the world as an interactive system of constantly shifting patterns as we reach out towards, or away from, significant others around us (our social atom); his view of man as a role player; and the primacy he gives to action, to the inter-action of role and counter-role in a dynamic system, to being "engaged" in this encounter with each other, and to being aware of the psychodramatic roles (myth roles) seeking expression within us.

These are his gifts and these are the gifts that excite me as I encounter him at this time.

Above all through Moreno I see Psychodrama as a warm up to a state of spontaneity and as an invitation to self-liberation.

"But this mad passion, this unfoldment of life in the domain of illusion, does not work like a renewal of suffering. Rather it confirms the rule: every true second time is the liberation from the first. ... One gains towards one's own life, towards all one has done and does, the point of view of the creator. ... The first time brings the second time to laughter."

(From "Theatre of Spontaneity", p.91)

The Wasley Centre, Perth.

It is 1977 and I am in Perth, Western Australia, in a converted church called the Wasley Centre, training to be a Psychodrama Director. Sometimes I wish to bale out, but I keep going because I know training to be a Psychodramatist takes me to boundaries of myself I need to step beyond. It still does, so I still do it.

One of the difficulties in Perth at this time is experiencing a split between the artist and the therapist. I knew this split was in me because it troubled me when I encountered it in others, including my trainers. Sometimes they spoke as though wisdom could not have existed before psychology, or as if the dramatic imagination was paradoxically both powerfully risky and light-weight. (Clinical psychodramatists themselves encounter these same attitudes from academically trained psychologists, as the latter sense themselves at the edges of their 'knowing style').

What then is the connection between theatre and therapy, or perhaps it's more pertinent to ask what are the differences between *theatre* and *therapy* at a practical level; and what are the links between *drama* and *healing* at a core level.

Where is the role of the artist in this?

Amongst Psychodramatists in Australia and New Zealand these attitudes have greatly changed. There now is a much greater awareness and integration of the role of the 'artist' and of artistry in all levels of our living.

By 1979 I have completed the practical requirements for accreditation as a Psychodramatist. In my work I am increasingly involved in linking the areas of Theatre, Education, Therapy and Re-creation.

Though some people trained in these disciplines still behave like mutually suspicious separatists I am heartened by knowing that a growing band of practitioners and colleagues are working to create this middle ground.

So what is it that we could call ourselves?

Landing in a foreign country I still wonder what 'profession' to make on my customs declaration.

Is there a word that is both accurate, and in common usage, that describes what we do?

What is the name for it? What is the role?

In my own story, mediating between the roles of artist and healer, between my private and my social worlds, between creating new worlds and breaking down old ones will have much to do with what I will come to call the role of "Playwright", and later the "Magister Ludi", the Master of the Play.

The Drama Action Centre, Sydney.

I know that I learn by doing; so with the benefit of ten years hindsight I can now say that I co-created the Drama Action Centre in Sydney to help myself discover the answer to the question, 'what is it that I do?' – by doing it.

The Drama Action Centre is established in Sydney in 1980 to run what becomes a two year course which the first brochure says "*offers a range of training and personal development activities related to theatre, drama, communication and education*". The course is open "*to anyone interested in developing their personal, professional or artistic expression*". The stated aims of the course at the time are:

1. *To provide training in Drama that draws together theatre,*

education and health, and provides an integrated basic training for workers in these fields.

2. *To provide training for those who want to create their own theatre, drawing on themes from themselves and their environment, and are interested in a physically based theatre where the body and the whole person is the expressive instrument.*
3. *To develop spontaneity and creativity; and make available a coherent training in spontaneity and creativity that can be applied in both our personal and professional lives.*
4. *To provide training for those intending to work with others as facilitators in theatre, education, recreation or health, in practical ways using "action methods".*
5. *To explore participatory modes of theatre and social communication that are healthy and empowering."*

(Drama Action Centre
brochure 1980)

Each year around twenty people enrol. They invest considerable money, time and effort in an unsubsidised two year course. Who are they?

Why do they come and what do they have in common?

Ages range from early twenties to sixties; professions include performers, teachers, health professionals, unwaged searchers, doctors, town planners, secretaries and nuns.

They come with a balance of professional and personal needs. Some come to acquire professional

skills, sometimes for the theatre, but often for other professional work with people. Often they are at a life-point where they have run dry in their work and want fresh input to develop new roles that will re-invigorate their metier when they return to it, or equip them to try new career directions.

Some come to re-moisten parts of themselves desiccated by the dedicated work roles they have been performing for society; others to make a space for self-discovery. Because we use the medium and metaphors of communicating through drama, it is called a drama centre.³

*There is always a
challenging transition
from the risking but
charmed circle of a
workshop back into the
world. So much more
so after a "workshop"
that lasts two years.*

Compared to the graduates of many other types of 'school', I believe that ex-trainees are more adaptable than most and more able to create a satisfying marriage between what they want for themselves and what society offers, or can be stimulated to offer them. (This ability to match inner personal and outer social requirements will become seminal for the role of the "Playwright").

It is around 1986 now and I am pondering again how to encourage students bridging between two years of exploration with their need to create a work-niche for themselves in

³ For more information on the background, participants and work of the Drama Action Centre see "On the Edge of Peril – a brief history of Drama Action Centre", by Julie Fuad.

society. What roles need to be developed to value both worlds, and to mediate between them?

There is always a challenging transition from the risking but charmed circle of a workshop back into the world. So much more so after a "workshop" that lasts two years. We try setting up post-course special projects and performance teams, but find this contributes to dependent and counter dependent dynamics and a tangled transition.

We start to do more within the course to prepare participants towards their lives after the course.

We get clearer about when we move into a more protected private world and when we open out to meet the social world; how to make these distinctions and develop the appropriate roles.

Our society is addicted to diplomas and paper-rites.

Knowing the sclerosis that sets in around institutional learning I have prejudices to overcome to do with the formalisations of paper qualifications. But if a diploma conveys a cachet of distinction, why not enter the game, but make it meaningful? Play it well and play it right. The challenge is to create a piece of paper which has external validity and which also provides useful inspirational and practical goals for the trainee.

Part of the challenge of building the bridge is finding a language that means something on both banks of the river. Old words convey old ideas; but buzz-words and neologisms convey nothing to the unconverted. So I play with old words and nudge them forwards towards new meanings, or backwards towards their ancient ones, hoping

that in time new practices will re-define them.

I develop a Diploma in Dramatic Arts for the Drama Action Centre and write the following as part of the introduction to the Diploma:

"A Diploma in Dramatic Arts may be awarded to trainees who complete the two year course (or equivalent training), who undertake some further specific studies and who meet the required standards of training outlined here.

The term DRAMATIC ARTS is used because it is an ancient term capable of covering the breadth and depth of training. For example, a course in Dramatic Arts enables us to draw on the wisdom embodied in the tradition of Drama as an ancient human activity, as well as on the more recent rediscoveries of J.L. Moreno and other developments seeking to answer the contemporary need for creativity, enactment and exploration in our lives and community. It also allows us to embrace rather than exclude experience and learning from the interweaving realms of the theatre, education, therapy and the spirit".

Well this gives me a name for the Diploma: but this is for the thing but not for the living role, for what Moreno calls *"the functioning form the individual assumes in a specific moment he reacts to a specific situation in which other persons or objects are involved."*⁴

I try and discard many words but the one I like best at this time is the "Playwright".

⁴ One of Moreno's definitions of a role; Psychodrama Vol. 1, 1946. Reprinted 1964, p. 1V. Another is "a unit of synthetic experience into which private, social and cultural elements have merged"; Psychodrama Vol. 1, p. 184.

What is a Playwright?

I think that it is not someone who merely *writes* plays? Let's open it up much more than that. Plays have only come to be written down in some cultures, and in them only comparatively recently. Playing was happening long before that.

Rite preceded write.

Play in its multifarious forms is an essential and immemorial activity for mammals.

As humans have evolved so has their capacity to play with alternative or metaphoric environments with alternative rules. Today a football association board discussing a change in the rules is discussing how to make a better Play. A child playing with her toys may be an actor in the drama later but first she is a Playwright – she sets the stage and assigns the roles in the drama of which she is a part and plays all the roles; playing and mimicking God and Creator in her personal universe.

In the case of groups of humans, it usually needs someone to read the situation and then create a form, container, rules, so the participants derive something satisfying from it.

So I spell the word *Playwright* not *Playwrite*. A *wright* is a maker, as in Plowwright, Shipwright or Cartwright or Wainwright. I enjoy the earthiness of a craft implied in the word *wright* – the Maker of Play, the Master of Play.

In the spiritual domain we can join with and play our part in co-creating the cosmos with the "Master of the Great Play" beyond normal naming.

At a personal level we strive to attain mastery and artistry in our living and be the Playwrights of our own story.

At a professional level many of us also play this role with others in the social arena. We might be in the role

of facilitator, teacher, theatre director, psychodramatist, sports organiser, recreation officer, festival organiser, community worker, therapist, actor, artist, musician, child, lover or fool.

We create an event, we create a play, a form in which there is learning, celebrating, experimenting, escaping or transforming. These forms are the matrix of spontaneity, and the '*playwright*' is the midwife.

In play

- we invoke the god-role within us;
- we balance the dilemmas of form and freedom, of structure and spontaneity;
- we resolve pleasure, pain or paradox in play;
- we imagine, practice, rehearse, act, listen and act again.

As we work with others and encourage them in this process we set up rites that are accessible and effective and many of us more and more knowingly traffic between the previously fenced off fields of the arts, therapy, education and organisational development in order to set up situations in which we, and others, can enact and incarnate ourselves more and more fully into life. We do it in so many different ways, but I call us all "*Playwrights*".

Playwright

play rites

play right

the right to play

the rightness of play

the rites of play

the maker of play – the master

the player (of play

the actor

The Creator

My next step is to formulate what is required for this "Diploma" and in doing this I am hugely helped and stimulated by the Training and

Standards Manual published by the Australian and New Zealand Psychodrama Association Board of Examiners. The role profile outlined in this thesis owes an acknowledgment of example and inspiration to the A.N.Z.P.A. Training and Standards Manual and its authors.

Originally I developed this role profile as part of a specific curriculum for the 'Playwright' designed for the Drama Action Centre course. But my own story involves me in leaving the Drama Action Centre in 1988, moving to a new city and applying action methods in new areas of work and in different parts of the world. I am freer to consider the role profile of the "Playwright" in a wider context.

My hope is of now developing a role Profile for Training that will be useful for practitioners of Psychodrama and Sociodrama, but also can serve as a model for defining personal training goals that can be negotiated in many different professions.

Development of the concept of "Magister Ludi".

It is 1989 and I move to Brisbane. My work here gives me the opportunity to work as a Sociodramatist and Sociometrist in organisations – to watch and work with the "play" of organisational groups; to assist in their playing right (in terms of their own cultures and criteria); and to assist managers and staff to see themselves as re-shapers and co-creators of their environment (rather than victims of circumstance).

In this culture they talk of corporate goals, re-structuring, strategic planning, implementation and evaluation. I do not see these as different in spirit from the work many others of you perform in your own spheres of practice – though we need

to develop language and practice that plays right for our different metiers.

In organisations for example practice and language need to be practical and efficient in relation to specific tasks and outcomes. Nevertheless most people spend a large percentage of their time at "work" and would wish it to be fulfilling and a satisfying expression of themselves. It certainly provides an arena for the enactment of many psychodramatic roles, often at an unconscious level. This dimension of corporate culture is as present as the more overt concerns about clear procedures, strategic planning, structural efficiency, communications and a healthy group culture.

In some of these new areas of work the term 'Playwright' is not immediately understood. Words like 'Creative Manager' or 'Strategic Leader' are more accessible, and to my mind cover the same role configuration, but in a different metier.

By interesting synchronicity, shortly after my move to Brisbane, Jonathan Fox, founder of Playback Theatre and an organiser of the 1989 Moreno Centennial Conference in New York phones to ask if I will present at that conference, and what would I like to do? I know what I would like to do, but not what to call it.

The next day on a friends bookshelf I come across "The Glass Bead Game" by Herman Hesse I open it and I see '*Magister Ludi*'. I ring Jonathan back from a too-hot-to-touch glass-boothed Telecom goldphone at a beach on the Sunshine Coast near Noosa. As the beads of sweat rolled off me, he comes in from clearing snow from his door to answer the phone.

'Magister Ludi'! The 'Master of the Play'! I have my title.

I like the way it links opposites.

It links mastery and play. It is both self-importantly latinate and playful; status-ful and fun. It has respectability. The roots are good. The word *Magister* tracks back to the a source 'mag-' which also gives us magi, wise ones and *magic* (mage-ic = master-ful). *Ludi* shares its ludic roots with *Lido*, a place of play and re-creation; and with *illusion*, *illusory*; with the *lewd* and the *ludicrous*. When we are fearful and seek to control (to normalise), we use these play-ful words derogatorily. Conversely, deriving from a fearful role state "mastery" may become negatively arrogant, or an abuse of power.

But by balancing Mastery with the Ludic we can get it right and get it light, (enrightenment and enlightenment).

The great masters of spontaneity and liberation of all traditions tell us that life is an 'illusion'. If we misinterpret illusion to mean a moderns sense of empty meaninglessness, then we will feel abandoned and deprived. With this 'construct', through these spectacles, we may well see the world as a bleak and cruel joke. But other great teachers I have met along my journey remind me that the word means play and that everything is the play of consciousness – Gods play – created for our mutual delight – a cosmic game of hide and seek.⁵

"He for whom you look is the same as he who is looking."

(St. Francis)

"The Self is the Actor, the Self is also the Stage"

(Shiva Sutras)

So for me the term "Magister Ludi" links our everyday work into the universal play, so I will use it also.

So in this thesis I will often use the names 'Playwright' and 'Magister Ludi' interchangeably. I have asked myself if this creates confusion but I have decided to do so nonetheless. They are interchangeable, and also others of you already do use other terms for a similar role; ('Participant Observer', 'Creative Manager', or the 'Conductor' in Playback Theatre). But 'Magister Ludi' and 'Playwright' also have differences from each other in timbre and connotation that I wish to retain as I refer to in my opening.

We come now to the thesis.

The purpose of this preface has been to provide a background to the evolution of the roles of 'Playwright' and 'Magister Ludi' a warm up to the Role Profile that now follows.

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⁵ cf. Swami Muktananda; *"Play of Consiousness"*, San Fransisco: Harper & Row, 1978.

Drivers and Restrainers: Sociodrama of a Lewin Force Field

by Henry Price

Henry Price is a consulting psychologist and counsellor who uses experiential learning methods in a wide range of staff development contexts. He is also a practising painter with a strong interest in creativity and artistic expression and he holds an MA in Visual Art from the ANU, Canberra School of Art. He has almost twenty years' experience in personal development training and is currently training with the Psychodrama Training Institute of ACT.

***Abstract:** Learning methods involving enactment are being increasingly utilised in the training and development of managers as an adjunct to formal information learning sessions. Their advantage lies in creating learning which integrates action, thought and feeling. This article describes the enactment of a Lewin Force Field as a means of understanding and changing organisational culture in a middle management public sector context.*

The work of Kurt Lewin (1890–1947) occupies a seminal place in dynamic organisational theory. It was Lewin who is credited with the phrase group dynamics and who coined the famous dictum: There is nothing so practical as a good theory. Lewin developed one of the early systems approaches to understanding groups and organisations, and his Force Field Analysis succinctly summarises many of the key principles of systemic and cybernetic conceptions of social stability and change.

Essentially, Lewin conceived of every individual as occupying a field of psychological forces which create a "life space" consisting of both intrapsychic phenomena (hopes, fears, expectations, past experiences) as well as the physical and social context. As long as there is no change in the psychological field, there will be no change in the person's behaviour, a situation which Lewin called "quasi-stationary equilibrium". However within the field exist tensions between two sets of forces; the driving forces and the restraining forces. These opposing forces arrive at equilibrium; change in the field must occur either by strengthening the driving forces or undermining the restraining forces. Of these two broad options, Lewin believed that strengthening the driving forces would encourage a corresponding increase in the restraining forces' strength and thus increase psychological tension and anxiety. Preferably change occurs by weakening the restraining forces, which allows more mental

energy to become available to think creatively and achieve the task.

Lewin began to apply these ideas to social and organisational systems as well as individual, psychological systems. Thus in a team or an organisation, a point of equilibrium is achieved between the driving and restraining forces represented by things such as clarity of purpose, adequate resources, insufficient training and so on. It was also Lewin who conceived of the change process as consisting of three steps: Unfreeze, Move and Refreeze.

The use of the Lewin Force Field in management training is normally as a diagnostic tool which leads into a structure for planning change in the system. The initial diagnosis consists of identifying the driving and restraining forces which create the current equilibrium of the system. Planning for change is then done by addressing how these forces can be worked with to either weaken the Restrainers or strengthen the Drivers.

The usual steps are as follows:

1. Identify a particular organisational issue or problem which becomes the focus for diagnosis and problem solving.
2. Identify a polar spectrum in relation to this focal problem. A sociodramatic question may be used such as: what are the forces operating for and against increasing organisational effectiveness? Or, what are the forces working to resolve this problem and what are the forces operating as obstacles to resolution?
3. Forces which are pushing towards increased effectiveness or problem resolution are identified on one side of a line, represented by arrows pushing on the line. The length of the arrow can be drawn to reflect the presumed strength of

this particular force. These are called the Drivers.

4. Forces which are working against effectiveness are also identified and drawn pushing against the line from the other side. These are the Restrainers.

Thus far the Force Field is used as a method of diagnosing the cultural system, a snap shot at a given moment in time. In the second phase this diagnosis is taken as the departure point for a problem solving planning process. Each identified force can be looked as a possible target for change. The forces for effectiveness can be "powered up" and the forces against effectiveness can be undermined.

5. A list of actions is generated which could reduce or remove the Restrainers. Particular obstacles may be easier to intervene with than others, strategies can be brainstormed and developed into action plans.
6. The same process is done with strengthening the Drivers.
7. Finally, a change strategy is planned, usually with precise action steps specifying who will do what when, with what resources to effect change within the system.

The difficulty with such an approach in middle management training is that it remains an intellectual exercise usually removed from the context which it is addressing; the plans are developed in the distant situation of the training classroom and may or may not ever be implemented. In addition, unless the middle managers can gain access to power bases which enable the implementation of their ideas, the Force Field analysis remains simply

diagnostic, and does not lead to organisational change.

By contrast, it is possible to enliven the learning and immediacy of the exercise by enacting the identified forces, and thus first living in a representation of the organisational culture, and then working actively to change it in the immediate present. The enactment exercise thus operates as a microcosm of the larger

The enactment occurred as follows. Rather than draw a Force Field diagnosing the effectiveness of the whole organisation (which was our focus at this time) the group agreed to conduct the Force Field as an experiential enactment.

cultural system of the whole organisation and participants in the exercise gain a direct experience of working to effect change or problem resolution. This is achieved by combining the insights of Lewin's Force Field with the powerful methods of experiential learning derived from sociodrama and the work of Jacob Moreno. The method can be used as in this case, as a microcosm of the whole organisation, or it can be used as an exercise to be done with an intact team, looking at their own team culture and its effectiveness.

This session took place as part of a Middle Management Development Program for a large public sector organisation. The group consisted of 16 middle managers from the central

office and several regional offices of the organisation. The participants were drawn from the upper middle management level of the organisation. Their functions included policy development and implementation, supervision of small teams of professional people, managing extensive budgets through public sector schemes such as the Financial Management Implementation Program, liaising with large and small private sector organisations, sometimes assessing such organisations for their contributions to the Australian economy. At the time of this session, the group had met for the sixth of a series of two day workshops covering a wide range of people management skills. This 2 day module was focusing on teams, group dynamics and organisational culture. The underlying themes for the workshop were leadership and constructive influence strategies.

The enactment occurred as follows. Rather than draw a Force Field diagnosing the effectiveness of the whole organisation (which was our focus at this time) the group agreed to conduct the Force Field as an experiential enactment. Warm up began with vigorous discussion about the organisation's effectiveness and overall purpose, much of the emotion arising from individual frustration and cynicism of the organisation, its bureaucratic structure, the communication gulf between policy and implementation (central office versus the state offices) and other issues personally experienced by the participants in their working life.

When the purpose of the exercise had become clear; to explore and look at ways of changing organisational effectiveness, and when people's emotional responses to their experience had strengthened, each person in the group was invited to

take on the role of a force for or against organisational effectiveness and to enact this role on the stage. The force being enacted by each individual was written on a label for easy recognition and the person invited to take a position on the stage, following the Force Field structure of opposing forces along an imaginary line. All 16 participants identified a force and one at a time took a position with the Drivers on one side and the Restrainers on the other. As each role player presented themselves they made a brief comment as to who they were and why they were representing this particular force.

The forces for effectiveness (Drivers) were

- Clear Purpose
- Leadership
- Productivity
- Adequate Resources
- Good Communication
- Enthusiasm
- Staff Training
- Close Liaison with Industry (their organisational clients)

The forces against effectiveness (Restrainers) identified were

- Cynicism
- Isolation
- Inadequate Resources
- Fear and Uncertainty
- Frustration
- Being Kept in the Dark
- Crisis Management
- Political Uncertainty ("changing the goal posts")

If it is important that the exercise be seen to be a valid representation of the whole organisational culture, further discussion could ensue until the group is happy that all the key forces are being represented. In this exercise, the Director accepted the

forces as each person identified them. It was quite fortuitous that there were eight Drivers and eight Restrainers in the sociodrama.

The enactment followed the basic Force Field stages of diagnosis and

A free enactment was then begun.

Participants were instructed to simply act their role as clearly as possible on the word "Go" and to freeze in exact position when the facilitator shouted "Freeze" or "Pause". The first enactment was allowed to run for about ten minutes.

change intervention. Participants were invited to consider how their particular role interacted with others on the stage prior to moving into action.

A free enactment was then begun. Participants were instructed to simply act their role as clearly as possible on the word "Go" and to freeze in exact position when the facilitator shouted "Freeze" or "Pause". The first enactment was allowed to run for about ten minutes. Interviews were then conducted with the numerous subgroups which had formed during this period. The Facilitator asked questions of each subgroup as to their purpose, who they were interacting with and why, how they were feeling in relation to what was happening in the whole Force Field, and what were their observations about the dynamics of the whole

Force Field. In this diagnostic stage no emphasis was placed on solution or change intervention.

At the end of this first ten minute enactment the sociometry of the group looked somewhat as follows:

Isolation and Cynicism had formed a subgroup and were off on their own away from the others. Fear and Uncertainty was locked in a vigorous debate with Enthusiasm. Enthusiasm was clearly attempting to persuade Fear to give up and join the Drivers team. Staff Training was also joining Enthusiasm, but had been accused by Cynicism of being naive.

A powerful clique had been formed by Political Uncertainty, Inadequate Resources, and Being Kept in the Dark. Productivity had joined this group in a tentative attempt to persuade them of his importance, but was clearly in a weak minority position.


Leadership was wandering around looking quite bewildered and overwhelmed. She had an ally in the role of Good Communication but had not yet been able to assess the situation and develop any form of plan as to what to do and had meanwhile attracted the attention of Crisis Management who was busily proving his point by focusing on Leadership's confusion.

Clear Purpose was equally isolated at that moment, about to approach Kept in the Dark, but without any clear purpose as to why.

In this pause period we could thus all reflect on the cultural system as it was being enacted. We observed that polar opposites were tending to attract each other individually (for example Cynicism and Enthusiasm were strongly attracted) and were strongly tempted to argue, or move into a power struggle. We also observed that whereas the negative forces easily came together to create

powerful subgroups, the positive forces were divided and uncertain and thus impotent. Nobody had any sense of unity or alliance or team work. This tended to favour the Restrainers. Clearly Good Communication was not yet adequately functioning.

After this initial clarification of role and subgroup dynamics in the system, another free enactment period occurred. The facilitator had not yet encouraged any form of intervention. The second enactment period was restricted to five minutes, and the ensuing interview and discussion began to take on a solution and change focus.



An observation chair was set up to one side. Anybody could climb up on the chair and observe what was happening within the system. Discussion occurred as to the nature of the culture. People began to become more solution focused.

An observation chair was set up to one side. Anybody could climb up on the chair and observe what was happening within the system. Discussion occurred as to the nature of the culture. People began to become more solution focused. What could be done to improve this culture?

The sociodrama now moved into an intervention phase by the Director who focused primarily on Leadership. The group agreed that strong leadership was required yet interviews with

Leadership suggested that she was still overwhelmed by the confusion and predominance of negativity, and had no idea what to do. She had inadvertently formed an alliance with Fear and Uncertainty. This was leading her to remain isolated from her potential allies, and to try and tackle the powerful cliques such as that of Political Uncertainty, and Being Kept in the Dark, or that of Cynicism and Isolation on her own.

The Leadership role was coached by the Director. Who could she form alliances with to strengthen her position? Who represented the primary obstructive forces? How could they be negotiated with? Eventually Leadership realised that she had to form an alliance with Clear Purpose, and then create links (through Good Communication) to Productivity and Enthusiasm. This group acting as a team could then infiltrate the negative cliques and undermine their alliance and power.

A series of short enactments with coaching by the Director followed. This raised Leadership's ability to think strategically, to plan, and to develop assertion and negotiation skills. Eventually a circle began to form around the nucleus of the new alliance between Leadership and Purpose which began to draw others in. The subgroup of Cynicism and Isolation remained as outsiders. By this time these two had become strongly "in role" and had formed an alliance with Frustration. They were becoming annoyed at Leadership's inability to draw them in and get them involved. Further discussion and negotiation took place. By now a sense of team work was emerging among the Drivers. They were beginning to take their roles and interdependent relationships seriously. They began to recognise that each of them had particular skills and

abilities and therefore could be used precisely to achieve a given objective. Thus Enthusiasm's debate with Cynicism became more potent with backup by Leadership and Staff Training, ably assisted by Productivity.

This phase of enactment with coaching interventions by the Director to assist Leadership continued for some time. The sociodrama finished when two key trends emerged:

1. Solutions were now more rapidly identified and tested, new alliances were made. Structure and change plans began to emerge more fully and completely from the general chaos of the early enactment.
2. People wanted to change their roles, specially those negative roles which felt they had been adequately managed now began to become positive forces. Role labels were changed or refined to reflect this new outlook. This of course changed the entire system dynamic. As the roles changed, the Force Field changed and the organisational culture we had created changed.

The enactment was followed by a debriefing discussion with an increasing focus on what could be done in the actual organisation to increase effectiveness. A strong positive atmosphere pervaded the discussion as people began to see more precise and strategic ways of managing the culture without giving way to their own powerlessness. The participant who had played the role of Leadership in particular had come to several significant insights into power, strategic influence and the role of leadership within an organisation. Several of the strong negative roles which had held out in the exercise for a long time, particularly Cynicism,

required considerable debriefing.

The participants in this sociodrama gained an immediate living experience of an organisational culture structured by the Force Field conception. As an active force within the field they could directly experience both the impact of the field on themselves and their impact on other forces within the field. They could clearly observe the nature of the interactive patterns which evolved in the culture and consider from an immediate point of view what to do about this. Further, within the format of the exercise, they were able to test out influence strategies and experience immediate consequences. In this way the enactment became also a role training exercise in team building and influence. Participants were also able to observe Lewin's principle that weakening the Restrainers tended to create change more easily, and that the Drivers could best be strengthened by working together as a team rather than engaging in individual power struggles. The sociodrama considerably enlivened their learning experience and their understanding of organisational culture.

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The Conductor's Baton as a Magic Wand

by Sue Robinson

Sue is the Assistant Conductor of the Wellington Chamber Orchestra. She also conducts for the Upper Hutt Choral Society and a children's choir. The inspiration to utilise some of the theory and practice of psychodrama in her work is a new area for her. We 'meet' her at the beginning of a new period of her career as she develops both as conductor and group process worker.

In training in psychodrama and sociodrama, the analogy of the orchestra is often used. In expanding our ability to relate to the total complexity of the group and to conquer our fear of leadership, we have sometimes been encouraged to imagine the group as an orchestra, and ourselves to be the conductor. This seems to be an especially relevant image and therefore must capture many similar elements that we aspire to integrate as group leaders in this particular method.

Conducting is easy for me. I see myself as a magician, able to encourage more than the musicians think is possible.

One focus of my work is voices. Many people come to me saying they have been told that they can't sing. I am angry that this is seen as an ability we have or don't have. Singing can be learnt. We can all learn to sing in tune, and to increase the power and enhance the quality of our voices. (How am I doing this...)

The conductor's view of the singer is often woefully limited. In choirs, singers are asked to restrain, restrict, blend in; to subtract rather than add. I challenge the singers to bring in their true individual voice quality. That way something really rich emerges. It is clear when I work that the music takes off, and the magic really takes

effect when *everybody* does this.

As a woman conducting orchestras, I enter a field with a conspicuous lack of role-models, and a fixed, traditional way of doing things. I am just beginning to experiment. People think I'm joking if I try something different. There is etiquette about where people sit, what is done in rehearsal, the order people enter for a performance, who is allowed to make suggestions ... I'm concerned with finding ways of working within this framework, with as much freedom as possible. (later changing framework?)

The audience's view of conductors and the orchestra's view often differ markedly. While the audience sees an alive, playful, enlightening personality, behind the scenes the orchestra can be rehearsing with an incompetent tyrant, and in perform-

ance they may be using their considerable skills to conceal this incompetence. Think of the extra energy that would be freed if this were not so! The baton is being used as a weapon, and many conductors assume their position gives them the authority to abuse. This is rife in the musical profession; a hidden legacy of fear and tyranny. Professional orchestras often hide a vicious maze of envy, bitterness and cynicism. What a paradox, to be working with some of the most brilliant manifestations of the creative spirit, in an atmosphere of fear and hatred.

I am concerned to encourage confidence and freedom. I am very aware I'm not working with instruments; I'm working with people playing instruments. And *they're* doing the playing. My body is my only instrument. As a conductor I have a responsibility to use my power in a creative way.

I have a vision of a full-time orchestra, where there is time set aside for psychodrama. Players will work on their relationship with each other, the audience, the conductor, with the music, and with their instrument. I'm also concerned to use my awareness of the link between physical tensions and emotional blocks to bring more freedom to the musicians I work with.

I'm strongly aware of the dichotomy of being a woman conducting music composed almost exclusively by men. I hope this will soon change.

Psychodrama in the Post Modern World

by Ian McKissack

Ian is a consultant psychologist in private practice in Hamilton, N.Z. He has been training in psychodrama over several years and makes extensive use of this method in his work. Ian has taught at the University of Waikato in the Department of Psychology over many years where he is remembered for his human, daring and entertaining approach as an educator.

Occasionally, at workshops, I hear a prediction that Psychodrama may fade away, as those who have had direct contact with Beacon leave the active scene. More often, a suggestion is that the method will become rigid – a travesty of Moreno's vision – without the transmitted live inspiration of Jacob and Zerka. There would be some basis for this gloom if the developing world view were to be similar to that of recent decades. Psychodramatic method and the derived system of role analysis have not made substantial inroads into the relevant Social Sciences of Psychology and Sociology. 'Moreno' and 'Psychodrama' appear in the index of many mainstream texts, and the comments in the text may be very respectful, as if the author had glimpsed but not comprehended an enrichment of life and learning. Yet that it is where it stops. And this is not surprising. The concepts of these texts have to be fully available to the intellect alone if they are to become an accepted part of developing scientific, 'rigorous', thought. As we

know, the value and validity of the Psychodramatic method requires experience *as part of the process* to know the process. 'Knowing', in experiential learning is a wider concept that it is for the objective scientist. For us, to know, is to understand through thinking and feeling and acting.

My optimism for the future of the Psychodramatic method is that the system of objective knowledge, based on a belief in absolute truth, which could not digest Moreno's intuition is itself being displaced. The new view from the bridge to the future is of an everchanging kaleidoscope of truths, not discovered by our intellects, but created by our interaction with the physical world, other persons, and the environment of ideas we live in. Reality is now seen to be socially constructed, and in a continuous process of re-construction. This emphasis on process is very familiar to us. Even so, the belief in an objective world gradually being uncovered, beneath the everyday world, still exists for most of us. The

essence of Post Modernism for me is that the everyday world *is* the world and we make it. This isn't too difficult to grasp in its most obvious area, the social environment, which is clearly created by the interaction between people, particularly linguistic encounters. The physical environment is less easily seen as socially constructed. There appears to be a given quality of firmness and relative permanence. Yet, modern physics has progressively taken us down a weird labyrinth searching for the ultimate nature of matter, and finding answers far removed from our commonplace perceptions. So that even physical reality turns out to be constructed out of an interaction between our sensory limitations and whatever might be there.

The implications which follow from this are many and varied. Feminists, for instance, have shown that the socially constructed reality we have lived in has been constructed for men, deliberately or unconsciously, by mainly men, and has included definitions of not just what women should do, but also who they are. Traditional femininity is not an attribute of women, it is a construction by men. As a consequence of the feminist revolution against colonization by men, much of the most acute and persuasive thinking using Post Modern concepts has been done by women. While there is part of the women's movement which looks back to earlier constructions of reality which assigned equal power to women, the most exciting contributions show that women can now construct their own realities. Gender attributes are a matter of choice, not fact. The emphasis on changing language habits by polemic women writers is a recognition of the importance linguistic encounters have in forming and maintaining social

constructions of reality. It is now up to men to construct a new reality for themselves that can co-exist and co-operate with the new reality of women.

Perhaps some of the clearest examples of social construction come from advertising and politics. Both sources invite us to enter their world. Toyota is most explicit, "Welcome to our world". Mazda strikes a post modern chord, "The excitement continues". George Bush coaxes Americans to believe in their imperial success; Dan Quayle reminds them of the joys of the reality constructed by Norman Rockwell – a homespun version of the American Dream –. The implication is that if you buy the product, vote for that politician, you have gained the right to enter the reality portrayed, and you will rightfully belong there.

The central area where Post Modern concepts are critical is in beliefs and values about the meaning and conduct of our lives. The reality in which we lead our lives is constructed by us, stepping outside of that personal world is through entering a more inclusive but still constructed world. Art, science, and theology, are all subject to this limitation; they are constructed processes of knowing. There may well be the absolute basis of all things the scientist seeks to pin down; there may well be the other dimension the theologian and the pilgrim aspire to understand. But we can never do more than create our own metaphors, models, theories, dogmas. They remain *our* realities. The unknown is the unknown. Now this is profoundly unsettling for those who search for certainty, and tremendously exciting for those who would create dreams. Beliefs and values have to be constructed by ourselves, in interaction with other selves, but not subservient

to them. The realities constructed by others may be impressive, moving, passionate; may resonate universally. Yet they remain constructions; they can be chosen, there is no moral imperative, no divine seal of approval to seek.

The Post Modern view not only frees us to construct, create our reality, it also insists that we accept the responsibility for the fact that we are doing this throughout our lives.

"Where has Psychodrama gone?" you may be asking. To borrow a metaphor, there may only be one set of footsteps in the sand, but I have been carrying Psychodrama faithfully through the preceding paragraphs. *The Post Modern view not only frees us to construct, create our reality, it also insists that we accept the responsibility for the fact that we are doing this throughout our lives.* Sometimes we may give away that responsibility to Gods and gurus, but even the most devout will re-write some of the small print in the process of receiving dogma. If we are to accept the responsibility of being reality creators, we will need to be trained out of obedience and into creativity. What better setting than Moreno's theatre of spontaneity? The essence of his vision was to meet life creatively; to be ready for the unexpected. Even Moreno may not have foreseen the extent that unpredicatability would reach in a post modern world where the side effects of technology threaten to overwhelm us, and the

old certainties fade. If Psychodrama is to play a role in the development of the Post Modern era, we will need to continue reducing the perception of the method as being primarily therapeutic, and stress its educative role. In our development as trainees or practitioners, we are already learning not to impose our truth or the current social consensus, but rather to produce enactments which are concretizations of the protagonists construction of reality, and resolutions which move it forward in creative ways. The cultural conserve, which represents the belief in a fixed, objective reality, is to be replaced by the ability to create, and act in, a surplus reality which may become a new constructed reality. The story of our life is not fixed, we can rewrite it; focus on the heroic and not the dysfunctional. To live in our new story we will have to learn some new roles, and the consequent responses of the auxiliaries in our lives will be part of the changing plot.

If you have felt that much of the foregoing is highly intellectual, try a hard core Post Modern text. Its like trying to fight your way through a tropical undergrowth of convoluted and exotic concepts. Post Modernism may have been developed, commented on, even obscured, by individuals, but it is not just a new form of cognitive masturbation. The realisation that reality is constructed has been accelerated in this century by a complex of feeling, action, and reflection in those oppressed by the allegedly objective reality of the oppressors; the patriarchs, the colonisers, the exploiters. It has arisen in the life experience of slaves of the industrial revolution, women, minorities, dispossessed indigenous peoples. Psychodrama is about extending that life experience, stepping outside it, knowing it,

constructing a new personal reality. I think Psychodrama has a great opportunity to produce the future through its protagonists.

Ian McKissack,
Hamilton, New Zealand,
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Glenda Laurence, Richard Mills, and
Lyn Yeoman for helpful comments.*

An Application of Sociodrama in the Training of Middle Management

by Elizabeth Synnot

Elizabeth Synnot has worked as a trainer, educator, management developer, organisational developer and senior manager over a 15 year period in four different public sectors in Australia. Two and half years ago she established an organisational consultancy business. The core of her work is in assisting the effectiveness of groups in complex and difficult situations. She has formed joint venture partners linking her Brisbane base with colleagues in Sydney, Melbourne and Perth. Elizabeth is a member of staff of the Queensland Training Institute of Psychodrama and a member of the Brisbane Playback Theatre Troupe.

***Précis:** The group of 21 middle level managers have been together as trainees on two previous occasions for one week at a time. The participants are fearful of self presentation and joining with each other. They are eager to be "good managers". This short article presents a series of moments in the group when a control paradigm of coercion/compliance shifted to a paradigm of internalized purposes being collaboratively pursued i.e. a shift from an external focus of power to an internalized motivation or vision being the driver. This is a recurring theme in training groups in the public sector. Internalized purpose is not part of the bureaucratic system. For the flowering of internalized purpose in the public sector, a shift from the system of roles in the bureaucratic system to a vision driven, purposeful system of roles is required. It is not the predominant practice of organisational and management development to ap-*

proach the dilemmas of the public sector from a role analysis and systemic viewpoint. The state of the art is to move from a single charismatic or authoritarian visionary to an elite of senior manager visionaries. This is done from the paradigm of an analysis of the overall environment and a planning and consultative intervention. This is increasingly accompanied by an awareness that the culture (core values) require alignment with the new direction. Looking at the situation from a role system perspective, the predominant practice means a shift from a coercive fear driven system of roles (vignette 1) to a participative compliance and reward driven approach (vignette 2). This article recounts an enabling way forward (vignette 3). Vignette 4 presents the emergence of roles of a Purposeful Public Service System which is driven by each member's own internal vision. The author is presenting vignettes 3 and 4

as an enabling solution to present public sector dilemmas, that is, as the 'new art' of Strategic Management. It is the application of the sociodramatic method that enables the integration of the new system of roles, thus moving from the area of ideas to integrated knowledge.

I have been engaged to conduct the third week of course work in an 18 month Middle Management Program. The 21 participants have had two separate weeks of training and have just completed their first work placement of 9 months. Their second 9 month placement begins the week following this workshop.

These middle managers are two or three levels from both the top level in the hierarchy and the operational level of the hierarchy. They earn about \$55,000 per annum. They manage one of five or six functions in a Region of an Australian Public Sector Department. Most have responsibilities for a budget of up to \$1 million and around about 50 staff. Three in the group provide policy advice and supervise staff of around 10 professionals.

We have come to the morning of the third day in the workshop. The theme of taking control and loss of control has been recurring. This view of their work has been brought forward in sharing after earlier sociodramas and in other more general discussions. Leadership difficulties with subversive subordinates and mindless, self serving superiors have predominated in the two earlier sociodramas. Viewing the role of manager as purposefully leading the group has begun to be considered as an alternative view point. As well as the desire to work collaboratively together in the group there emerges an overriding anxiety to enter into relationships with each

other. One restrictive solution that is repeatedly sought by the group is to have "input" sessions from "entertaining experts". There is also an expressed fear that they will be "caught short" in the future and will not be up to date on "best" management practices.

The scene for the sociodrama is one of a bus driver collecting passengers. It begins with three vignettes being enacted. The warm up to the enactment includes a guided fantasy, the drawing of pictures and the use of story, metaphors and songs. Each person, through this warm up, regains and develops their vision for Australia. Once this has been achieved the whole group work together to devise a draft 'reason for the existence' for the Australian Public Sector in contributing to the fulfilment of their vision. Everyone gets involved and appears enlivened. In less than an hour the draft Mission Statement is accepted by all. (This is a surprise as past experiences include taking up to two days to reach this point of consensus.)

Several group members discuss the application of a vision oriented organisation at the operational level. In response, the Director decides to present the same operational scenario from three differing role system perspectives. The vignettes unfold in turn and are all on the stage at the same time. The Director's experience of the public sector is that the approaches in vignettes 1 and 2 are the present approaches taken, i.e. an accurate description of what is. Vignette 1 displays the Classical or Traditional Bureaucratic System of roles at the operational level, viz., the vision is seen and kept at the top of the organisation with coercion or fear being the predominant force. Vignette 2 displays the Renaissance Bureaucratic System of roles at the

operational level, viz., the vision is seen and kept by an elite of senior managers with participation, for ownership, in operational planning throughout the organisation and with compliance or reward being the predominant force. State of the art management and organisation development is concerned with the shift from Classical Bureaucratic System of roles to the Renaissance Bureaucratic system of roles. Vignette 3 is a new approach. It is the Purposeful Public Service System of roles, viz. the vision is from within each person in the organisation and the Mission (core function) of the organisation is collaboratively created. Individuals then enact their role in the organisation while their driving force is their internalized vision.

The scene in each vignette is the same, *a bus driver collecting a young woman with two children – a baby in a pram and a young toddler*. It is 11.00am on a Wednesday morning on a sunny day in Brisbane.

Having set the scene, members of the audience choose the roles they want to take up and the vignettes are enacted accordingly. The story follows the enactment. There is no role reversal.

Vignette 1

Vignette 1 shows the driver, Jo, having been directed to be “customer driven” by his boss. Jo doesn’t like this idea because he knows he will be punished for not running the bus to schedule. He sees “customer driven” as the latest plot by management to make him work harder. “What about the schedule?” He is then given the implicit threat that if he doesn’t do this he won’t get to drive the routes he prefers. At the same time, Jo knows that what matters is whether the bus arrives on time at Bus Stop 16 (2 stops later) where the inspector is.

So, the driver is cursory with the woman. Angrily he tells her to “get your act together” and begrudgingly and quickly helps her on the bus. Immediately the two children cry and continue to do so for the next few minutes. Jo is clocked by the inspector as on time.

Vignette 2

Vignette 2 shows the driver, Jane, being cajoled and talked to by her supervisor about putting the customer first. All Jane’s ‘what ifs...?’ are met with ‘this is your new job. Do this and you will be doing a good job’. Jane is told that the inspector is there to help her and collect information for improving the schedules. Jane is not sure about this but decides to give it a go. In the enactment we see Jane lose sight of all else except for the woman and children who she goes all out for. Two passengers later become angry because they are now running late. She is clocked in by the inspector as 10 minutes late.

Vignette 3

Vignette 3 shows the driver, Eugene, chatting with his supervisor having absorbed that it is his job to provide a friendly, courteous and reliable bus service. As they talk it is evident that Eugene links the bus time table with the train and the ferry schedules. In the enactment he provides assistance to the mother and her children. At Bus Stop 16, he is 3 minutes behind schedule. At the stop he talks to his supervisor recounting the story of the woman and her children and discussing the likelihood of such passengers at this time of day.

In vignettes 1, 2, and 3 the scene has been set by the Director and the auxiliaries have enacted the vignettes, i.e., a prepared or leader directed

sociodrama. This changes when Daryl, a group member, begins to frame the sociodramatic question for the group. His expression is, "How do you shift a driver from the first vignette to the third vignette?". This is a critical moment in the group. His question is one that is echoed by other group members. We are all about to enter into the drama unknown and warmed up to a higher level of spontaneity than has been present in the group thus far. The sociodramatic question is enlarged and now states "How does the middle manager shift an operator from a Classical or Traditional Bureaucratic System of roles to being an operator in a Purposeful Public Sector System of roles?"

He agrees to let me teach him and the group in my own way, i.e., through the use of sociodrama. In itself, this is a major shift in the group to being adventurous learners rather than dependant of fighting learners whose orientation, thus far, has been to have the 'expert' tell them and then to argue if they disagree! I am aware of the requirement for me to model a

new way of teaching. In turn, it can be used by these managers with their own staff and as a model for others with whom they come in contact.

Daryl, the group protagonist, discusses with the group whether to approach the bus driver in the scenario from the position of Inspector. Without an enactment, Daryl and the group decide that this would not produce a change and would get stuck with the manager becoming the 'Sadistic Overlord' in a mutually negative relationship with the bus driver as 'Harried Serf'. In the mind of the Director, she views this as deciding that there will be no movement if the manager approaches the operator to shift from the same system. She supports the group protagonist when he decides to approach the operator from the role of 'Trainer Educator'. At this point she is not sure if this will be enacted by Daryl as a Renaissance Bureaucracy trainer/educator or as Purposeful Public Service trainer/educator. Either way she sees the possibility of movement in the operator in response to a role enacted from a different system.

Vignette 4 –

Enactment

P (Protagonist) Cajoling Suggester
"I want you to take a bit more time with your passengers. Think of your customers more."

BD (Bus Driver) Suspicious Defender
"I have a timetable to keep."

P Correct Instructor
"We can shift the timetable around so it works better for you and the passengers."

Director's Process

This is a Renaissance Bureaucracy initiative. It is telling and selling what is required.

This response is to be expected from someone who has worked in a Classical Bureaucracy all their working life (and prior to that has been in an educational system based on fear and shame).

I am struck with how the Renaissance Bureaucratic System puts the requirements of the operator in the picture. This is a significant shift from the Classical Bureaucratic System. (A Dysfunctional Bureaucratic System

- BD Suspicious Knife Thrower
 "You can say that but it's not your decision. We've tried to get the times changed before and nothing gets done."
- P Water Treading Negotiator
 "This will be different."
- BD Angry Confronter
 "But if I'm late I'm the one who cops it! It's all very well for you to say it'll be different!"
- P Dithering Searcher
 (Head bowed, hunched shoulders, furrowed brow)
- D (Director) Warm Confronter/Coach
 "Daryl, you've forgotten your vision. What are you setting out to create here."
- P Troubled Reflector
 (Shift in body posture to weight on two feet. Still frowning.)
- D Prompting Coach
 "Take your time. Let your picture of the kind of world you want to live in become clear to you."
- P Quiet Seer
 (Another shift in body posture. Open expression on face and eyes lit up.)
- BD Angry Rejector
 "You're setting me up! You're like all the others. I'm going to get knocked off. Who the hell are you?!"
- P Open Inviter
 "O.K. I've dumped all that stuff.
- doesn't even have the passengers in the system.)
- There is an evident truth in what is being said from a Classical Bureaucratic System viewpoint. It's systematically impossible to influence how things are done from the operational level.
- Daryl is now 'coping'.
- Again the ring of truth from this systemic perspective.
- Daryl is now 'disabled'. In his present role state he is not able to pursue his purpose.
- This is the crux of what is being taught. To be in touch with their own vision is enlivening and *enabling*. The roles that emerge from their self at this time are roles that *enable* the pursuit of their purpose and the creation of their vision. This teaching requires internalisation for their integrated learning of the Purposeful Public Service System.
- Integration is beginning.
- The auxiliary takes up the role from before and provides a role test for the Protagonist.

Let's go and sit down. We'll have a drink of coffee and find out what you really want to know."

P Collaborative Adventurer
"Let's both give this a go and see where we get."

BD Reticent Experimenter
"O.K." (spoken quietly.)

I pause the vignette here. Daryl says he's 'got the message'. I see that he has passed the first role test.

The audience were engaged throughout this process. I feel pleased with this progress. While the enactments are ordinary and simple they are also significant in the learning that has taken place. I have been able to stay with my own vision of learning being integrated rather than the group's orientation to 'learning about organisational vision and 'state of the art' management theory. I have been able to operate purposefully in learning collaboratively. I have been able to model my vision. This has been in the face of a group of managers who primarily function from the Renaissance Bureaucratic System of roles and sometimes the Classical Bureaucratic System of roles. I am encouraged to continue working and developing as a teacher in the public sector.

This morning session has begun the process of the group operating out of a purposeful system. Immediately after the break one of the group members initiates the group conducting the rest of the morning for themselves and at the same time practising and developing their roles as leaders and group members. While many of the roles that were enacted were underdeveloped, it is clear that the roles they are developing are emerging from their own vision of themselves in a purposeful public service system. The group persevered with teaching and coaching each other. They have taken up the

opportunity to integrate what they learnt in the morning by practising this with each other throughout our time together. These middle managers already have significant influence and are seen as the likely senior managers of tomorrow.

It is the author's experience that the integration of new roles that emerge in a new system have a recursive impact on the former system. This has been observed by the author and reported on by former participants. Her experience suggests that the work of the group will have significant impact in the larger system in which these middle managers operate.

Training the Auxiliary Ego

by Rob Brodie

Robert Brodie is certificated as a Psychodramatist and Role Trainer and is the Director of the Psychodrama Training Institute of South Australia. He works in private practice and for organisations applying the psychodrama method in self development courses, individual and group therapy, couples counselling, parent education and team-development.

This paper is the complete thesis written by Rob for his certification as a Psychodramatist. Although written some time ago, the content has an on-going relevance for all trainers, trainees and other group members who will have an interest in developing themselves as auxiliaries. Also, in our aspiration to create a journal, a continuing idea has been to publish some theses as journal articles. The actual format relates well to the written requirement for assessment procedure.

Preface

Difference excites and fascinates me. In my original family, it was the basis for shutting out anyone seen as a threat to a Methodist matriarchy and brought on the ruthless oppression of any deviant behaviour. Writing about this now brings the flat, numb, arid and scratchy feeling so familiar from my childhood. Instant obedience and the clean, tidy intellect were fostered and the accumulation of ideas and facts demonstrated and applauded. "That's a good idea" was the highest accolade.

When I first made love, I discovered that all the words I had read on the subject and pictures I had seen, the resulting ideas, fantasies and expectations I had constructed were irrelevant. They had meant what I could not know until I had experience on which to base them. Experience brought an immediacy, a depth,

a texture and a satisfaction not previously possible. With this temporary fulfilment, my hunger for meaning based in experience, became conscious.

I ventured further from the umbrella which imprisoned me for my "own good." I was intrigued by the example of Rimbaud. From a sheltered, secure life as a profoundly tender Parisian poet, he chose to be a slave-trader at the age of 28. I undertook the exploration of cultures with more broad-minded mores around relationships, drugs, ethnicity, legality, aesthetics and religion. So underlying my lusty adventures in difference is a search for depth, meaning, and connections, both inner and outer.

In psychodrama groups, I discovered a setting where I could venture into territory I had so far only dimly envisaged. Being an auxiliary in another's drama, often demanded

whole-hearted participation in a foreign realm, at the same time maintaining an inner independence. Where else could I usefully be Captain Ahab, heroically and obsessively leading a slaughter, or Mary meeting Jesus, resurrected? Where else could I so fully build a bridge between enlivening fantasies and daily necessity. Rather than being a frustrating, painful delay, fixing a leaky radiator hose in the middle of the near-desert of the Hay Plain could become an incident in the saga of terraforming a hostile planet to create a paradise.

With my enduring hunger for experience, a spirit of adventure and the anticipation of depth and dialogue, I went to the United States in 1985, accompanied by Narelle, to whom I'm married, and 15 month old Adam. While there, I took part in the Annual Conference of the American Society of Group Psychotherapy and Psychodrama in Washington, D.C. During this Conference, the leaders of the Association of Drama-Therapists in the USA met with leading figures in the Psychodrama movement in order to discuss their commonalities and differences. This concentration of outstanding personalities and distillation of experience attracted me strongly, so I attended. In their discussions about the two groups, several similarities and contrasts emerged.

Among them were the following. Both groups use dramatic improvisation. Both deliberately and consciously work with participants' warm-up to action, themes and interaction. The eclecticism of drama-therapists, who draw from many schools of drama and therapy, contrasts with the coherence of the body of philosophy, theory and practice which is Psychodrama. The presentation of performances to a

paying public as part of drama-therapy has no obvious parallel in Psychodrama.

Drama-therapy demands responsible participation in the preparation of a play through regular attendance and work at rehearsals and in the crucial performance. It requires from the individual a self-disciplined commitment to others. This commitment results in development of the participant's personality. Roles essential to healthy living and an internal organisation which promotes the development of a solid self, both become more established. The reader may wish to refer to the example in the body of the article which elaborates and clarifies these outcomes for one particular person.

I started to look for the origins of similar results in psychodrama. Their fostering is obvious in director training, as the development of core director roles. But what about for the members of the regular, public Personal Growth Groups I direct using classical Psychodrama? At first, apart from regular attendance in the face of stuckness and confrontation in the group, I could only think of delegating the responsibility for preparing supper. Eventually, I saw that becoming an effective auxiliary ego requires this development.

In groups like these, members are frequently called on to take parts in dramatic action. I started to focus more on training participants in Personal Growth Groups to be adequate auxiliaries, an ability essential to daily living anyway, as psychodramatic roles are integrated into everyday functioning and relationships.

This prompted me to detail the aspects of being an effective auxiliary. The statements here are based on my own training as a Psychodramatist and on my experience

conducting Self-Development Groups in the community and Director Training Groups for professionals.

Originally, I wrote this article to distribute to people participating in Personal Growth Groups. It has also proved useful to Trainee Directors of Psychodrama and Sociodrama and as a check-list for practising directors, whose comments have been helpful in making this version more accessible.

My deep gratitude goes to the following people who have engaged generously with me in the course of my training, writing and practice.

As well as his profound understanding of Psychodrama and his love of the freedom it can engender, Max Clayton has provided rigorous modelling of commitment to living fully, especially through contacting and expressing inner process, and of spontaneous auxiliary work under direction. His coaching is summarised, according to my understanding, in many of the statements written here.

Tom Wilson has given gently relevant advice and his unflagging validation of my adequacy and ability to bring out my self with authority.

By her coaching as an auxiliary ego, Zerka Moreno led me to fuller and deeper appreciation of the contribution to healing and growth possible through adequate auxiliary work in the later stages of a drama.

Lynette Clayton has supervised me in the production of this article with humanity, equality and humour.

Many people in groups I have conducted have responded so vividly to my attempts to work together effectively in bringing greater fullness and riches to life. They especially are my never-tiring teachers and fellow voyagers.

Introduction

Jacob and Zerka Moreno(1) write: "The director must trust the psychodrama method as the final arbiter and guide in the therapeutic process." When this is done, "the psychodramatic method becomes a flexible, all embracing medium leading systematically to the heart of the patients suffering, enabling the director, the protagonist, the auxiliary egos and the group members to become a cohesive force, welded into maximising emotional learning."

These words convey the overall coherence and power of Psychodrama. Auxiliary egos are an essential component for most effective work in this method. In a group setting, with trained auxiliaries, the power, delicacy, breadth, depth and vigour of Psychodrama can emerge fully.

As well as being a co-therapist or co-educator with the director, an auxiliary ego derives considerable personal learning. They may approach their own sensitive areas and enter them sideways while they would be too defensive to face them directly in their own work.

The ability to be an auxiliary ego is an essential life-skill. Developing this ability is part of the work of any group whose goals include participants relating more fully with others. The self becomes more solidly integrated as the individual develops the internal organisation necessary to staying in touch with their own inner experience and, at the same time, being able to discipline themselves to act in a way which furthers the work of the protagonist and the director of the drama

Some of the roles the individual will develop through learning to be an auxiliary are *Creative Organiser*, *Competent Producer*, *Team-member*, *Playmate* and *Spontaneous Actor*.

Frequently there are no trained auxiliary egos included in groups which draw members from the community. If some participants are already trained, they are models for the less experienced. In any case, the director must repeatedly teach the method during the course of the group. Intensive coaching in all aspects of auxiliary ego work is part of this teaching.

The writing which follows addresses two aspects of auxiliary work, namely, the changes that result in individual personality and the teaching of group members by a director.

After a review of the literature, a section of this article presents an account of work with one particular person as they become more adequate as an auxiliary ego and consequently more functional in their daily living. It illustrates the director coaching an auxiliary ego and their resulting personality development.

The focus in the subsequent section is on information and ideas that participants require to move from a feeling of raw ignorance to a sense of playful, responsive confidence based in their developed ability to take the role demanded by a particular moment. It will further the understanding of auxiliary work and the sometimes obscure demands of psychodrama process.

In experiential groups, the material gathered there would be raised by the director at appropriate times over many hours in the life of the group. Presented all together, it can be overwhelming. One way to deal with this is to choose what appeals and to work on other aspects when they in their turn become of interest.

Directors will find the section useful in helping them to reverse roles with participants in groups they run and in coaching them.

Literature Review

In the books and journal articles about Psychodrama, writers have focused on aspects of technique, theory and philosophy and on applications of the psychodrama method in different settings. The present article builds on this work by specifying how a director may work with an auxiliary in a particular situation.

Jacob Moreno(2), the creator of Psychodrama, relating to the Classical Greek theatre, first used the words "auxiliary ego" and he consciously developed the functioning of auxiliaries. As with other concepts he developed, the power of this one is sustained by its basis in real life processes. Frequently in his writing, he elaborates aspects of auxiliary work. For instance, he does so at several places in a general essay(3) on the nature and development of Psychodrama, which has specific illustrative examples, as well as in the summary of his theories presented in the introduction to *Psychodrama Volume 1*(4).

Other writers too have added to the clarity of thought and the fullness and precision of practice in this area. Those mentioned here have paid particularly direct attention to auxiliary ego work.

Barbara Seabourne(5) has addressed auxiliaries from a professional audience whose thinking and perspective on auxiliary work and psychodrama is sophisticated. In this comprehensive article, she presents auxiliary ego functions in a wide range of situations and at the different stages of a drama, and, also, instructions for doubling.

In his article, Norman Zinger(6) presents concepts to guide the actions of auxiliary egos. From his own understanding and discussions

with Zerka and Doctor Moreno, he examines the varying functions of the auxiliary in relation to the protagonist, director and group. There is an exposition of how an auxiliary may help a protagonist enact old roles and develop new perceptions and roles. There is a list of tasks performed for the director by the auxiliary. Finally, ways of working to develop the sociometry and culture of a group are presented. Language is technical.

Heather McLean(7) discusses the directing of a drama with particular mention of the use of auxiliaries and doubles. Her writing is oriented to trainee directors.

Zerka Moreno(8) writes on the function of the auxiliary ego with special reference to psychotic patients. In her introductory section she describes J.L. Moreno's use of auxiliaries with such patients and urges others to work in this area. She concludes this section with a poetic description of the developing relationship between an auxiliary ego and a protagonist.

She says of the protagonist, "It is as if they stretched out a hand saying: 'This is my world. I trust you. Come and be with me inside it. Live my pain, my sorrow and my joy, that you may know me better.' This leads to becoming a genuine auxiliary ego, eventually able to stretch out one's own hand to that person, indicating, 'Now that I have been in your world, let me take you into mine.'"

She then sets out with great clarity "The Five Functions of The Auxiliary Ego." This is done in abstract and technical language.

The following two references employ language which is more ordinary, less technical.

Carl Hollander(9) expands on the meaning of the words "auxiliary ego" and the significance of auxiliaries in everyday living. He discusses Role

Structures in individual personality and relationships and the implications for auxiliary egos in a psychodramatic enactment. Subsequently he details changes through the course of a drama in how an auxiliary plays a role.

The auxiliary ego, firstly, replicates a role that arises in a protagonist's self-presentation. They progress to expressing their subjective experience in role expansion and then introduce balance into the presentation of some other person by role creation. The final stage described is the auxiliary ego's integrating function as a drama closes.

Hollander goes on to discuss the effects of an auxiliary ego being sensitive to the rate of warm-up of their protagonist in psychodrama and life. Finally, in a guide to auxiliary ego development for practitioners, educators and trainers, he lists functions, techniques, prescriptions and proscriptions for auxiliary egos and directors, and includes suggestions about doubling.

In his book(10), Howard Blatner devotes a section to the auxiliary ego. He lists ways of selecting an auxiliary from a group. He details a variety of other auxiliary roles – the auxiliary chair, the silent auxiliary and the audience as auxiliary ego. He presents a collection of shoulds and possibilities for directors in warming up and training auxiliary egos with some examples.

The present writing gives specific instruction on the training and coaching of auxiliaries who are new to this method. It uses everyday language such as a director might use in a group.

Example from practice

This is an account of how one group member develops personally through participation in another's

drama and through learning to be an adequate auxiliary. She is sustained in doing so, at least in part, by her commitment to the other person's growth.

In her forties, Jean had taken on tertiary studies and was experiencing difficulty. Her course-work required presenting herself both through writing and verbally to groups. When she started weekly psychodrama personal-growth groups, she didn't make eye-contact, was pasty-skinned, inert in the group and quite unable to maintain a role as an auxiliary in another's drama. Her overdeveloped *harsh critic/stubborn refuser* role-cluster left her triumphantly immobile when she was selected as an auxiliary.

After about 30 sessions, during which she was protagonist a few times and occasionally a conflicted auxiliary, she worked on a scene that she vividly recollected while she was preparing to present a tutorial paper.

The scene is set one afternoon at the farm where Jean and her parents live when she is nine years old. Father is out working with the cows. Mother is standing, ironing Father's shirts. Nearby, Jean is sitting on the floor absorbed in cutting out material for a dress she has chosen to make. In role-reversal as Mother, with great vehemence, she suddenly says, "You're useless, look at the mess you're making of that material."

Back as herself, Jean looks down, stops cutting and sits without moving. In an aside, she says sadly, "I wish she'd let me do it my way." She directs this to Mother who, again with Jean in role-reversal, stridently attacks her for being a nuisance and making life more difficult. Jean accepts this perception of herself and sees Mother as trapped and in no way responsible for how she treats her.

In the role of Father, her shoul-

ders sag and her voice is flat as he responds to this interaction by defending the girl against Mother. In interview, we find that he feels helpless, rejected and unjustly criticised too.

Jean is unable to express to her parents her sense of being used as a weapon between them or the neglect and loneliness she feels. Mother has only to mention her own struggle in the face of her disappointment at the censure of her in-laws for Jean to completely lose her own warm-up and to become swept away by her understanding for Mother's "plight". Her *clear-seeing spontaneous actor* role is underdeveloped and conflicted with the social role of *understanding resigned forgiver*. The session is rounded off unsatisfactorily with a sense of anti-climax and frustration.

In the next group session, Jean takes on an auxiliary role in Simon's drama. He has been very active in the group. Like Jean, this protagonist has been working for some time in a series of dramas to separate emotionally and psychologically from his parents. Jean had a fierce fight with him early in the life of the group and a growing relationship since then. Simon played Jean's father last week. This week, he chooses her to play his father.

In this scene, he warms up to his frustration at being repeatedly controlled by his father's oppressive demands and rationalising and discounting statements. Simon stays with his own experience and becomes an *angry truth-teller* with fullness and conviction.

On role-reversal, Jean changes position with Simon to take on the protagonist's own role then stands limply, turns to me as the director and says, "I can't." I say to Simon "Pause there as you are, a moment"

and to Jean "Will you go along with me coaching you." She agrees to do so. "Imagine Simon as you've just seen him standing when you're his father. Can you see him?" She nods. "Stand as you see him standing." She moves her right foot forward and leans her upper torso over it towards Simon in the role of his father. "Notice how he's holding his right fist clenched." I raise her fist and she clenches and starts to shake it.

This section is a manual about auxiliary work. To make it accessible, it is written as a series of responses to an enquirer new to Psychodrama. In it, the writer answers questions frequently asked by beginners and students in action methods.

"Now, hear Simon's voice and his words 'I'm not like my mother. She's not crazy either. It's your own violence you're scared of. I'm different from both of you.' Go ahead and say these things to your father with the feeling that's in you." She does so with conviction equal to Simon's, not the whine she has had in the past.

The scene closes with several role-reversals where the father genuinely hears Simon and deeply shares his own experience. They come together and embrace. Jean has persisted and enacted the roles as they have shifted, adequately and with confidence.

She displays this developing ability to take on and persist in a role

a couple of weeks later as she takes a central auxiliary role in a public demonstration of role-training, simply, accurately and without self-consciousness. At a weekly session, she shares her joy at playing house with a six year old girl – previously an unthinkable activity for her. She is much more able to carry through her warm-up to full enactment. She is more solid in herself.

Later, Jean cries about not being able to get to write the essays required to pass the course she's undertaken. During the course of the ensuing brief drama, she displays the development of far more adequacy in the roles enacted earlier as auxiliary and their increased integration into her personality. She confronts Mother strongly with the guilt learnt from her around reading books instead of "working" and separates herself clearly from her mother. She identifies her father's unfulfilled dream of academic prowess. She has previously tried to live out and partially rejected this dream and now wholeheartedly affirms it as her own. She recognises her fear of losing her admired tutor's respect and accepts this possibility with equanimity.

She misses the next two sessions on the following Saturday as she is writing an essay. When she comes again, Jean's skin has a good colour, her eyes are mobile and and she is active in the group.

Through auxiliary work in others' dramas she has more fully developed and integrated essential roles and has a stronger sense of self.

Detailed Coaching

This section is a manual about auxiliary work. To make it accessible, it is written as a series of responses to an enquirer new to Psychodrama^A. In it, the writer answers questions frequently asked by beginners and

students in action methods. Some technical terms useful for a new person are explained in footnotes included here^B.

What is an auxiliary ego?

An auxiliary takes and maintains fully the role^C of an absent other person or object or an aspect of the protagonist^D in a drama. They assist the director^E in producing a full experience and satisfactory resolution of whatever scene or abstraction is dramatised by the protagonist.

What is meant by a drama?

Loosely a *drama* is used to mean any enactment with a sense of dramatic form. It can be a vignette, with a single scene, or a full psychodrama or sociodrama, with a series of scenes around a particular theme.

Before the drama, the group warms up to one another and to the theme.

At the beginning of the drama, the specific time and place are set out and the characters established using objects and people. Auxiliaries learn their roles.

Then the drama moves more freely and the protagonist, assisted by the director and auxiliaries, acts spontaneously^F, giving rise to new roles.

Finally, the protagonist closes off the drama by experiencing the new

ways of being that have arisen and connecting them to everyday reality. Sharing from the rest of the group completes the drama.

What is necessary to be an auxiliary?

Primarily, the willingness to learn, to be open to the thoughts, feelings and behaviour of others, to try on new or shunned behaviour, to be open to direction, to accept the discipline of staying in role and to get involved. Your abilities will develop from there.

What are the benefits from being an auxiliary?

You get the satisfaction of contributing directly to another's growth and freedom, a broadening of your life-experience, freedom to express yourself in ways you would normally avoid, an increased ability to put your own self-preoccupation to one side as you objectively help another, a deeper connection with others, new insight into your own values and reactions, a greater ability to act in the face of obstacles and practice to develop adequacy^G in many roles you require to live fully.

What if I can't act?

All the better, you'll be more natural. Go ahead and take on the role anyway. It's the responsibility of

A. **Psychodrama** is the body of philosophy, theory and practice originated by J.L. Moreno and developed by students of his. He called it "rehearsal for living", "the theatre of truth". Improvisational dramatic action is based on the immediate concerns of a group or individual in a group. The application in group psychotherapy is also called Psychodrama. The application to task, organisational and educational groups is known as Sociodrama.

B. For fuller discussion see J.L. Moreno(11).

C. **Role** Used by Jacob Moreno to mean "the functioning form assumed by the whole self in interaction with another person or object in a particular situation at a particular moment." It is not pretending or hamming or purely external as is often implied when the word is used.

D. **Protagonist** is the person who embodies the theme in the group at the moment and enacts a drama on behalf of the group with the help of the director and auxiliaries. Sometimes the whole group may be protagonist.

the director and protagonist to assist you to do it well enough. This they will do.

Why does a protagonist choose me in particular?

Mainly because they sense that you can provide what they need in order to do the required work. Other considerations might be that your size reminds them of the absent other, that they know or sense that you have had similar experiences in your life or that someone is required to play the role.

How do I know what to do?

Observe the protagonist in role-reversals^H.

Listen to interviews with the protagonist.

You can then take on the role and enact it. This enactment includes position in space, body posture, non-verbal behaviour, tone of voice, language style and rhythm, specific words and actions. Respect too, the physical scene and objects set out by the protagonist, i.e., no walking through walls or picking up fridges.

Experience how it is to be inside the role you are taking.

Respond freshly to the protagonist and others in the scene moment by moment.

Accept and act on prompts and instructions from the director.

What do I do when the director says to reverse roles?

This will vary with the stage and

rhythm of the drama, so notice any special directions from the director.

In general, once the drama is under way, immediately change position with the person you are interacting with and enact and speak their most recent actions and words. This is most effective if you use the protagonist's own words rather than paraphrasing in yours and if you include all non-verbal behaviour.

From then on, respond from the role to the protagonist and other auxiliaries, as they present at every moment.

Get inside the role and let yourself go.

What do I do as an auxiliary as a drama goes on?

When you first take on a role, *early in a drama*, enact it accurately in some detail as described by the protagonist or as presented by them in role-reversal.

In *subsequent role-reversals*, immediately take up the role enacted by the protagonist, repeating back the last line and action. Then allow the protagonist time to respond, otherwise the drama is likely to drag or get repetitive.

Continue to interact in the moment from your role, with the protagonist and others. Explore what is going on in the system being set out.

As the drama progresses, an auxiliary expands the role. You draw on your experiencing in the role to improvise by bringing out feelings, thoughts, hunches and insights, while

E. **Director** The leader of the group who works with the group and any protagonist to produce a drama, with artistry, fullness and resolution. In Australia and New Zealand, a certificated Director is rigorously trained according to the Standards of the ANZ Psychodrama Association.

F. **Spontaneity** is seen in a new and adequate response to an old situation or an adequate response to a new situation. There is often a sense of freshness and surprise.

G. **Adequacy** is the word used to describe a role or action that is appropriate to its context and purpose. It's far more positive than the common meaning of "pass with a push".

H. See next question.

staying in the role. This deepens the protagonist's involvement in the drama and provides a full sense of the reality.

Late in the drama, you extend the role to help the protagonist to make the most of their work. This will require you to act in life-enhancing ways from your own spontaneity so that the protagonist can experience with satisfaction what they haven't in their life before this and become more adequate in their responses.

During the sharing stage of the drama you express fully how it is for you to play that role, thus making the most of your own learning from the drama.

What do I do after the protagonist has made an aside?

Store the information away inside you and maybe there will be a use for it later. Certainly it increases your understanding of what is going on. It's not part of the action unless the protagonist brings it directly into the interaction themselves.

How physical should I be?

Role-reversal will show you this. Use the same amount of strength as the protagonist does, to create a full experience for them.

In interaction with other auxiliaries, it is only necessary to create a convincing appearance.

Protect yourself. The director will do so too.

How do I know when my auxiliary work is effective?

When the protagonist behaves more spontaneously, with less conflict and greater absorption in the drama during interaction with you and when the director signals.

What if I don't know what to do?

Warm-up¹ to the role by doing the following.

Feel into the role by taking up the body posture shown by the protagonist when they are in this role and by imagining yourself as having the physical characteristics and clothing they present.

Ask and answer these questions inside yourself.

- What do these clothes feel like to my fingers?
 - What sort of person am I? How do I stand, think, feel, speak, act?
 - What is important to me as this person? What do I like and dislike?
 - What is the nature of my relationship to the protagonist and others presented in this drama?
 - Who/what/when does this remind me of from my own experience?
- How did I think, feel, stand and act?

Improvise, make it up, and be aware of the responses of the protagonist and the director. Even if you don't hear or understand something they do, don't ask, take courage. Enact whatever you do have, perhaps your sense of not knowing. E.g., "I don't know what's going on here." Chances are it belongs in the system being set out, anyway.

What if I do it wrongly?

It's not possible to make a mistake. Any action you do from a role furthers the drama if you notice and act on the responses of the protagonist and director.

Accept gracefully any changes from the director or protagonist and continue to enact the role with this modification included.

1. Warm-up refers to the processes at the beginning of an action. Fires are stoked, imaginations fired, muscles stretched. If warm-up is full, the resulting action will be too.

What other points can I consider as an auxiliary?

Personalise and bring into the present. For example:

Protagonist as Father:

He always did sit on the wrong side.

Director:

Reverse roles.

Auxiliary as Father:

You always do sit on the wrong side.

Ask questions to bring out material and make it more specific. For instance:

Protagonist:

You used to say you liked me doing that.

Auxiliary as wife:

When did I say that?

Protagonist:

That time at the beach...

Listen for cues from the protagonist and work them into your role. For example:

Protagonist:

You're always telling me I'm hopeless.

Auxiliary as Father:

*You **are** hopeless, no matter what I do, you won't change. You're hopeless all right.*

Stay in role. Once you have a role, stay in it. The protagonist's involvement in the time and place of a scene will be deepened by looking for an object to represent the stove. If you point out where a cushion is you will engage them with you as yourself and distract them from the scene. Never "help" the protagonist.

Provide something for the protagonist to push against, by staying in the role, rather than agreeing or accommodating thus changing the role. This helps them to express fully their own role. Continuing the example:

Protagonist:

Well you're hopeless too.

Auxiliary as Father:

I am not. How dare you speak to me in that tone of voice. You don't even respect your father.

Draw on the following to fill out your role as the drama continues, on cues from the protagonist, on previous information and on your own thoughts, feelings and impulses in the drama.

Be an amplifier for a quietly spoken protagonist so that others can hear what they say. For example:

Auxiliary as mother:

I work all day looking after this family. Nobody cares.

Protagonist:

(mumbles) I'm no use to anyone.

Auxiliary as mother:

(loudly) You say you're no use to anyone. What about me, no-one appreciates me?

Be sensitive to the rhythm of the interaction. Sometimes, especially early in a drama, a protagonist will need a short time to establish themselves before you enact the role.

Be sensitive to the protagonist. Stay alert to the possibility of overwhelming the protagonist if you enact a role more forcefully than they portray it.

Be sensitive to the shape of the drama and to where the protagonist, director and audience have their attention. Don't take over. It's the protagonist's drama, as directed by the director. If you are near the focus of the action, enact your role fully, if you are further from the centre, it is appropriate to stay in role but probably more subdued.

Remember these points:

1. Stay in contact with the protagonist.

2. Stay in contact with the director.
3. Act spontaneously.

When can I step out of role?

Most simply, never.

Speaking out of role cuts across the protagonist's warm-up to the scene being produced in the here and now. The work of an auxiliary is to increase that warm-up. Sometimes for special reasons, a director may interrupt the dramatic production. This will be made clear at the time.

What if I see something I consider vital?

Find some way of expressing it from your role into the drama.

For example, you notice from the role of Father that the protagonist does not look at you, so, depending on the nature of Father's role, you could say, "Look at me when I'm talking to you," or "I hurt when you won't look at me," or "Why won't you look at me, dear?"

Another example: As Mother, you notice the protagonist consistently avoids dealing with you by focusing elsewhere and, after some time, the director doesn't seem to notice this. You might speak directly to her from role, "Madam Director, deep inside I really want to sort out this relationship with my son, please get him to talk to me." Go along with her response.

Trust the director and the psychodrama process to bring out what is central in this particular drama for this protagonist.

How much do I lead the protagonist?

Only as far as they are willing to enact, themselves. If you introduce hitherto covert material, drop it if the protagonist does not respond or pick it up at the next role reversal. You may be inaccurate or attempting to

work for the protagonist or taking over the drama with your own issues if you don't follow this guideline.

How much do I extend a role?

Not much. Stating an unspoken thought, expressing a feeling more fully, maximising a minimal non-verbal response, may deepen the protagonist's warm-up and be picked up by them at the next role-reversal in more or less modified form. If they don't use it, let it drop. Either you're inaccurate or they're not focusing on the same as you at the moment. Notice the responses of the protagonist and director and accept direction gracefully. Keep on acting the role.

What is my relationship with the director?

You are an intelligent, assisting co-producer under the director.

Keep an eye and ear on the director for directions.

Directors appreciate greatly, and protagonists benefit hugely from, your persistent energy.

Am I just a puppet of the director?

By no means. Auxiliary work requires active, intelligent and whole hearted participation. It is enhanced by acute and detailed observation of the subtleties of what is happening. There is plenty of opportunity to practise listening and your ingenuity by applying what you hear in the role you are taking. You will work internally to value your experiencing and to develop persistence in the face of criticism and rejection and uncertainty. You will also see and feel others blossoming from your work.

None of the statements made here are inviolable rules. All of them are subject to the protagonist's spontaneity, your spontaneity and the director's direction.

Conclusion

Auxiliary work is central to psychodrama method and a necessary aspect of individual development.

In the preceding writing, there is an illustration of its relevance to and the development in one client.

There is also a section giving detailed instructions to new participants about performing as an auxiliary.

In that section, there is an emphasis on an auxiliary ego working from their own inner experience whilst staying in touch with the embedding systems of the drama and the director. This is an attempt to convey the sense that a role taken by an auxiliary is an interactive, living entity. This must be engendered on the basis of experience as must a sense of appropriate timing.

One area not addressed is that of individual readiness and potential for adequate participation as an auxiliary. Personal difficulties with learning and performance will be attended to by the director, in the course of the group.

Many of the situations mentioned could be fruitfully elaborated with reference to examples from practice.

Of course, not all situations encountered in all dramas have been covered. Some are new. Some are too complex to address in a document oriented to the requirements of naive participants. In such situations the wisdom and spontaneity of the director prevail. Further writing about these topics would benefit the practice of psychodrama.

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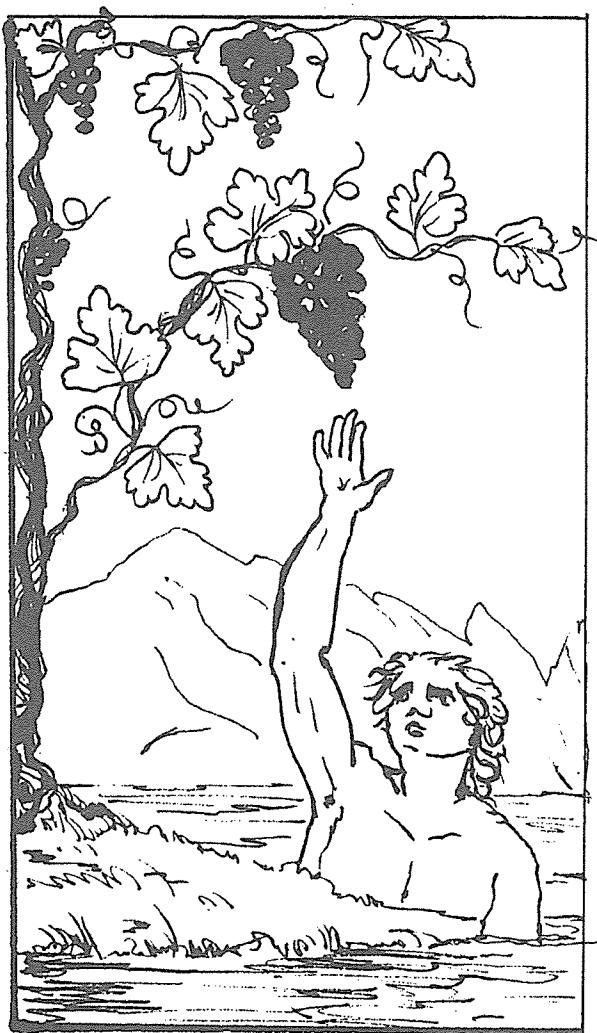
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The Tantalus Myth

A Summary

Being half God/half human Zeus' son Tantalus was an important figure in the old world. He enjoyed wining, dining and entertaining his father and many other gods. Though he was a popular host it was also acknowledged that he had a nastiness in him. He committed transgressions which incurred Zeus' anger. The first one was stealing ambrosia and nectar from the gods' table to impress his earthly friends at their next feast. The second one was stealing Zeus' golden

mastiff, then completely denying that he had ever even seen it. The third thing that Tantalus did filled Zeus with fury. He had no food to entertain his guests so he killed and chopped up his own son Pelops. As punishment Tantalus was subjected to eternal torment. He was tied to a vine surrounded by water that was just out of reach – suffering an excruciating thirst. Above his head



hung a luscious bunch of black grapes which would recede just out of his grasp whenever he reached for them. He suffers like this for all time and balanced above his head is a huge rock from his own kingdom threatening to fall on him. This is the end of Tantalus' story but Zeus brought Pelops back to life and he ruled his father's old kingdom of Sipylus.

The Tantalus Myth

by Simon Field

Simon is a teacher in the Special Needs Department of Wellington High School. The students he talks of in this article are loosely referred to as 'slow learners' and are aged between 14 to 19 years. Simon has been working in this area for three and a half years and after joining the Core Curriculum training group in Wellington this year he and Bev Hosking began these experiential drama sessions. They have experimented with a variety of approaches before settling on this one outlined below. They report a real hunger in their students for the work they are doing.

Many of the pupils in the Special Needs Department of Wellington High School have crushingly low levels of self esteem. They are held back in life by academic and social limitations. The students are disadvantaged by having learning problems and many have learned ineffective ways of being with other people.

All of this manifests itself by the students being unseen or obsequious, by them engaging in vicious blaming and by their inability to accept responsibility for their own actions and destiny. These kids are also spirited, imaginative and generous. Many of their concerns are the same as the concerns of all of us. Working with them is always fun, exciting and it demands a fair degree of spontaneity.

Having seen this, Bev Hosking and I thought we would be able to meet some of the students' needs in Drama Classes. Our objectives were to build self esteem, to expand the range of roles that the students can act out of and have experienced,

specifically to develop some playful roles and the roles of the self valuer and self presenter. Fortunately we were able to get funding from the school's Special Needs Grant to run two one hour sessions each week.

We tried a number of different approaches to this work. We were wanting to find a way forward where the students' self consciousness was not so inhibiting and finally felt as though we had made a break through when Bev told the Greek myth of Tantalus. The silence and the awed faces showed us that the students were spellbound by this story. Somehow the story was fantastically distant enough from the young people's own world that they were able to enter into its power without shame, giggles or derision. Paradoxically the themes of heinous crime, fair punishment, authority figures, knowing what is wrong and being tantalised were so familiar that the students related to them quite readily. This framework provided a bridge from their own world and their own

set of roles to a much larger world
and a larger set of roles.

After the story had been told each group was to select a part of the myth and to create their own enactment of it. Interestingly the two scenes selected were the crime and the punishment. One group showed with glee the extent of Zeus's son Tantalus's depravity when he chopped up his own child, Pelops, and put him into a cauldron for a feast. The other group showed the enormity of Tantalus's punishment when he was tied for all eternity to a vine, thirsty yet with the water just beyond his reach; the grapes above his head were impossible to grab hold of. As if this wasn't enough he also had a huge rock teetering above him.

The richness of this session came from the students' experience of roles other than that of the punished victim. They have lived for a moment as the all powerful Zeus, other Gods and Goddesses in all their dignity, an ultimately grandiose rebel, a cunning schemer, a provocative tease, vines, water, gracious hosts and as a rock. By the students enacting these parts of the story they have taken it more fully into their own life experience and been expanded by it. They were filled up by something much greater than their own life experience and in a part of themselves they knew this.

Medical Journey to Another World

Personal Experience of Group Work

by Dr Hamish Wilson

Hamish works as a General Practitioner in Christchurch. In this paper he describes the favourable influence of experiences in groups and with the psychodrama method on his attitude and identity as a doctor.

In 1978, after considerable struggle, I graduated from medical school, and so symbolically left the 'group' that had so effectively held and contained me for six years. It was not until 1989 that I again entered a 'group', and this time the journey was entirely different. It started when I was at a workshop/conference on polydrug abuse, and most of the well-known medical experts of New Zealand were present. One afternoon session was allocated to a psychodrama demonstration directed by Robert Crawford from Hanmer. He asked us to lie on the floor and each dream up a fantasy of an ultimate drug trip. In groups of four we then discussed these fantasies, and eventually two protagonists were chosen to act out their 'trips'.

Well, about 20 seconds into that first drama, my jaw was just about dropping off. In acting out this man's fantasy, it seemed to me that an underlying psychological bias became immediately obvious. Three years down the track I would now be a lot more cautious with such glib interpretations, but at the time I was astounded by the simplicity and speed of the method. I had just split

from the latest of a line of girlfriends, and was almost starting to concede that 'blaming the other half' could not always be the answer to my relationship problems. So I resolved to do psychodrama as the most direct way of sorting all that out.

I spent two years or so learning from Paul Baakman, a Christchurch psychotherapist and group worker, and learnt a lot more than I bargained for! I also did sessions with Max Clayton, Mike Consedine and Clare Elizabeth. All of these people make extensive use of the psychodrama method in their approach.

These groups were structured and disciplined. The director usually introduced himself and 'warmed-up' the group with either group exercises or with individual personal sharing. This was either related simply, or else acted out dramatically. The directors did not usually share personal experience in their own introductions. Some participants had 'issues' which they wished to explore in group, and eventually by various processes of elimination (not least by voting) a protagonist was found to do a 'drama'. This was then acted out under the control of the director,



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The venue is the Institute of Educational Administration in the centre of Geelong. It is one hour's drive from Melbourne and regular buses run from Melbourne airport to Geelong.

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Convenor, Peter Rennie, on phone (03) 699-3697

using various techniques such as scene-setting, role-reversal, modelling and mirroring. Subsequently, personal sharing of similar experiences by the rest of the group completed each session.

Most of the groups I was in were 'unsophisticated', in that much work was done on unresolved issues from the family of origin, and in particular on the relationships with parents. Later, as I joined more experienced 'training groups', the focus became more on how to use psychodrama at work, although I continued to 'meet' many parents in dramas. Women outnumbered men by 2 or 3 to 1, and so I had many acting roles as brothers, fathers, uncles, etc. Many participants had been sexually abused.

Strong group bonds were formed, and I noticed this seemed more so in the 'personal growth' groups than in those particular 'training groups' I attended. I also noticed that as the group feeling became stronger, my sense of individuality also strengthened. Similarly, I noticed that as I shared more personal experiences of my vulnerabilities, others seemed to warm to me more. During 'sharing' after each drama, most of the directors drew on their own personal difficulties with the same theme, and this seemed enormously powerful.

During three years of group work, I've noticed that the combined effect of the group seems to be more than the sum of its parts. Somehow, group process does more than expected. It seems to have a life of its own, over and above the contribution of participants. For example, at times there was a congruency about all the subgroups we had set up, so of the four protagonists chosen, each had the same theme for an intended drama. This happened so often it ceased to be remarkable. Overall, the qualities in those groups seemed to

be expansion, openness and creativity, yet individual boundaries seemed to be firmer. It was all very mysterious.

The focus in these groups over time became the interconnections between people, between the protagonist and his parents, between himself and his abuser/his victim/his authority figure. This focus on the connection or relationship between things was new for me as, of course, that was *not* how it was in medical school. There, the underlying concept is The Scientific Experiment. The Experimenter is disconnected or *removed* from the experiment. He wants to have absolutely no relationship at all with what is being observed in case that interferes with the result. Using the Scientific Method, he makes an hypothesis, applies certain techniques, and monitors the result. The focus of medical training, at least until 1978, was to break down each problem to its very smallest part; to find the organ that's malfunctioning; to find the biochemical pathway that's blocked. Since then, there has been some medical emphasis on 'engagement' and 'empathy' with patients. Yet the underlying theme remains the same. The Doctor (as Experimenter) diagnoses the patient (the Object to be observed) and prescribes a course of action (manipulates a variable). Cynically, it seems that 'empathy and engagement' are being advocated only to increase 'compliance' so that the experiment has a better chance of success. The underlying philosophical theme remains the same; that the medical interview is still largely based on the dogma of the 'Scientific Method'.

As so this group work I have done in the last three years was radically different; certainly it has changed my orientation. Rather than being sepa-



ANNOUNCEMENT

MACQUARIE HOUSE is being established in Brisbane at 45 Clarence Street, Coorparoo. It will be equipped with a psychodrama/playback theatre, group work rooms and consultancy/counselling rooms.

The establishment of MACQUARIE HOUSE is timely in the development of the psychodrama community in Brisbane.

MACQUARIE HOUSE staff will also provide organisational and community consultation services including:

- Community Development
- Management Consultation and Organisation Review
- Management Development
- Negotiation and Conflict Resolution within and between Groups
- Group Work Facilitation and Professional Development
- Personal Development

Elizabeth Synnot and Peter Howie are founding members of Macquarie House.

The postal address is P.O. Box 83, 50 Albert Street, Brisbane 4002
Ph (07) 843 1150 Fax (07) 843 1104

rated from patients/clients, I now see similarities with my own issues, and I am more likely to openly say so. Hopefully without neglecting the physical and technical aspects of the consultation, I now see their symptoms in the context of their lives, and I attempt to explore their *relationship* with their illness.

I still, of course, attend medical groups for various reasons. I even meet, sometimes, those in my original 'group' from medical school. But it is the same old stuff; crossed arms, superficial talk, medical talk ... we somehow don't meet *as people*. And yet I can meet friends from psychodrama who I join in a big hug, catch up on with enthusiasm, and have a feeling that it's great for us all to be in the world.

Somehow then, those six years of medical 'group' work had not developed or encouraged those same bonds between myself and the others. Given the extraordinary power of group process, I now find it remarkable we were able to resist that process so effectively.

My ideas on this were further developed by attending George Sweet's last series of workshops called 'Courses for Carers' in 1991. In that year I also attended two role training workshops for health professionals, one by Walter Logeman and one by Paul Baakman. All these groups were not directed toward technique or diagnosis; they were orientated toward the health professional in the context of his work.

George Sweet, a local psychotherapist, broke all the rules from medical school in the first five minutes. The first workshop was 'Power in Relationships', one he started by personal sharing about his family of origin, his experiences of power issues in various job positions, and his experience of 'power' in his own

marriage. I have never heard the leader, or 'power' figure, start with his own issues, and yet this somehow increased his own authority in group. Certainly it encouraged personal sharing from the rest of us, and it seemed to facilitate subsequent work on client power issues. These groups were for one day only, and I did not notice such strong personal connections within the group, as for the four or seven day psychodrama groups.

I was usually the only GP present, until I helped to organise a role training group with Paul Baakman as leader. This was part of the 1991 Medical Postgraduate Education Programme on Substance Abuse. Six GPs attended, and the role-training was orientated toward dealing with the difficult drug-seeking patient in general practice. We had two dramas, and we used mirroring of current roles, and modelling of new ones. After the drama there was a tendency from the GPs to analyse the action, rather than contribute with a similar personal experience, and this reminded me of the similar situation in Robert's group back in 1989. Few doctors over the years, it seemed, were familiar with such group work, and on both occasions, most of them had difficulty with this concept of 'personal sharing'. In Paul's group, however, we all agreed that role-training seemed to be a brilliant way of examining such difficult consultations.

I have decided not to continue 'training' in psychodrama, yet I continue to enjoy occasional groups. I have found myself stepping outside of the medical model, and yet find myself now more effective within it. And so the journey for me continues. Further mysteries are awaiting.

Book Review

'Directing Psychodrama'

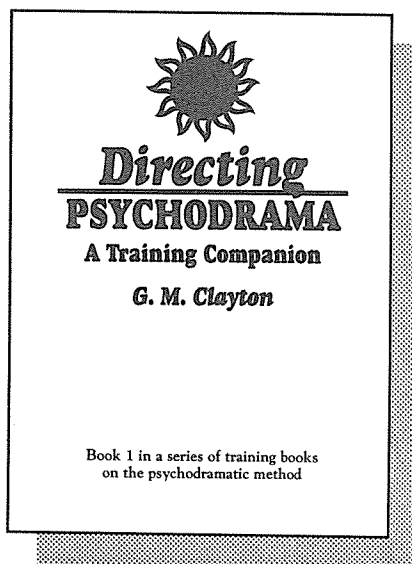
by Leon J. Fine

A review of **DIRECTING PSYCHODRAMA, A TRAINING COMPANION** by G. Max Clayton.

I enjoyed **DIRECTING PSYCHODRAMA, A TRAINING COMPANION** by G. Max Clayton. It is an easy read which provokes thought. It gives clear, thorough descriptions of the behaviour of the Protagonist and the Director. The thought processes and theorizing underlying Director behaviour are competently articulated. Encouragement and instruction for the beginning therapist are offered.

Early in this short book Max asks his client not to be compliant and gives her permission to argue with him and to defend her own point of view. I took it that these rules held for the reader as well and I had a good time both identifying and agreeing with interventions and tactics and also protesting with my imaginary Max when I did not agree or would have done something differently.

Max is clear and confident. He has lots of experience both as a therapist and as a teacher of the method. He is secure in that which he does. He has the ability and willingness to describe his interventions in detail and does not hedge when he tells why he does what he does. You have the behavioural data followed by book sections which give unseen thinking behind his behaviour. I agreed with most of



that which Max does even when my underlying thinking uses different language or conceptualisation. Max uses Moreno language and concepts of role theory, something I have not directly done for a while. I was brought back to my early reading and concepts. I enjoyed the review (and instruction) and the recognition of how I am Moreno influenced.

Max is a clear observer of behaviour and a sophisticated Director. He encourages the novice Director to get the depth of experience and theoretical learning so that he can spontane-

1993 SYMPOSIUM PSYCHODRAMA BOOKSHOP

This is the last year that Moreno's basic texts will be available due to the Beacon supplier closing up shop.

Psychodrama Vol II and Vol III and Theatre of Spontaneity and other books on group work and related texts will be available to purchase.

Blatner: Acting In / Art of Play

Fox: The Essential Moreno

Heathcote: Drama as a Learning Medium

Sternberg and Garcia: Who's In Your Shoes?

Clayton: Enhancing Life and Relationships

A number of theses have been published by the Board of Examiners.
For example:

K. Sprague: Everybody's Somebody. Action Methods for Young People with Severe Learning Difficulties

S. Hurst: The Suicidally Depressed Person and Psychodrama

F. Batten: "Magister Ludi, The Master of Play." A Role Profile of the Playwright

K. Rosaline: Reaching Out into the Community with Psychodrama

See you at the Symposium!

DIRECTING PSYCHODRAMA A Training Companion G. M. Clayton

Book 1 in a series of training books

This book on the subject of directing psychodrama meets a long-felt need for a clear and concise demonstration of how a psychodrama session may be conducted for the therapeutic benefit of everyone present. *Directing Psychodrama* will be of benefit to anyone who works in one of the healing professions and especially to those who are actively engaged in the practice of the psychodramatic method general group work, counselling, education and training.

Price: Au\$16.00 (plus Au\$3.00 postage and handling within Australia and New Zealand; Au\$5.00 to U.S.A. and Europe)

Available from ... The Australian College of Psychodrama, ICA Centre, 167 Hawthorn Rd, Caulfield, Victoria, Australia 3162

ENHANCING LIFE & RELATIONSHIPS A Role Training Manual G. M. Clayton

Book 2 in a series of training books

This book presents the theory and practice of role training through the presentation and discussion of role training sessions. The book is of benefit to trainers in organisations, educators, counsellors, psychotherapists, psychodramatists, sociodramatists and role trainers and to anyone whose task it is to make other people more able to fulfil job requirements or to function well in other relationships. It will generate fresh perspectives, confirm the practice of those who already make active use of role training, and stimulate effective work with individuals and groups.

Price: Au\$19.95 (plus Au\$3.00 postage and handling within Australia and New Zealand; Au\$5.00 to U.S.A. and Europe)

ously intervene as Max does. I remember a student who wanted to be able to replicate the Gestaltist Fritz Perls' ability to sharply intervene. "Why did you do that?" he was asked. "I felt like it", he replied not mentioning that he had 50 years of experience contributing to his feelings of the moment.

The majority of Max's interventions are consonant with that which I do and which I now call Gestalt-Psychodrama. So of course, I approve and admire his work. The exception I would make is that toward the end of the session Max is more directive and helpful than he earlier prescribed (in terms of following the protagonist, and encouraging her ownership of her power). I would have done less. I wondered if the Protagonist was complying with his suggestions as he warned she might. Max is more willing than I am to be paternal and his students adore him for his willingness to guide them.

This is an excellent training monograph. When I first started doing Psychodrama I read all of J. L. Moreno's monographs because they described sessions. Max's monograph is clear and detailed with verbatim, sequential descriptions of events as well as with clear, unequivocal descriptions of his thinking. He ties his behaviour and thinking to clear expositions of his theoretical constructs. He instructs and encourages his reader toward their own power and the power of the method skilfully and lovingly used. Good job, Max. I await what I hope will be a series of monographs describing more of your exciting sessions.

Leon is a Clinical Psychologist and Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at the Oregon Health Sciences University. He has been active in Psychodrama since 1956 and was Vice President of the ASGPP and President of the

Federation of Trainers in Psychodrama, Sociometry and Group Psychotherapy. He has trained with J. L. and Zerka Moreno (Psychodrama) and with Fritz and Laura Perls (Gestalt) as well as a host of the students of both couples. He was a student and then an Associate of National Training Laboratories (group dynamics) and was a student and teacher at Esalen Institute during the Personal Growth and Encounter movements of the 60s and 70s. He is in private practice as a Clinical Psychologist. He has a Diplomate as a T.E.P. from the American Board of Examiners in Psychodrama, Sociometry, and Group Psychotherapy and train others in these methods.



Australian and New Zealand Psychodrama Association, Inc.

ANZPA, Inc. is an organisation of people trained and certified in the psychodrama method and its applications and developments as Psychodramatists, Sociodramatists, Sociometrists, Role-Trainers or Trainer, Educator Practitioners (TEP).

Members and Associate Members are involved in regional associations and chapters.

The elected Association Executive appoints a Board of Examiners to set and maintain standards of training and practitioner certification. The Board has established and accredited Regional Training Institutes.

ANZPA organises its annual conferences and AGM through its regional chapters and associations.

Regular Bulletins and a Journal are sent to all Members.

MEMBERSHIP. People who are currently certificated by ANZPA are eligible to be Full Members. They are issued with a Current Practice Certificate each year, on paying the fee.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP is open to people who demonstrate commitment to the Association and its goals and principles by undertaking ongoing training beyond the basic level. They must be sponsored by a Full Member who is involved with their training.

Additionally, from time to time, particular people who have special qualifications or accomplishments are invited to become Honorary Members or Distinguished Members.

ANNUAL FEES: Full Membership – \$85
Associate Membership – \$35

SEND TO: The Treasurer, Don Reekie,
ANZ Psychodrama Association, Inc.,
3/54 Gills Avenue,
Papakura,
NEW ZEALAND

**OR, WITHIN
AUSTRALIA,
SEND TO:** Australian Membership Secretary, Annette Fisher,
ANZPA, Inc.,
44 Gruner Street,
Weston, ACT 2611
AUSTRALIA



Australian and New Zealand Psychodrama Association, Inc.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Complete the details requested below. Send with fee to the Australian Membership Secretary if you are in Australia, or to the Treasurer if you are in New Zealand or elsewhere.

Surname: _____

First Name: _____ Middle Name: _____

Address: _____

Country: _____ Postcode: _____

Phone (include area code): _____

Status (tick appropriate one): ☐ TEP ☐ Practitioner ☐ Trainee

Certification (tick appropriate one): ☐ None ☐ Psychodramatist

☐ Sociodramatist ☐ Role-Trainer ☐ Sociometrist

Qualifications: _____

Occupation: _____

Work Details – Place: _____

Address: _____

Phone (include area code): _____

Membership Category (tick appropriate one):

☐ Full Member ☐ Associate Member

Sponsor's Details (required if applying as Associate Member) –

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Address: _____

Phone (include area code): _____

Enclose sponsor's letter of recommendation with this application.

Signature: _____

Date of Signing: _____