

CURRENT APPROACHES IN DRAMA THERAPY

Second Edition

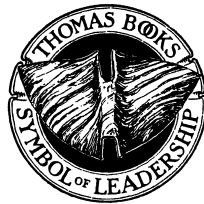
CURRENT APPROACHES IN DRAMA THERAPY

Edited by

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*The book is dedicated to Penny Lewis (1946–2003),
whose inspiration and leadership produced the first edition of this volume,
and whose many contributions to drama therapy and the creative arts
therapies will be long remembered.*

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PREFACE

This second edition of *Current Approaches in Drama Therapy* provides a comprehensive compilation of the primary drama therapy methods and models that are being utilized and taught in the United States and Canada. This edition offers experienced practitioners and board certified trainers of drama therapy, as well as students and newcomers to the field, an updated articulation of theoretical and clinical approaches to drama therapy practice. This volume is therefore recommended as a basic text in the field of drama therapy. Every aspect of the book has been updated and revised, including a comprehensive bibliography on drama therapy. We have added four new approaches in this edition: “Healing the Wounds of History,” by Armand Volkas; “Rehearsals for Growth,” by Daniel Wiener; “Performance in Drama Therapy,” by Sally Bailey; and “Theatre of the Oppressed,” by Nisha Sajnani. Their addition is a good indication of the continued vivacity and growth of our profession.

The approaches were selected on the basis of the fact that they have been taught in universities and institutes, presented at national conferences, and published in professional journals. Each of the chapters is authored either by the founder or a key proponent of that approach to drama therapy. Each author accepted the discipline of writing the chapter within a prescribed format, including updated theoretical and conceptual premises, as well as one or more case examples. Authors were encouraged to compare their approach to that of other primary approaches in the field, and evidence of this dialogue is much more present in this edition. It is important to note that we do not presume that this book includes all approaches in the field, nor were we able to include the work of many gifted clinicians who have yet to articulate a particular model or approach. Further editions will continue the process of expanding the body of knowledge in the field.

Section I provides a context for the state of the field of drama therapy in North America. The first chapter describes the history of the field. The second chapter discusses stages in professional development and theory building. A third chapter examines advances in clinical practice, especially over

the past decade, emerging areas of interest, and challenges for the future. Section II contains 14 specific approaches to drama therapy. Section III describes four related approaches—*Psychodrama*, *Sociodrama*, *Playback Theatre*, and *Theatre of the Oppressed*, each of which has had significant influence on drama therapy practice despite their founders not identifying as drama therapists. A separate index of key concepts in drama therapy is included in this new edition, demonstrating the consolidation and breadth of theory in the field.

We are aware that this second edition of *Current Approaches* is part of a continuous professional challenge: to articulate the similarities and differences among various methods within one discipline. Each approach in this book is at the same time a unique set of ideas and methods, and a variation of the fundamental processes that underlie drama and psychotherapy. It will be through an active dialogue among these perspectives that our profession will continue to mature. The rapid transformation of our local and global cultural environments will continue to challenge our creativity and flexibility in adapting drama therapy methods to the changing needs of our clients and society.

DAVID READ JOHNSON AND RENÉE EMUNAH, EDITORS

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We wish to thank the contributing authors who graciously and enthusiastically joined with us in the preparation of this volume. Support for this effort also came from the National Association for Drama Therapy and Sally Bailey, who aided in the updating of the drama therapy bibliography. We appreciate the assistance of Sarah Harkness in editing of text and preparing the index and Beth Van Buecken in updating the bibliography. Our publisher, Michael Thomas, offered continuous support and patience throughout the entire process. Finally, we thank the clients whose courageous journeys are reflected in the many case examples throughout the book; it is you that have given the authors the inspiration and motivation to develop these approaches to healing.

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CURRENT APPROACHES IN DRAMA THERAPY

Section I

THE STATE OF THE FIELD

Chapter 1

THE HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE FIELD OF DRAMA THERAPY IN NORTH AMERICA

DAVID READ JOHNSON

THE CREATOR

In the beginning, there was Moreno. This visionary single-handedly discovered drama therapy in the 1920s. His theatre of spontaneity, use of improvisation, and theatrical sensibility make him the original drama therapist (Moreno, 1946). Though there were others who used drama as therapy (including de Sade, Evreinov, Iljine—see an excellent review by Phil Jones, 1996), none had any substantial influence on the future of the field since there was no transmission of their work to others. Moreno, on the other hand, did nothing less than expand forever the boundaries of what was possible in psychotherapy.

Moreno trained as a psychiatrist, but his longstanding interest and activities in theatre led him to the discovery of *Psychodrama* by the early 1920s. In 1925, he emigrated to the United States, where he revolutionized the practice of psychotherapy until his death in 1974. While he was at St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Washington, he influenced Marian Chace, the originator of dance therapy, as

well as many art and music therapists. In New York during the 1950s, hundreds of therapists attended his workshops and presentations, many of whom later became leaders of the humanistic and encounter movement (e.g., Fritz Perls—Gestalt Therapy; Eric Berne—Transactional Analysis; Arthur Janov—Primal Scream).

Moreno's psychodramatic writings provide a strong foundation for drama therapy, and for some time it seemed that no more needed to be said: How could anyone imagine a drama therapy that was not Moreno's? However, in the late 1960s, a new group of theatre artists entered the mental health field—partly as a result of the cultural changes evoked by the Vietnam War, and partly due to the expansion of art, music, and dance therapies. As these theatre people encountered psychodrama, they found it wanting. Because Moreno had intended to influence his psychiatric colleagues, he had encapsulated his methods into a structured form, reminiscent of an enacted psychiatric interview. As a result, his method began to stray from the aesthetics of its theatrical

roots. Increasingly, his audience had become mental health professionals rather than theatre people, so theatre training was not incorporated into the required training of a psychodramatist. A breach had developed between psychodrama's theatrical roots and its actual practice, a breach into which a number of drama therapy pioneers leapt.

THE TITANS

There were five of them. Each contributed in a special way to the creation of the field of drama therapy. Though by the 1960s there were many people practicing some form of drama therapy, these five had an influence that reached out beyond their immediate areas, inspiring others to move toward drama therapy. Each one embraced this new entity of drama therapy; without them, drama therapy as a profession may never have been born.

Eleanor Irwin received her degree in speech therapy, but found herself at the Pittsburgh Child Guidance Clinic under the tutelage and mentorship of Marvin Shapiro, a gifted psychiatrist who encouraged Ellie and other future creative arts therapists. Out of that clinic came Judith Rubin, Penny Lewis, as well as Ellie, all who have become leaders in their respective fields. Ellie Irwin published the first articles on drama therapy in the early 1970s, and soon they found their way into the hands of other drama therapists, inspiring us greatly (Irwin, Levy, & Shapiro, 1972; Irwin, 1977). Her work was characterized by careful, rigorous clinical descriptions of cases, clear articulation of a theoretical base, and a delight in the play of children. Her psychoanalytic background (she later became a psychoanalyst) served her well in rooting her work in a widely accepted area of scholarship. As a link be-

tween drama therapists and the psychiatric community, Ellie Irwin was far ahead of everyone else in her integration of these perspectives. Her articles provided deep reassurance that we had the capacity to stand up to the scrutiny of psychiatrists.

Marian (Billy) Lindkvist founded the Sesame Institute in 1964 in London, which integrated psychiatric principles and research with movement, art, and drama (Wethered, 1973). She established a full-time course in drama therapy in 1974. Both Renee Emunah and Lynn Temple studied with her in London at Sesame. She also made several trips to the United States during which I and others were profoundly impacted. Marian was influenced by the British tradition of drama-in-education of Brian Way (1967) and Peter Slade (1954), in which guided play was used to explore topics of both social and personal importance. She also did much work on shamanic ritual, particularly in African cultures, which drew her to Jungian concepts of archetypal expression. She extended her own and Sesame's work with children to the elderly, adult psychiatric patients, people from various cultures, and even "normal" people (Pearson, 1996). Sesame had a serious research interest, and one of the first outcome studies in drama therapy was done with chronic schizophrenic adults with Sesame clinicians (Nitsun et al., 1974). Though Slade had written about drama therapy much earlier, he always had his feet planted on educational soil. Billy took a bold step over the line, committing herself entirely to the therapeutic arena.

Sue Jennings wrote *Remedial Drama* in 1973, one of the first books on drama therapy. She later started a course in drama therapy at St. Albans, University of Hertfordshire, and helped to create the British Association of Drama Therapy in 1977. Since then she has developed training programs throughout Europe, Greece, and Israel, and

has written numerous books and journal articles. She has been the Johnny Appleseed of our profession, always traveling, sowing seeds of inspiration and wisdom on her way. Sue also emerged from the drama-in-education tradition in England, though she has preserved the influence of the professional stage and the literature of Shakespeare in her practice. She has remained a powerful influence on the professional development of drama therapy internationally. United States and Canadian drama therapists were well aware of her work, which provided a strong impetus to us as we gave birth to a new profession.

Richard Courtney was steeped in the drama-in-education tradition of Britain, but was able to extend the field far into psychology and psychotherapy in his book, *Play, Drama, and Thought*, which was published in 1968 and spurred many of us on. This book established once and for all the links between drama and psychology. He later helped Gertrud Schattner finish editing her book on drama therapy. Richard was a man of immense breadth of knowledge and interest, who effortlessly wove intellectual themes among fields of great diversity. He became fascinated by the potential of drama for personal growth—at first from an educational point of view, and then later from a psychotherapeutic point of view. The essence of a British gentleman, mediated by years of living and teaching in Canada, he brought an air of gentility, perspective, and worldliness to the beginnings of the drama therapy movement. He died in 1997.

Gertrud Schattner spent much of World War II in Switzerland with her psychoanalyst husband. After the war, she used drama with concentration camp survivors. She came to this country and trained in the Karen Horney Clinic in psychotherapy. For years she taught drama and then drama therapy workshops and courses, settling in at

Bellevue Hospital and Turtle Bay Music School in the 1960s. Her life mission was drama therapy. Trained professionally as an actress in Europe, even working with Otto Preminger in prewar Austria, she became influenced by Viola Spolin (1963) and creative drama approaches including improvisation. Her work grew out of theatre games, movement exercises, and improvisational role-playing. After the war she had developed a clear vision of drama therapy which she embraced without an ounce of misgiving. Though she was not a writer, she initiated the project of an edited book that brought all of us together, and was instrumental in bringing the National Association for Drama Therapy into being. Her fiery commitment to the field was the match that lit the smoldering doubts of others, igniting us into action. She died in 1994.

These were our Titans. Though few of them were friends, each cast a large shadow, providing a protective shade for the developing profession.

OUT OF THE DESERT

By 1974, many people were experimenting with what we now know as drama therapy: Don Laffoon at Stop Gap in Los Angeles; Janet Goodrich with addicts in Washington, DC; Margaret Ladd and Imagination Workshop in New York; Rosilyn Wilder, Toddy Richman, Naida Weisberg and Rose Pavlow with children and the elderly; Renee Emunah with psychiatric patients; Elaine Portner with families; Barbara Sandberg at William Paterson College; Ray Gordon with ex-prisoners at the Cell Block Theatre; John Bergman at Geese Theatre; and myself at the Yale Psychiatric Institute. Numerous psychodramatists such as Adam Blatner, Nina Garcia, and Jonathan Fox were rediscover-