

R. Ridge PhD, TEP. Literature Review of Psychodrama

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A literature review of Psychodrama

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Abstract

A literature review of the history of psychodrama and its theoretical developments viewed through the lens of Moreno's life. It is drawn from the second chapter of the author's dissertation in partial fulfillment for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Interdisciplinary Studies with a Concentration in Psychology and a specialization in Psychodrama and Somatic Therapies for Union Institute and University. The title of the dissertation is **The Body Alchemy of Psychodrama: A Phenomenologically-Based Qualitative Evaluation of a Training Manual for Trainers and Practitioners of Psychodrama and Group Psychotherapy.** Included are contributions from those who influenced Moreno during the course of his life as well as those who followed Moreno and continued to develop Psychodrama through the end of the 20th century.

Literature Review

Historical Literature Review of the Theories and Foundation of Psychodrama

This literature review provides in-depth definitions of psychodrama and compiles a historical and political context that forms a backdrop to the creation of psychodrama. It categorizes and relates Jacob Levy Moreno's original contributions to the theory and development of the therapy known as psychodrama, sociometry, and group psychotherapy organized under a number of entitled subsections. As the pioneer of these fields, Moreno receives a scholarly discussion of his life and the development of his theories form a foundation for the discussion. Finally, those new leaders' and teachers' contributions that have emerged in the later half of the twentieth century will be briefly described.

Definitions of Psychodrama

Moreno first defined "psychodrama" in *Psychodrama Volume 1* (1946, 1985): "Drama is the transliteration of the Greek word which means action, or a thing done. Psychodrama can be defined therefore as the science which explores the truth by dramatic action" (p. a). Moreno described how the psychodramatic method is used through five instruments: the words "client," "subject," and "patient" were used interchangeably.

1. The stage, which is an extension of life where fantasy and reality are not in conflict, provides an objective therapeutic setting that is designed to create a relief from tensions. Enactments within this therapeutic space encourage a mobility and flexibility for the protagonist which stimulates an ultimate resolution of deep mental conflicts.
2. The subject or the patient (later called "the protagonist"), who is "warmed up" to give an account of his or her daily life, acts freely and spontaneously with a variety of techniques

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employed to explore a patient's internal world of self or external world of others who are involved in their psychological conflicts.

3. The director has at least three primary functions: first, as a producer who must develop the dramatic action, second, as therapist who engages in a therapeutic relationship with the patient, either confronting or laughing with them, and finally, as an analyst who interprets the responses of both the patient and the group members as they respond to the patient.
4. The auxiliary egos are group members who are involved in the action as therapeutic actors and are the extensions of both the director and of the patient as they portray roles within the client/patient's world. The auxiliary egos have a threefold function: as the actor bringing to life the roles for the patient, as a therapeutic agent of the director, guiding the patient, and as a social investigator exploring the internal world of the role they are chosen to enact for the patient.
5. The audience or group, has a dual purpose, either in assisting the patient or by receiving help from the work the patient portrays. The audience assists most importantly with a client/patient who lives in an extremely isolated internal world shaped by delusions. In such a case the audience provides a sense of reality and unconditional positive regard for the therapeutic work of the patient (Moreno, 1985, p. a-d).

Kellerman (1987) and Kipper (1988) each voiced concerns about the lack of a commonly agreed upon current definition for psychodrama. They cited numerous reasons for this lack of commonality, including Moreno's evolving theoretical constructs, the triadic system of psychodrama which includes sociometry, group psychotherapy, and psychodrama and its eclectic

nature. They also noted how many other forms of therapy borrowed some measure of psychodramatic philosophy or practice, sometimes diluting the potency and depth of its practice.

Kellerman in 1987 defined psychodrama to give it a more psychological credibility:

Psychodrama is a method of psychotherapy in which clients are encouraged to continue and complete their actions through dramatizations, role-playing, and dramatic self-presentation. Both verbal and nonverbal communications are utilized. A number of scenes are enacted depicting, for example, memories of specific happenings in the past, unfinished situations, inner dramas, fantasies, dreams, preparations for future risk-taking situations or simply unrehearsed expressions of mental states in the here and now. These scenes either approximate real-life situations or are externalizations of inner mental processes. If required, other roles may be taken by group members or by inanimate objects. Many techniques are employed, such as role reversal, doubling, mirroring, concretizing, maximizing, and soliloquy. Usually the phases of warm-up, action, working-through, closure, and sharing can be identified (p. 79).

Psychodrama was further refined and defined by Kipper, (1988) as “a method that uses dramatizations of personal experiences through role-playing enactments under a variety of simulated conditions as a means for activating psychological processes” (p. 167).

Wolff (2004) simplified and added root word definitions, “Psychodrama comes from the two roots “psyche” meaning soul and “drama,” which means action” (p.2). In the *Oxford, American Dictionary of Current English* (2002), psychology is defined as the scientific study of the human mind and its functions, esp. those affecting behavior in a given context. Within philosophy, psychology is described as the branch of metaphysics that studies the soul (defined as the emotional or intellectual nature of a person), the mind, and the relationship of life and

mind to the functions of the body. By combining all of these definitions, this brings a unification of the body-mind in relationship to the psyche, the soul the mind, the behavior, and the body as an embodied integration of the whole person.

History of Psychodrama

The theories of psychodrama were created, written, and described by Moreno, whose life spanned the years 1889-1974. He originated psychodrama and pioneered the emerging fields of sociometry and group psychotherapy from their inception in the first half of the 20th century. The following historical review of the literature has its basis in the context of Moreno's theories that form the foundation for this clinical therapy and its developments. His theories are treated with detail as they shaped his development of psychodrama, sociometry and group psychotherapy. When possible, his relevant personal history is woven into the development of those theories. Also included are relevant vignettes about Moreno's life presented chronologically to show how significant life experiences created his theories. Because he was the pioneer and sole creator of the theory of psychodrama, from 1921-1942, this review draws from Moreno's autobiography, his texts, and two well-documented biographies--Marineau, 1989; Hare & Hare, 1996--to describe Moreno's major works that contributed to the formation and foundation of psychodrama. Although many of Moreno's original writings currently are out of print, whenever possible original editions are used with some later editions, for this literature review. Where relevant, definitions are included within the text. The historical foundation of the relevant theories in psychodrama are part of the intellectual foundation of psychodrama and provides a complete understanding of psychodrama as a therapeutic modality within the field of psychology.

Moreno wrote extensively about his philosophy and theory of life which he developed into the clinical practices of psychodrama, group psychotherapy, and sociometry. It is important to know the political and emotional climate that formed the background and set the stage for Moreno's philosophical development to understand the depth and background of the field of psychodrama.

Moreno lived in Vienna, Austria, from 1906-1925. He was a Sephardic Jew in a city where more than half the medical students were Jewish. The Jews of Vienna represented less than 10% of the population (Rosenblit, 1983). An art movement and a political movement were challenging the moral values of the empire of Franz Josef. This new movement, known as "expressionism," invited radicalism in all of the arts and infiltrated the sciences as well (Dube, 1972). Psychiatry was part of this wave, with the work of Phillippe Pinel (1745-1826), who pioneered the humane treatment of the mentally ill and insane (Alexander, 1966). Johann Christian Reil and Phillippe Pinel each wrote separately about the use of drama for healing purposes (Alexander, 1966; Mezurecky, 1974; Porter, 1998). Pinel's work in particular was part of this revolution in psychiatry that formed the backdrop of the work Moreno would eventually develop (Marineau, 1989).

However, the psychiatry taught at the University of Vienna was still rooted in neurology, which was more interested in the treatment of symptoms (Moreno, 1989). Most of the research work was conducted by neurologists more interested in classifying mental illness (Marineau, 1989).

Sigmund Freud, M.D., (1856-1939) preceded Moreno at the University of Vienna Medical School. Freud was influenced by the work of Jean Martin Charcot (Freud, 1909). Charcot (1825-1893), though he believed that hysteria was caused by a weakness in the nervous

system, demonstrated a cure by psychological means (Alexander, 1966; James & Person, 1989). Freud's work brought about a second psychiatric revolution by giving back to the patient the right to speak. Freud's conceptualization of the unconscious opened the door to the interpretation of thought processes and behavior from a psychodynamic perspective. He explained behavior from an understanding of repression and defense mechanisms (Freud, 1922, 1933). In Victorian Vienna, Freud could be seen as part of the expressionist revolution as he interpreted dreams and gave a voice to psychosexual development. Seen from the perspective of that time, his developments in the understanding of human nature comprised a breakthrough in the treatment and understanding of mental illness and human behavior (Freud 1922, 1933). Expressionism was a deep call from the heart and soul and a cry from the artists, poets, philosophers to the younger generation to save the world from the old fashioned, the "bourgeois" society. Their cry was for a new moral purity and for the manifestation of creative genius in shaping a new world order (Schorske, 1985). Onto this stage in Vienna stepped Moreno, already ahead of his time, who felt compelled to create his own revolution of the psyche. He reacted against the psychoanalytic theories in Vienna at that time. He believed that human beings could be more productive by acting out their fantasies and symptoms rather than trying to constrain or resolve them (Moreno, 1989). Moreno would combine his love and knowledge of the theatre with his background in psychiatry, group dynamics, and the spontaneity and creativity he observed in children to develop psychodrama. Two other Russian psychiatrists who developed "therapeutic theatre" were Vladimir Iljine in 1908-1917 and Nicolai Evernirov between 1918 and 1924 (Jones, 1996). Neither of these men's approaches attained the same scope or development as Moreno's contribution (Blatner, 2000).

Moreno entered medical school in 1912 and attended the University of Vienna medical school until 1917 where he received his medical degree. While there, he personally encountered Freud with whom Moreno is said to have spoken following a lecture by the learned doctor. Freud spoke with Moreno and asked him what he was doing. Moreno is quoted as saying, “Well Dr. Freud, I start where you leave off. You meet people in the artificial setting of your office. I meet them on the streets and in their homes, in their natural settings. You analyze their dreams; I give them the courage to dream again. You analyze and tear them apart. I let them act out their conflicting roles and help them to put the parts back together again” (Moreno, 1989b, p. 61). At this time Moreno was 20 years old and Freud was 56. Moreno went on to say that his disagreement was not with psychoanalysis but with the therapeutic behavior of Freud. Moreno visualized that a healer should be a “spontaneous, creative protagonist in the midst of a group” (1989b, p. 62). Freud’s work grew out of neuropsychiatric theories, and he treated his psychiatric patients as a medical doctor treating the illness of the mind. Moreno saw his own work as that of a social scientist and a prophet who researched “primitive religions” with the desire to create a new social order (Moreno, 1989b). Moreno also encountered Albert Einstein at the university and was impressed by his capacity for envisioning the cosmos as both a physicist and a theologian. Moreno recorded how he was inspired by Einstein’s words, “You know God does not play dice with the Universe” (1989b, p. 63). Moreno believed his work was in alignment with Einstein’s.

Within this social, cultural, and political climate, Moreno, as a young man, began to formulate his theories demonstrated by his first writing in 1914 of *An Invitation to an Encounter, Part 1 (Einladung zu einer Begegnung, Heft 1, 1914)*. He was not interested in what was wrong with patients but rather what would empower people to have more meaningful

relationships and to be able to experience more spontaneous and creative fulfillment in life (Moreno, 1934, 1956, 1959, 1969, 1971, 1975, 1985, 1989). Unbeknownst to him, he would usher in the humanistic psychological movement 40 years later (Maslow, 1971).

Although Moreno is best remembered for his creation of psychodrama, sociodrama, and sociometry, his legacy lives on as a pioneer in other fields as well. Corsini (1955) credited Moreno as one of the founders of group psychotherapy, Compennole (1981) wrote about Moreno as an unrecognized pioneer of family therapy, and Thomas and Biddle (1996) acknowledged Moreno as one of the founders of group psychotherapy. Maslow (1968) attributed many of the Human Potential Movements' exercises to Moreno. He said, "I would like to add one credit-where-credit-is-due footnote. Many of the techniques ... were originally invented by Dr. Jacob Moreno" (p. 15). Similarly Berne (1970), founder of Transactional Analysis, also noted, "that (Fritz) Perls, founder of the Gestalt movement shared with other 'active' psychotherapists the Moreno problem: the fact that nearly all known 'active' techniques were first tried out by Moreno in psychodrama, so that it makes it difficult to come up with an original idea in this regard" (Berne, p. 164).

As an artistic, cultural, imaginative, visionary, Moreno had a deep and abiding love and respect for the Greek theatre as an experiential event fostering transformation. Moreno drew several of his theoretical concepts from the Greek history of drama. Referring to psychodrama as a group therapy, he compared the audiences of Greek theatre to the group members witnessing a drama.

He saw that group work was more beneficial than individual therapy. Moreno said in *Psychodrama Volume 1* (1985), "Thespis was credited as having put the first actor upon a social space outside of the chorus, portraying the woes of their own hero. Aeschylus is credited with

having put the second actor on the stage thus making possible the dialogue and interaction of roles. We (psychodramatists) may be credited with putting the psyche itself on the stage. The psyche which originally came from the group, personified by an actor returns to the group in the form of a psychodrama” (p.e).

Moreno drew his concepts about catharsis from Aristotle (Moreno, 1985). He described how Aristotle in his *Poetics* used the word “catharsis” to describe the purifying effect of the drama on Greek spectators by eliciting certain emotions that created a relief from their pent up passions. Aristotle presented catharsis in his *Poetics* saying that the task of the tragedy was to produce through the exercise of fear and pity, liberation from such emotions. Aristotle saw that the catharsis should take place in the spectator. In psychodrama, the emphasis shifts away from the spectator to the actors and to the group members for whom the process is more mental and observant, as compared to the participant in religions from the East and Near East, often a saint, who would more actively experience a catharsis and internalize the realization directly. Moreno went on to describe catharsis as an experience that cannot just be mentally realized but also must be felt within the body. It can be experienced not by just one person but collectively as a group, hence the need for the drama (Moreno, 1985).

Moreno also noted that the Greek word *therapeutes* meant attendant or servant. The earliest therapeutic measure was to drive the demons out of the body of the victim (Moreno, 1985). The patient was not able to do this for himself or herself; thus, he or she needed a *therapeutes* to do it. A priest or shaman would use a magic charm or potion to relieve the sick person. From primitive times, the drama was a place for therapeutics and catharsis, long before the drama was used for art or entertainment (1985).

Moreno, from his early teens, decided to play the part of a prophet. In his autobiography (1989a), Moreno attempted to recapture those mystical thoughts which began to shape his personal philosophy on “Godplaying” based in part on the life of Christ. Berger (1990), in response to Moreno’s descriptions, imagined his identity quest for answers to questions such as, “Who am I? Is the body which I possess me? Is it all of me? Is it all matter? Or is there a part of my body or some other manifestation of me that could be called soul?”(p. 218). Moreno read extensively the philosophers of ancient and modern times including the Old and New Testament prophets, Kierkegaard, Spinoza, Leibniz, Descartes, Kant, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche; and the poets, Whitman and Goethe (Moreno, 1989a). At age 14 he proclaimed himself a megalomaniac. Although his super-ego gave him the driving energy to bring to life his dreams of a new form of psychotherapy, it may also have caused some damage to the reputation of psychodrama and its place in the psychotherapeutic community even today.

Moreno was a man of imagination and magnitude who made his own life a psychodrama. In his 1989 autobiography, he noted that the psychodrama of his life preceded the development of psychodrama as a method. Indeed, it does seem a natural outgrowth of his enactment of his own storied life. What is most intriguing is how each of his experiences serendipitously built upon one another, giving shape and form to his ideas. He was a heuristic researcher, living his own experiences and then forming a creative composite of them to shape a theoretical basis for his ideas (Moreno, 1989; Marineau, 1989).

To give more clarity to the reading of this literature review and to understand the flow of Moreno’s philosophy and how it shaped his theories, Diagram One charts the four cornerstones of psychodrama. Garcia and Buchanan (2000) in their chapter on “Psychodrama” in a book edited by Lewis and Johnson, *Current Approaches in Drama Therapy*, identified the four

cornerstones that form the strong theoretical foundation developed by Moreno that underlie the practices of psychodrama. They are (a) the theory of spontaneity and creativity, (b) sociometry, (c) role theory and, (d) psychodrama intervention constructs. Each of these cornerstones interfaces and interweaves with the others. Although they can each be used independently, “Moreno created and envisioned them as interdependent parts of an organic whole” (Garcia & Buchanan, 2000, p. 164).

Cornerstones of Psychodrama

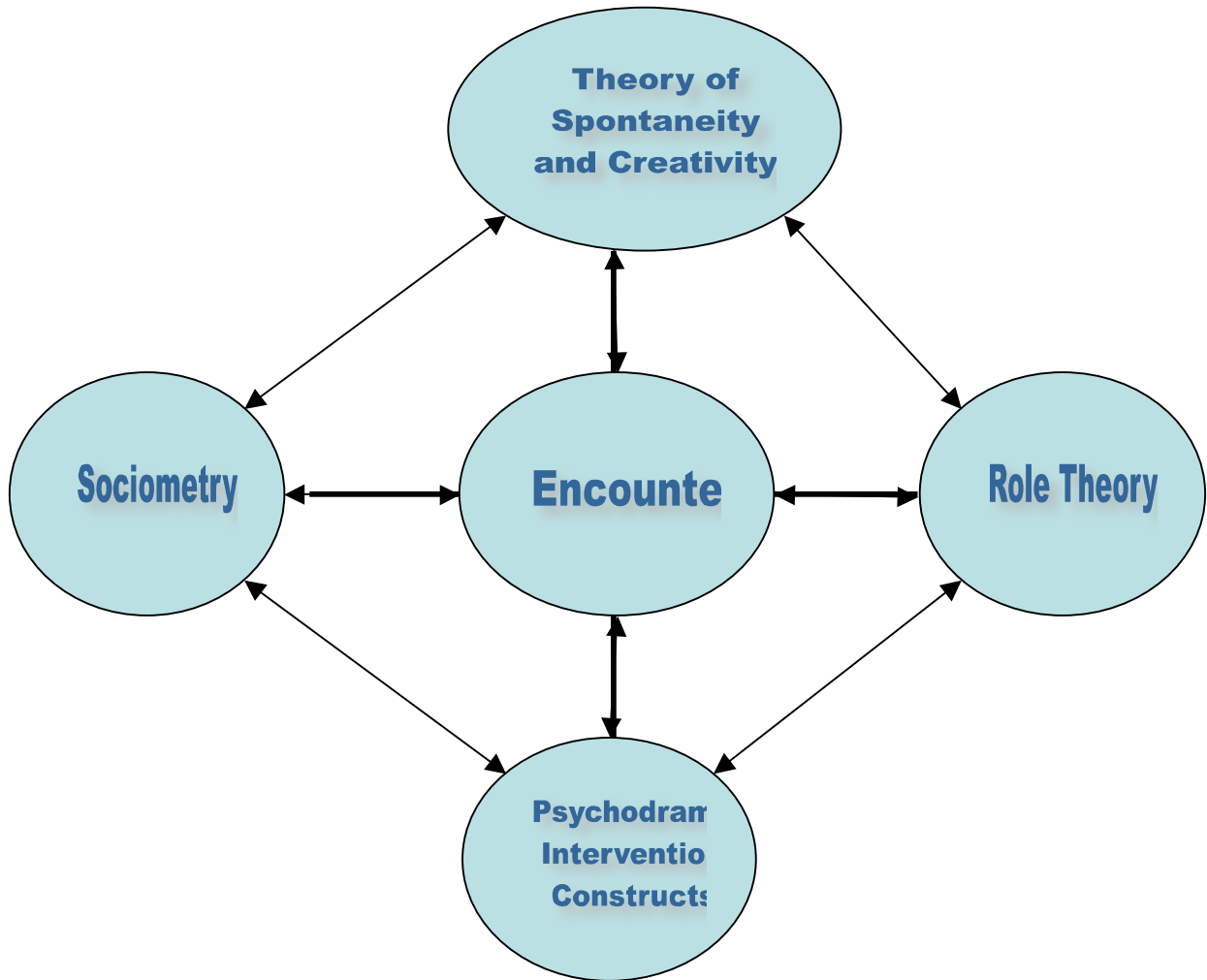


Diagram 1: Cornerstones of Psychodrama

An encounter became the center core for this model because encounter is both a keystone for all of psychodrama theory, and it is the identifying theme of Moreno's original conceptualization of human interactions. Moreno's philosophy of the encounter began in 1909 when he and another university student, Chaim Kellmer, formed a group they called, "The Religion of the Encounter." Moreno and Kellmer established a community center open to students, new immigrants, and refugees. The sign over the door read, "Come to us from all nations and we will give you shelter" (Hare & Hare, 1996, p. 5). Moreno first wrote about "encounter" in 1914 as an invitation to a meeting between self and inner self, self and other, and self and God (Moreno, 1914). The word "encounter" succinctly and uniquely prefaced psychodrama as a relational form of therapy. Therefore, one of the essential ingredients of Moreno's philosophy, the encounter is depicted as the center hub of this wheel. All of Moreno's theories flow into and out of this center; they begin and end with the encounter, which he described as "extemporaneous, unstructured, unplanned, unrehearsed, it occurs in the spur of the moment ... it is the experience of identity and total reciprocity; but above all psychodrama is the essence of encounter" (1969, p. 9).

In 1914 Moreno wrote and published this poem about encounter:

Invitation to an Encounter

More important than science is its result.

One answer provokes a hundred questions.

More important than poetry is its result.

One poem invokes a hundred heroic acts.

More important than recognition is its result,
the result is pain and guilt.

More important than procreation is the child.
More important than evolution of creation is the
evolution of the creator.

In the place of the imperative steps the imperator.

In the place of the creative steps the creator.

A meeting of two; eye to eye, face to face,
And when you are near I will tear your eyes out
and place them instead of mine,
and you will tear my eyes out
and will place them instead of yours
then I will look at you with your eyes
and you will look at me with mine.

Thus even the common thing serves the silence and

our meeting remains the chainless goal:

The undetermined place, at an undetermined time
the undetermined word to the undetermined man.

Translated from *Einladung zu einer Begegnung* (Moreno, *Invitation to an Encounter, Part 2*, 1914, p. 3).

In *Psychodrama Volume 3*, Moreno (1975) described “encounter” as a rough translation of the German word, “Begegnung.” He defined it this way:

[a] meeting, contact of bodies, confrontation, countering and battling, seeing and perceiving, touch and entering into each other, sharing and loving, communicating with each other in a primary, intuitive manner, by speech gesture, by kiss and embrace, becoming one-una cum uno. It encompasses not only loving, but also hostile and threatening relationships. It is not only emotional rapport ... it is a meeting on the most intensive level of communication... The encounter is extemporaneous, unstructured, unplanned, unrehearsed-it occurs in the spur of the moment. It is “in the moment” and “in the here.” It is the sum total of interaction between two or more persons... It is the convergence of emotional, social, and cosmic factors, the experience of identity and total reciprocity. (p. 26)

Moreno’s life work was about encountering life fully. Moreno said that “The first encounter I tried to have was with the child” (1989a, p. 36) In 1911 as a university student,

Moreno would walk through the Augarten (garden), near the Archduke's Palace and gather children together for impromptu play and storytelling (Moreno, 1989). Sitting in the tree like a being in a fairytale, he would tell stories and then have the children enact them. It was here that he developed his theories of spontaneity and creativity, which would form one of the key cornerstones of psychodrama theory. "I took to anonymity, spontaneity and creativity," Moreno said "like wood takes to fire and began my Godplaying in the streets and gardens of Vienna" (1989, p. 37). He observed in the children that the originality of imaginal play was fresh and full of new experiences and that their repeated action became rigid and robotic. Moreno took this "idée fixe," this sense of fresh originality as a guide to his own life (Moreno, 1989). For Moreno the "encounter" was at the core of relationships; coupled with encounter was the element of "tele," which pulled individuals into an encounter.

Moreno (1934, 1985) chose the word "tele" to describe the current of feeling that flows between persons. Tele, from the Greek, means "a far, influence into distance." Moreno defined tele as the feeling that draws and holds people together. It is an essential ingredient within groups and facilitates an encounter. Moreno saw tele as primary and transference as secondary; when the transference has disappeared, tele remains. Moreno regarded tele as the decisive factor for therapeutic progress (1934, 1953, and 1993).

Moreno described the key and first cornerstone, Spontaneity and Creativity, for the first time in his book *The Words of the Father* (1971), which he first published as *Das Testament des Vaters* (1920). Here within this prose, Moreno wrote fervently of his philosophy of co-creativity and co-responsibility. He expressed these concepts that would inform his future theories of surplus reality, spontaneity, co-responsibility, co-creation, creation as an on-going process, and an encounter of "I and You" as the basis for significant meetings (Moreno, 1971; Marineau,

1989). In “First Principles” for *The Words of the Father*, Moreno (1971) stated that the “highest value of spontaneity and creativity, the top-value of any axiological scale is the Godhead” (p.168). This scale had two opposite poles; on one end was the ideal exponent, which was the totally spontaneous creator. On the other end was the total cultural conserve. To Moreno, God was synonymous with spontaneity. He said that, “In God all spontaneity was creativity” (1934, p. 11). Spontaneity and creativity would be a foundation for all of his work, from psychodrama, to group therapy to the study of sociometry and how people make social choices. Moreno, who was deeply interested in spiritual issues, saw the universe as infinitely creative. He believed that children were endowed with creativity and that creativity and spontaneity could be trained and learned in adults as well.

He also accorded the etymology of the word “spontaneity” from the Latin, *sponte*, which means “of free will.” He valued spontaneity as a highly organized form of behavior not as disorderly conduct or emotional impulsivity (Moreno, 1971). At the other end of the scale, Moreno defined a cultural conserve as the finished product. From his perspective, cultural conserves served two purposes: They provided assistance and reassurance during threatening situations, and they helped to preserve and secure the “continuity of a cultural heritage” (1971).

Cultural conserves were the highest value a culture could produce, whether the value was embodied in the *Bible* or the works of William Shakespeare or Beethoven’s symphonies. Cultural conserves could be seen as good when they inspired a person’s spontaneity and creativity and negative when they held one bound to repetitive or destructive behaviors that stifled or repressed one’s free will or the freedom of others.

Moreno saw spontaneity as the oldest phylogenetic factor, which entered human behavior while in an embryonic stage. There were, according to Moreno, unlimited potentials for training

spontaneity (Moreno, 1985), which he compared to nuclear energy within the body. Moreno later elaborated on this analogy in his theory of child development *Psychodrama Volume 1* (1985). He said that spontaneity was a cerebral function and had a lower level of development than any other fundamental function of the nervous system. He believed that poor adaptability and pathological spontaneity contributed to why people responded so badly when confronted with surprise or the unknown. He noted that most people acted frightened and seemed ill prepared for unexpected events. The normal brain, he said, responded with more confusion when tired, anxious, or over-involved with machines. He felt that, compared to other forms of intelligence and memory, spontaneity was far less developed; however, he believed that “conscious evolution through training of spontaneity would open up a new vista for the development of the human race” (1946, 1985, p. 47).

Moreno himself noted that his work stepped beyond the norms of behavioral research, based on Pavlov’s early work with dogs and rats. His work also went beyond psychoanalytic theories as well, which focused upon the adult neurotic mental syndromes that were explained as regressions toward the oral cravings and anal strivings of the infant. Instead he hypothesized about a third dimension of the infant which was from a top-down perspective of a child embodying the highest achievements of the human species, the potential for true genius of the race. Moreno regarded spontaneity and creativity to be “*primary positive phenomena*” that were not derivatives of libido or an animal drive” (1946, 1985, p.49). At this juncture Moreno agreed with the social psychologists, who noted that how an infant or child interacted with other individual organisms was crucial to their development of a self-concept and a personality. Moreno however was unique in his perception and interpretation of infants as being totally spontaneous in their ability to continuously respond to new situations adequately and

appropriately. He also postulated that this (spontaneity) which he called the “s” factor had to be present at birth in order for the infant to survive the new situations he/she would inevitably encounter (1946, 1985).

Moreno regarded children’s bodies as the physical warm-up space that discharged the spontaneity for children’s interactions. The infant’s breath, movements, and cries thrust their neuromuscular system into an active engagement with their environment which had the potential to invoke higher forms of mental organization and social behaviors. Moreno saw this as evolving throughout a child’s life into adulthood. He recognized that the brain’s plasticity encouraged this evolutionary process of physical engagement with one’s body. Therefore, as the brain developed through neuromuscular activity, social behavioral encounters would also develop with increasing sophistication and intelligence. Moreno believed that most importantly the infant bound its spontaneous energy to the new environment through the physical starters known in psychodramatic parlance as the “warming-up phase” (1946, 1985). As the physical starters invoked the neuromuscular activities, the brain engaged and formed new links in the brain. This process in turn sparked creativity that would eventually become language and gestures that promoted more social behavioral interactions. The reciprocal response from others encouraged the continuous development of the child’s awareness of self and their social milieu.

Moreno (1985, 1993) described spontaneity as the arch catalyst and creativity as the arch substance: spontaneity within human beings ignited their creativity, which inspired them to bring creative acts to life in many unique and individual forms. A person needed both to be fully actualized. Moreno described the theories of spontaneity and creativity in all of his major texts including *Words of the Father* (1971), *The Theatre of Spontaneity* (1947, 1983), *Who Shall Survive* (1934, 1993), *Psychodrama Volume I* (1946, 1985), and nearly every article he wrote.

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Simply defined by him, spontaneity operated in the present and was an unconservable energy that propelled the person toward an adequate and appropriate response to a new situation or a novel response to an old situation. Spontaneity required a sense of timing, imagination, appropriateness and the ability for an organism to adapt in a rapidly changing environment (Moreno, 1946, 1985; Hale, 1985).

Finally, Moreno believed that human beings were infinitely creative and responsible to their own creator. If people behaved in these ways, human beings could ultimately be co-creators in a world of interpersonal relationships that were interdependent upon each other (Moreno, J. L., 1934, 1993; Marineau, 1989). This philosophy underlay his development of psychodrama as a therapy that would allow people to increasingly develop their spontaneity and creativity within themselves to improve their relationships.

The second cornerstone was sociometry, which means “the science of the macroscopic systems of human society, their descriptions and measurement” (Moreno, 1993, p. 21). Moreno presented sociometric theories about the social laws of natural selection, along with his “canon of creativity,” as key constructs in a unified body within his primary text, *Who Shall Survive? A New Approach to the Problem of Human Relations*, in 1934 (1934, 1993). Those theories were (a) the Science of Action, (b) Sociometry, the Science of Society, (c) Role theory, and (d) The theory of interpersonal relations. (Moreno, 1934, 1993; Hale, 1985) Moreno saw God as the supreme creator and the robot as the complete antithesis of the creator, the most conserved form of being.

Each of these theories referred to the first cornerstone of spontaneity and creativity, which stated that spontaneity was the ingredient that provoked the creative process. Spontaneity could not be conserved and had to be used freshly and originally each time (Hale, 1985).

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In *Who Shall Survive?* (1934, 1993), Moreno described his development of the definition of sociometry. Taken from the Greek and the Latin, *socius* means “companion,” and *metrus* means “measure.” He wrote (1993),

Sociometry deals with the mathematical study of psychological properties of populations, the experimental technique of and the results obtained by application of quantitative methods. This is undertaken through methods which inquire into the evolution and organization of groups and the positions of individuals within them. One of its special concerns is to ascertain the quantity and expansion of the psychological currents as they pervade populations. (p. 23)

Sociometry, the measurement of choice, had its inception when Moreno enlisted in the military and was hired as a government medical officer of a resettlement camp. During World War I, from 1914-1917, Moreno worked at a refugee camp in Mittendorf, where his ideas for a sociometrically planned community were born. He studied the psychological currents that developed around the various elements of community life and discovered how to alleviate the factionalism of the camp by giving more freedom of personal choice to the residents (Moreno, 1989). This discovery gave him a practical understanding of what later became his theory of sociometry.

Moreno’s signature two-year research experiment with delinquent girls at a New York training school provided the implementation of these theories to a specific population. The results formed the basis for his book, *Who Shall Survive?* (1934). More details of this study appear later in this chapter.

Sociometry is more recently described by current theorists (Hale, 1985; Garcia & Buchanan, 2000) as the measurement of social choices and the set of tools and interventions that

were designed to measure and facilitate social interactional change. The structure of society is complex, as are the dynamics forming it. An individual first identifies the group to which he or she belongs and then proceeds to explore his or her own personal dynamics within this group through his or her own social atom. The social atom consists of the people in an individual's private and collective world to whom a person feels connected or disconnected at any given time (Moreno, 1985; Hale, 1985; Garcia & Buchanan, 2000). Thus when a person enters into a psychodrama group, he or she brings all of his or her relationships, real and imagined.

Psychodrama seeks to heal those relationships through a therapeutic process called, "social atom repair." Moreno also developed a role diagram that assisted a person in inventorying his or her roles and relationships, which also contributed to the repair of one's relationships in one's social atom (Moreno, 1985, 1993).

Specifically within a psychodrama group, the director or therapist is a sociometrist. The director uses these tools to assist in building a functional group on a foundation of trust and rapport. Sociometry forms the visible and invisible network of connections that are present in any group. A successful group leader would recognize these networks and incorporate interactive exercises that would build greater reciprocity based on an individual's making choices for activities or encounters. Besides Moreno, numerous individuals wrote in depth about the theories of sociometry and the instruments that have been devised for promoting social change. Among these tools were the social atom (Moreno, 1934, 1985, 1993; Hale, 1985), role diagram, (Moreno, 1985; Buchanan, 1984; Hale, 1985), spectogram, (Hale, 1985; Sternberg & Garcia, 2000) the diamond of opposites, (Carlson-Sabelli et al, 1992).

The third cornerstone is role theory. The word "role" originally came from the French, derived from the Latin "*rotula*." In the Greek and Roman theatre tradition, the "speaking" parts

in the play were written on rolls or parchments that held the scripts or lines to be read to an actor by a prompter in case they forgot their words for a particular “part.” The term “role” arrived in the sociological and psychological realm through the drama vocabulary (Moreno, 1985). In Morenian theory, roles were used for four purposes:

- Observe the role process within the context of life itself.
- Study it under experimental conditions.
- Use it as a method of situational and behavioral therapy.
- Examine and train behavior in the “here and now.”

Moreno (1985) saw man/woman as a role player and that role-playing occurred prior to the emergence of the self. He saw role as one of the most significant theoretical concepts to be developed as a bridge between psychiatry and the social sciences. The concept of role, according to Moreno’s theory, cut across the human sciences, physiology, psychology, sociology, and anthropology and brought them together in a new way. Moreno drew directly from William James (1890) when he wrote about how the function of role was to enter the unconscious and bring shape and order to it (Moreno, 1934). Moreno, like James, believed and recognized that the self was multifaceted and was the product of a heterogeneously organized society.

William James taught the first course of physiological psychology at Harvard in 1873. He was the first full professor of psychology in 1889 and wrote *The Principles of Psychology* in 1890. A review of the history of psychology is not complete without including his influence and original philosophical constructs of psychology, particularly in the field of social psychology. The focus of James’ work was the study of psychology as a cognitive science of consciousness. In 1890, James wrote against the current view that humans are creatures of instinct and habit. James argued that instincts are modifiable and transitional through the development of habits that

provide distinct memories of prior experiences. He pointed out the impact of society and biology on human behavior. He saw human experience as a continuous flow rather than a sequence of discrete states, and he presented an analysis of consciousness as a continuous process. He made a further analysis that the self emerged from consciousness that was inclusive of the individual. There was the self as knower (the *I*) and the self as known (the *Me*). He saw the self in four distinct types, the material, the social, the spiritual and the pure ego. James said that a person “has as many social selves as there are individuals who recognize him [sic]... that he has as many different social selves as there are distinct groups of persons about whose opinion he cares” (1890, p. 294). In 1897 James published his first major philosophical work, *The Will to Believe*.

The theory of roles was at play in the social climate of the 1930s among sociologists. American sociologist Mead wrote about “role concept” in a theoretical context in his 1934 posthumous book, *Mind Self and Society*. Mead’s creative synthesis drew upon Darwinian evolution and pragmatism as well as from the psychologist Wundt (1894), who took the concept of gestures through the mind, self, and society and merged it with social interaction. Specifically, Mead saw that humans respond to themselves, reflexively adopting perspectives that let them step outside of themselves and see themselves as objects. They communicate and interact with one another in order to build a solution to problems that they encounter. Actions take time to occur, and people need to build resources with others in order to construct solutions. They do this by anticipating another person’s response and taking on the role or attitude of another. Cooperation based on communication through significant symbols or gestures is essential for human survival. Thus Mead recognized that social interaction was fundamental, and from

interaction, both self and society emerge. The organized social roles with which one interacts become the parts of self.

However, Moreno declared that his own book, *Who Shall Survive?*, which described “roles,” was released 12 months before Mead’s book (Moreno, 1934, 1993). Moreno said that psychodramatists were responsible for the greater body of role experimentation and research. In his usual competitive style, Moreno felt he and the psychodramatic community had best described the theory of role in the sociological community. Unfortunately, this sense of competition and the need to be the frontrunner in all psychiatric and sociological developments plagued Moreno and the psychodramatic community far into the 20th century.

In *Who Shall Survive?* (1934, 1993) Moreno stated:

The tangible aspects of what is known as “ego” are the roles in which it operates. Roles and relationships between roles are the most significant development within any culture. Working with the role as a point of reference appears to be a methodological advantage as compared with “personality” and “ego.” Role emergence is prior to the emergence of the self. Roles do not emerge from the self, but the self may emerge from the roles (p. 47).

He also saw roles as the cluster of behaviors that was culturally recognized and described. For instance, the role of “mother or father” would be enacted in a variety of different forms of behavior dependant upon the culture in which a person lived. Attitudes and emotions also contributed to how one would play a role; thus, each person had a unique way of expressing himself or herself within a cultural context.

In 1946, Moreno once again reflected upon these developments in the social theory. He saw that a new body of theory was being developed to establish “a bridge between psychiatry

and the social sciences; it tried to transcend the limitations of psychoanalysis, behaviorism and sociology” (p. ii). Moreno emphasized that one of the most significant concepts to be defined in this new theoretical body was the psychiatric role concept. Moreno defined role theory as the emergence of the self. “Role playing is prior to the emergence of the self. Roles do not emerge from the self, but the self emerges from the roles” (1946, 1985, p.ii). Moreno drew directly from James and Mead when he wrote that the clustering of the physiological, the psychodramatic, and the social roles operationally formed contact links to the various parts of the integrated self. This is what is called the “me” or the “I”.

Moreno also said that,

... every individual--just as they at all times have a set of friends and a set of enemies, has a range of roles in which s/he sees themselves and faces a range of counter roles in which s/he sees others around them. They are in various stages of development. The tangible aspects of the ego are the roles in which a person operates, with the pattern of role relations around an individual as their focus...Roles and role relationships are the most significant development within any particular culture (1985 p.v-vi).

Moreno re-interpreted Mead when he said that through role reversing, one actor tries to identify with another. It depends upon how intimately familiar individuals are with the other person and on the resultant psychological and ethnic distance. The causes for the variations are the developments of co-unconscious and co-conscious states. Moreno noted that these states were not the property of only one person; they were always common property (1985). At this point in history Moreno, James, and Mead were all in various forms of philosophical agreement; only language and symbol occasionally differed.

Moreno's response to Mead was that he was an excellent theoretician but that he never left the realm of theory. Moreno emphasized that Mead's theories were not what had the major influence upon the role concepts of psychiatry but rather it was psychodrama's role playing techniques that were developed and formulated for over 40 years based on extensive empirical research.

Moreno used role theory and the function of roles to describe the stages of individual personality development. From birth, the non-verbal infant forms an attachment to the mother through psychosomatic roles that preclude the development of psychodramatic and social roles. Similar to Freud, Moreno saw the physiological behavior of psychosomatic roles as preparation for early sexual development. Moreno described the psychodramatic roles, the psychological aspects of self as contributing to mental development, and the social roles developing throughout childhood as part of ego development and one's ability to form and participate in social relationships (1985).

As the self emerges from the roles one plays, Moreno postulated that role evolution follows a particular pattern that one can differentiate. The pattern he described was role-taking, role-playing and role-creating, (Moreno, 1985, 1993; Hale, 1985). He described "role taking" as the taking of a finished product of the role that does not allow any variation. Role playing meant one has acquired some degree of skill in the set of behaviors that accompanies the development of a role. For example, role taking occurs when a person who learns to play the piano first learns how to play the scales. After studying and practicing, he or she may be able to play some simple songs or pieces of music with a growing proficiency, which is role playing. Finally, role creating occurs after more practice, study, and experience: a person would be able to create from the role and improvise his or her own music or variations of others. In a psychodramatic therapeutic

session, a person might lack a particular role such as the role of supervisor in a new job, which would require role training to teach new skills or self-perception. A person may not be ready to move developmentally from role taking to role creating without the middle step of role playing, which could mean acquiring more skill-building or education. In this way psychodrama becomes a rehearsal for life experiences, a warm-up to becoming more spontaneous to encounter others in one's social milieu and learning to behave appropriately and creatively.

According to Moreno, the function of the role was to enter the unconscious from within the social world, such as within a group. From this vantage point, a person would then consciously be able to bring shape, form, and a new understanding of the role. Moreno further saw a person as a role player and that for every role one plays, another person then plays a counter role in the relationship (1985).

Moreno defined his theory of interpersonal relations as based upon a hierarchy of meetings. The "primary dyad" was the meeting of two actors. This is the concrete situational event preliminary to all interpersonal relations. Moreno saw the limitation to individual-based psychologies as missing the presence of the other in the dyad. Moreno then expanded this "meeting" one step further suggesting there was a greater meaning of two or more actors who meet not only face-to-face but were able to live and experience each other in their own right. This meeting involved their strengths, their weaknesses, and their spontaneity and creativity. The meeting is also enhanced by a "two-way" role relationship, *tele*. Moreno also said that "the function of the role is to enter the unconscious from the social world and bring shape and order to it" (1946, 1985, p. v) which could later develop into a dramatic encounter. Furthermore, the meeting included each person's aspirations and role repertoire. The third step was upon the psychosocial organization which he believed was crucial to forming a group or an actual society

of human beings. The fourth step was the emphasis on measurement of interpersonal and intergroup relations. Finally, was the ability of the group members to warm-up to each other, to function and to build a structure that works with group members, encouraging and promoting their spontaneity (1946, 1985).

Drawing upon the concept of the collective unconscious with Mead and other social psychologist contemporaries of the 1930's, Moreno developed a comprehensive theory of the "atom" in social sciences (1934, 1993). This is recognized today as a significant contribution to the theories of social psychology. He described human society as similar to an atomic structure of matter; an atom is defined as any very small thing. Moreno saw that a person is defined by their relationships both socially and culturally. The smallest functional unit for an individual within a social group he named a "social atom." This was comprised of patterns of attraction or repulsions or indifferences between an individual and someone else in their social atom. These relationships could either be one-way or two-way, reciprocated or not reciprocated. A person was born into a social atom (family) and would develop a range of roles and counter-roles with individuals, all with varying levels of developing. The ego developed in response to these varying roles and the relationships with which a person operated. These role relationships comprised a person's cultural atom. Therefore, this social and cultural atom organization could not be separated from the individual who brought this into every group with which they interact. They were all manifestations of the same social reality (1934, 1993).

The fourth cornerstone was the theoretical constructs of psychodramatic methodology or psychodrama intervention constructs. In *Psychodrama, Third Volume, Action Therapy and Principles of Practice* (1975), Moreno and his wife, Zerka Moreno included an essay and lecture that he delivered at the Second International Congress of Psychodrama in Barcelona, Spain on

August 29, 1966, in which they wrote about the four universals of psychotherapy, noting that “the objective of psychodrama from its inception was to construct a therapeutic setting which uses life as a model, to integrate into it all the modalities of living, beginning with the universals – time, space reality, and cosmos, down to all the details and nuances of life and reality practice” (Moreno & Moreno, 1975, p. 11).

Time. Moreno reflected on how in Freudian and psychoanalytic doctrine the emphasis was to look into a patient’s past to understand the cause of their problems. Beginning in 1914, Moreno was a proponent of the “here and now,” the dynamics of living in the moment. He described his emphasis upon the “encounter” and the value of recognizing the therapeutic process as it took place in connection with the patient and the group. Moreno believed that focusing only on what happened in the past would diminish one’s spontaneity for the now. The original problem, he felt, occurred because of a lack of spontaneity and an inability to form a healthy relationship based on mutual positive regard, which he called “*tele*” (1934, 1953, and 1975).

In psychodramatic intervention constructs, a person has the opportunity to revisit the past to correct the scene or experience with a renewed spontaneity and therefore change history. Time is collapsed as the client enters the scene from childhood as both an adult and as the child. The client can view it through the lens of both the past and the present concurrently. This intervention alone can sometimes neutralize the past event. Through other interventions, for example, the adult self could learn to provide safety or comfort for his or her inner child. In this way, by revisiting the past, the person replenishes himself or herself through enacting and repairing the past and, in turn, he or she is invigorated for future experiences. He or she no longer feels depleted energetically by the past event. Similarly a person who has a concern about a future

event, for example, deciding to move to another city, can practice or prepare for this concern in the “here and now” and learn new skills that enable him or her to meet the demands of the future experience. All of psychodrama, past, present, and future is enacted in the here and now.

Space. Moreno felt that space was neglected in all psychotherapies as part of the therapeutic process (1975). He described the typical office setting as having either a couch or chair and the limitations of this environment on the psyche of the patient. The space did not convey the experiences of the patient in his or her “real life” (1975). In psychodrama space is critical to the therapeutic encounter. A client is asked to set up the scene in which the drama or experience will take place. The emphasis is on creating a setting that conveys the truth as well as affording safety for the continued well-being of the client. The director, with the client, determines where the scene will take place, either in the actual setting (recreating the place of the experience) or sometimes creating a more neutral or safe setting. The choice making for the scene and the actual physical creation of the scene allows the client to warm up with more spontaneity to the work of the psychodrama. Often props, scarves, and furniture are used to bring the scene to life, thus eliciting all of the senses and inspiring the unconscious memories to be activated as well. A client may develop a greater imagination in managing the situation simply by physically creating the working space for the action (Garcia & Buchanan, 2000).

Reality. Moreno described three forms of reality: (a) Infra-reality, one’s reduced reality that is subjective and contrived, as in the therapist’s office, (b) Life or actual reality, how one actually lives in one’s own world, which can often be a reality that a person wishes to change, because it is difficult or even threatening, (c) Surplus reality, which incorporates a perspective beyond one’s collective and is a simulation and enlargement of one’s personal reality (Moreno, 1975; Garcia & Buchanan, 2000; Moreno, Blomquist & Rutzel, 2000). Moreno described role

reversal as an important surplus reality technique. When a person reverses roles with another person, he or she gains a new perspective and insight into his or her own view of the world and how another sees him or her. In the therapeutic setting, the client can try out, practice, and even fail without repercussions until he or she learns new approaches to life that will provide greater satisfaction and enhancement (Moreno, 1975; Garcia & Buchanan, 2000).

Cosmos. The fourth universal is the cosmos. Moreno (1975) felt that Freud's emphasis was on the individual person while Marx's philosophy was largely focused on the social person. Moreno, however, addressed the existential concern about one's place in the universe as well. He reviewed how persons have been, since time immemorial, trying to understand the values and morals of the laws of the universe and their implications for birth, sex, and death. Moreno said that "in the psychodramatic world the fact of embodiment is central, axiomatic and universal" (1975, p. 21). Everyone can play his version of God; there is no age, no death, and no sex differentiation in psychodrama. Gods and goddesses, heroes, and heroines all appear on the psychodrama stage (Moreno, 1975; Garcia & Buchanan, 2000). Moreno (1975) passionately declared that everyone can play God on the psychodramatic stage, not just the prophets and leaders, but the epileptic, the schizophrenic, the prostitute, the poor and the rejected, each one fully embodied. God, instead of coming down from the skies, comes in via the stage door. In this way psychodrama helps a person to find and create his or her own meaning in life and to find his or her place in the universe.

These were the cornerstones and the key theories that underlie the practices of psychodrama, group psychotherapy, and sociometry described in the psychodramatic historical literature.

Moreno's life is best divided into three parts, The European Years (1889-1925), The Early American Years (1925-1941) and the Later American Years (1942-1974) (Garcia & Buchanan, 2000).

The European Years (1889-1925). During his European Years, Moreno said, The drama of my life preceded psychodrama as a method. I was the first patient of psychodramatic theory, protagonist and director all in one. With the aid of unwitting auxiliary egos, the people around me, I developed a surplus reality, a new world which the actual culture did not provide...from my experiences and from my successes with them came the vitality and drive to apply such techniques to other people (1989, p. 32).

The Godplayer: From the beginning, Moreno described his life as the story of a young man who tried to become God (Moreno, 1989a). Moreno's musings in his autobiography (1989) suggested a premonition of a mystical sensitivity regarding his own divine purpose and destiny. The story of his birth became one of his finest examples of psychodramatic and poetic truth. He said that he was born on a stormy night crossing the Bosphorus Sea to Rumania on a ship without a flag; thus, he had no birth certificate and instead became a citizen of the world. Moreno further related the story of an old gypsy who observed him as a sickly child, stricken with rickets. The gypsy woman gave his mother a prophecy: "The day will come when he will be a very great man. People from all over the world will come to see him. He will be a wise and a kind man, do not cry now" (1989a p.18). Thus, a young Sephardic Jewish boy was given a promise that would guide him in shaping his life and that will drive him in his ambitions.

He recounted the story of his childhood game played at age four, enacting "God and his angels." He climbed up on a mountain of chairs and declared himself "God." He was asked by one of the other children, "Why don't you fly?" In response, he leaped off and landed on the

floor, breaking his arm. This, he said, was his first experience of the godplayer and the first psychodrama that he directed. He also believed that this structure of his image of heaven inspired his idea for the psychodramatic stage (1989a).

Development of Group Psychotherapy: Moreno (1989) wrote, “I had an *idée fixe* that a single individual had no authority, that he must become the voice of a group” (p. 34).

Moreno credited himself as having first coined the term “group psychotherapy.” He first used the term in an address to the American Psychiatric Association in 1932 (Moreno, 1957; Hare & Hare, 1996). He had his first experience with facilitating a group when he “encountered” a young prostitute in the streets of Vienna who was subsequently arrested before his eyes. After speaking with her, he learned that she and all of her fellow prostitutes were segregated from the rest of society and were considered criminals with neither civil rights nor any social mechanisms for protecting themselves.

In 1913, along with the physician Wilhelm Gruen and a newspaper publisher Carl Colbert, Moreno visited the prostitutes’ homes. Armed with the current ideas from Marx about social justice, he worked to give the prostitutes a sense of respectability. He began meeting with them in a small group where they enacted situations that were problematic. In these sessions the prostitutes not only discussed their legal and medical issues, but they also began to offer each other support and help. As Moreno observed the stages each group would go through, he began to form his ideas about how groups work and how collective role aspects bound groups together and provided focus for group process (Moreno, 1989; Marineau, 1989; Sternberg & Garcia, 2000).

This thought process eventually gave shape and form to his theories of group psychotherapy, one of which was that each member of a group is a therapeutic agent of the other

members. From this experience Moreno later described the four aspects of group therapy: (a) The group is autonomous; (b) There is a group structure, and knowing more about it allows a preliminary group diagnosis; (c) Each group has a unique collective order with patterns of behavior, roles and mores that contribute to the situation independently, which also makes them separate from any other group within the locale; and (d) Within the group there is a tendency toward anonymity, the ego boundaries become weaker and the group as a whole becomes the most important thing (Moreno, 1985; Marineau, 1989).

Moreno's theories of group therapy continued to evolve into more complex work for social change (Moreno, 1985). He described two rebellions. One was of the suppressed group versus the individual. This first step beyond psychoanalysis he called "group psychotherapy." He emphasized the word "therapy" of the group and not sociological or psychological analysis. The second rebellion was by the suppressed "actor" against the use of verbal expression alone in therapy. In response, Moreno created psychodrama, which he regarded as a step beyond psychoanalysis. In his view, group therapy was limited by being only psychoanalytic and verbal. He believed that practicing group therapy only *in situ* was restrictive to the unconscious as it would not be as readily invoked or explored (1985). Rather, Moreno believed that when the group was allowed to move into a natural or synthetic place, the very act of restructuring the experiences that occur in life would bring forth a psychomotor response and a further opening of the unconscious that would allow group members to experience the discussions, the conflicts, and the tensions, just "as if" they were occurring. This restructuring then would allow for a more symbolic and meaningful re-experiencing that would bring forth new information and awareness, as well as a greater depth and breadth. Moreno described this development as psychodrama and action psychotherapy (1985).

The earliest writings on small groups occurred in the late 1800's and early 1900's with Simmel who was concerned with the general principles of groups and group formation, (Simmel, 1955; Wolff, 1950). These preceded Moreno's study and analysis of group processes. Simmel focused on the differences between two person groups (dyads) and persons in isolation as well as how group of three (triads) differed from dyads. His analysis on a general level included how people were affiliated into groups of all sizes and the influence of multiple groups on the individual (1955). He analyzed small groups, large groups, issues concerning divisions in groups, issues of authority and power. These are very similar to what concerns the researchers of small groups today: the behavior and actions of persons in small groups and the impact of groups upon the individual.

Other researchers of groups were Cooley, in the early 1900's, who was interested in the nature of social order. His work was on conceptualizing primary groups and primary relationships which were reflecting the influences of current social changes giving way to secondary relationships and more impersonal role relationships (1909). Thrasher's study of the gangs of Chicago in the early 1920's focused on groups in their natural environments. He examined the status of leadership and the role structure within the gangs (1927).

Moreno's theory development on groups was slightly different from the early social psychologist's study of groups. Moreno's conceptualization and development of groups concentrated on the organization within the group and how to restructure groups in order to create greater cohesiveness and compatibility for co-operative living and working together, as well as instigating social and behavioral change. His theory of sociometry was the foundation for his research experiments.

Group therapy grew as a treatment during WWII to handle the large number of battle stressed veterans. The rise of T-groups (therapy and leadership training groups) was a product of this shift in treatment for groups. T-groups were based upon unstructured groups of managers engaging, off their work site, for up to four weeks in an experiment in honest communication and in the “here and now.” The focus of the group was to examine the behavior of the group members who were all struggling to make sense of this structureless experience within the group. The struggle was exacerbated by the presence of a passive facilitator. The primary learning style was receiving feedback from group members in an atmosphere of openness to change as resistance was broken down. The National Training Laboratory in Bethel, Maine, started by Lewin’s Research Center for Group Dynamics, became the center for research on training groups (Bennis, Benne & Chin, 1961; Highhouse, 2002). This led to a huge increase in group therapy process research (Bion, 1961; Scheflen, 1974; Whitaker & Lieberman, 1967). Much of this research had roots in psychoanalytic training which stemmed from Freud’s discussion of group psychology (Freud, 1959). Moreno applied his method of group therapy with the U.S. army veterans and the Red Cross (1942-1946) at St. Elizabeths hospital in Washington, D. C. (Overholser & Enneis, 1959; Buchanan, 1981; Marineau, 1989) and was invited to work in Britain with veterans as well (personal communication, R.D. Buchanan, July 2004)).

Concurrently, in the late 1940’s and 1950’s there was a surge of work researching small groups in psychology and sociology. Most notably were Whyte’s study of the street corner gang (1955) and Moreno’s research on sociometry (1934, 1951) which began and continues to contribute to the work on social networks. Moreno was further cited in Burke’s chapter on *Interactions in Small Groups* (2003), “A very different approach to the study of leadership was initiated by Moreno (Moreno & Jennings, 1961) in the context of what he called sociometry or

the measurement of social configurations. In his landmark longitudinal study with Helen Halls Jennings, Dr. J.L. Moreno used sociometry at the New York Training School for girls to reorganize an entire community” (p.373). Burke (2003) noted that Moreno’s study and practice of sociometry was formed on the idea that there were positive and negative attractions between members of a group. These connections could be mapped by asking group members to select or reject whom they would choose to engage with in activities such as work, play, or habitat, based on particular criteria. Additional information could be gathered from these criteria in order to understand the patterns of choice and to draw conclusions from these patterns. Often, those most highly chosen (stars) were considered by group members to be leaders; however, understanding why choices were made by group members helped to explain the basis of the patterns. Moreno’s sociometric approach (of naming stars or isolates) found acceptance in therapeutic settings as well as organizational and educational settings (Passareillo & Newnes, 1985).

The *Daimon* and I and Thou: In 1918 Moreno was involved as editor-in-chief of the publication *Daimon*, a monthly journal of existential philosophy based on the Socratic “*daimon*” (Moreno, 1989b). The Greek word *daimon*, according to Rene Marineau, Moreno’s biographer, was that it could mean “both a good or evil spirit; it was also referred to as an individual’s genius. Thus the *daimon* was every individual’s “interior double,” his inspiration and secret advisor (Marineau, 1989, p. 56). In psychodramatic parlance the “double” refers to the inner voice of inspiration and advice. *Daimon* was the creative power of the individual that infused them to transcend the mundane rules while acquiring a greater knowledge to bring about a new world order (Moreno, 1989b; Marineau, 1989). The *Daimon* was developed by an association of poets, philosophers, and sociologists from Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Austria, who were

disturbed by World War I and its consequences. Moreno was one of the six owners, which included Alfred Adler.

Martin Buber, author of *I and Thou* (1970), was one of the contributing writers. Years later, Moreno argued that his own idea “of meeting,” “of encounter” influenced Buber and not that Buber influenced him (Marineau, 1989). Both acknowledged the primacy of the original “encounter.” Moreno said that in the beginning was action and the group, while Buber said in the beginning was the relationship (Buber, 1970). Each stressed the value of experiencing reality as the means for making change, not just talking about it (Marineau, 1989). Moreno, in subsequent years, developed the idea of encounter within the context of psychodrama and group therapy. Moreno reproduced “Invitation to an Encounter” in *Daimon*, and he published three protocols: “The Godhead as Author” (1918), “The Godhead as Preacher” (1919), and “The Godhead as Comedian” (1919). These three texts are good examples of axiomatic protocols: axiomatic protocols being dramatization that is based on explorations of social ethical values with the purpose of bringing out the truth. Moreno also published his critical work, *The Words of the Father* in 1920. All of these works gave him the public audience he had never had before, which gave him the impetus to go forward with his next endeavor. In his autobiography, Moreno stated that his writings were a response to the historical-ideological setting of the Western world pre- and post-World War I, Marxism, and psychoanalysis. He saw that Marxism and Freudianism had one thing in common: they both rejected religion and disavowed the idea of a community based on spontaneous love, unselfishness, positive goodness, and naïve cooperativeness. Moreno (1989a) took a stance for positive religion. He explored these beliefs in *Words of the Father* (Moreno 1920, 1971) and later formed them into his theories for psychodrama and sociometry and group psychotherapy:

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1. Spontaneity and creativity are the propelling forces in human progress beyond and independent of libido and socioeconomic motives.
2. Love and mutual sharing are powerful and indispensable working principles in group life. Therefore, it is imperative that we have faith in our fellow human beings' intentions.
3. That a superdynamic community based upon these principles can be brought to realization through these new techniques (1989a, p. 50).

The Theatre of Spontaneity: Moreno described the first unofficial psychodramatic session as taking place at the Komodienhaus, Das Stegreiftheater (The Theatre of Spontaneity) on April 1, 1921. Vienna was poised at a most unstable moment in history, seething with a postwar revolt without a stable government, restless, and in “search of a soul” (1989b, p. 73). Moreno stood on the stage in front of 1,000 people. His cast was the audience and his play comprised the historical events into which all of them were immersed. It was perhaps a first impromptu theatre, a first sociodrama and a first psychodrama. He tested the audience, challenged its members' spontaneity, and posed a philosophical question, “What is to be the new order of things, how should the country be run?” (Moreno, 1989b; Blatner, 2000). Although this event was a huge failure and most of the audience left, it was the first experiment of what would later be called “sociodrama,” a deep-action method of social reform that works with intergroup relationships, social values, and collective ideologies. The aim was to explore and solve problems that emerged within a group or between groups.

His Theatre of Spontaneity evolved as a potentially therapeutic vehicle for the audience as well as the actors. From 1922 he continued to develop these theories for the *Theatre of Spontaneity*, which he wrote and published in 1924 (Moreno, 1983). In this book Moreno suggests four “revolutionary theatres” that are in interaction and interdependence. They are the

theatre of conflict or the theatre of critique, the theatre of spontaneity or immediate theatre, the theatre therapeutic or reciproque, and finally the theatre of the creator. The theatre of conflict was based on axiodrama in which the audience took the role of God and challenged the cultural mores of the day. The theatre of the immediate was based on spontaneity and what was happening in the here and now. Moreno used a technique called the “living newspaper” in which he would read from the day’s newspaper, and actors would enact the stories as if they were taking place in that moment. This technique would evolve in the United States as impromptu theatre.

The third form of theatre was the therapeutic theatre, in which persons play themselves. The whole of their lives unfolded with all of the complications to gain a perspective, some distance, and a sense of humor. In one case, Moreno invited a husband and wife who were having problems to the stage to re-enact their struggles. This re-enactment was the first psychodrama. The theatre of the creator consisted of everyone creating their lives on stage in a self-actualized, creative process (Moreno, 1983; Marineau, 1989). Once again the seeds of these ideas would lend shape and form to the evolving forms of the theories of psychodrama, sociodrama, and group psychotherapy. Initially, Moreno’s theories were formed separately and were slowly integrated during the evolution of his work. Psychodrama was not a group therapy; group therapy was not psychodrama; and sociodrama was neither group therapy nor psychodrama. Today these theories have become interwoven, often in support of each other therapeutically.

The Early American Years 1925-1941. Moreno found that the climate of Europe was too conservative and dangerous for a rebellious Jewish philosopher. He immigrated to the United States in 1925. In a 1958 article on the “Origins of Group Psychotherapy Movement and J. L.

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Moreno, Its Pioneer and Founder,” Renouvier described three important developmental periods for Moreno. This first one he called Moreno’s *axionormative period*, 1908-1923, when his basic theoretical foundations for psychodrama and sociometry were developed. During his *second sociometric phase* 1937-1942, Moreno published his first professional journal, *Sociometry: A Journal of Interpersonal Relations* (1937). He also began applying his sociometric testing procedures in public schools in New York. The third phase of sociometric development began in 1942 when Moreno organized the American Society for Group Psychotherapy and Psychodrama (ASGPP), the first professional association for group therapists. Most significantly he met Zerka Toeman, who would be his wife, muse, and co-creator in all of his endeavors. From 1942 until his death in 1974, she organized and edited Moreno’s writings and maintained and nurtured all of his professional connections.

Moreno also opened The Sociometric Institute and Theatre of Psychodrama on Park Avenue in New York City, where he held open sessions of psychodrama for the public. Following this phase, group psychotherapy and psychodrama spread internationally (Renouvier, 1956; Blatner, 2000).

Critical historical events in psychodrama in the United States

- 1927-1930: Impromptu theatre was offered at Carnegie Hall in New York City. A demonstration of role-playing took place at Mt. Sinai hospital and the first demonstration of action-therapy techniques at an American institution (Hare & Hare, 1996; Blatner, 2000).
- 1930: Moreno encountered Helen Jennings, a graduate student at Columbia University. Jennings, the driving force in the development of sociometry, who introduced Moreno to

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Professor Gardner Murphy who opened the door for Moreno to meet key social psychologists and sociologists (Hare & Hare, 1996).

- 1931: Moreno consulted at Sing Sing prison as a psychiatrist using group therapy and sociometry (Moreno, 1932; Moreno, 1989; Marineau, 1989).
- 1932: Moreno first used the phrases “group psychotherapy” and “group therapy” in his presentation at the American Psychiatric Association in Philadelphia. William Allanson White, (psychiatrist at St. Elizabeths Hospital, Washington, DC), was the chairperson who later championed Moreno (Marineau, 1989; Blatner 2000).
- 1933: Moreno appointed director of research at the New York Training School for Girls, Hudson, NY. He collaborated with Jennings, a humanistic educator who assisted him in developing the sociometric system. He also introduced role-play at the school (Moreno, 1989b; Marineau, 1989; Hare & Hare, 1996; Blatner, 2000).
- 1934: Moreno published his book, *Who Shall Survive? A New Approach to the Problem of Human Interrelationships*. He also introduced psychodrama to St. Elizabeths Hospital, one of the innovative psychiatric centers of the time. Psychodrama was practiced and applied to the psychiatric patients until 2003. It was also a training center for students of psychodrama until 2001 (Overholser & Enneis, 1959; Buchanan & Enneis 1981; Blatner, 2000).
- Mid-30s: Other pioneers in group therapy were emerging. Schilder (1950) practiced a psychoanalytic approach at Bellevue Hospital in New York, and Slavson (1950, 1966), with the Jewish Board of Governors’ Big Sister Program, began group homes for teenage girls. He became a great rival of Moreno’s after allying himself with the Psychoanalytic Association.

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- 1936: Moreno opened his own sanatorium, Beacon Hill, as a private hospital 60 miles north of New York on the Hudson River. He built an attached psychodrama theatre here for training professionals as well as treating psychotherapy patients with psychodrama (Marineau, 1989b; Hare & Hare, 1996 and Blatner, 2000).
- 1937: Moreno published his first professional journal, *Sociometry: A Journal of Interpersonal Relations* (Moreno, 1937; Marineau, 1989; Hare & Hare, 1996; Blatner, 2000). He also began a publishing operation, Beacon House, to publish his own books and journals. He applied his sociometric testing procedures to Public School 181 in Brooklyn, New York. This period was considered Moreno's *second sociometric phase* (Renouvier, 1956).
- 1941: A second psychodrama theatre was built at St. Elizabeths Hospital in Washington, DC. Moreno wrote an article on mental catharsis (1940) and many articles on psychodrama, sociometry and spontaneity that he published as monographs through his own Beacon House publishing company (Marineau, 1989; Blatner, 2000). Monographs are listed below.

Psychodrama Monographs: These monographs were published by Beacon House in the early 1940s and were Moreno's first American publications. They preceded his books and journals. Unfortunately no dates were specifically recorded (Marineau, 1989).

Psychodrama Monographs

No. 1. *Sociodrama, a method for analysis of social conflicts*, J. L.

Moreno.

No. 2. *Psychodramatic Treatment of Performance Neurosis*, J. L. Moreno.

No. 3. *The theatre for Spontaneity*, J. L. Moreno.

No. 4. *Spontaneity tests and Spontaneity training*, J. L Moreno in collaboration with Helen H. Jennings.

No. 5. *Psychotherapy Shock Therapy*, J. L. Moreno.

Sociometry Monographs

No. 1. *Developments in Social Psychology, 1930-1949*, Leonard S. Cottrell, Jr. and Ruth Galagher.

No. 2. *Sociometry and the Cultural Order*, J. L. Moreno.

No. 3. *Sociometric Statistics of Social Configuration*, J. L. Moreno and Helen H. Jennings.

No. 4. *Foundations of Sociometry*, J.L. Moreno.

No. 5. *Group Method and Group Therapy*, J. L. Moreno.

Sociometry as living research: Of the events listed in the foregoing section on critical historical developments of psychodrama in the United States, three important experiences shaped the further development of Moreno's theories when he arrived in the United States.

1. With the help of Helen H. Jennings and the support of E. Stagg Within, a well-known criminologist and chairman of the National Committee on Prison and Prison Labor, Moreno completed a qualitative and quantitative study of individual relationships with a group of prisoners at Sing Sing prison. Moreno (1932) presented this study to the Annual Meeting of the American Psychiatric Association held in Philadelphia in 1932. This presentation was determined to mark the date when "group psychotherapy" was first used in the history of social sciences and was the first introduction of Moreno's new method of "sociometry." His research was well-received and considered ground-breaking for working with groups as a therapeutic tool (Marineau, 1989).

2. Moreno was then invited to the New York Training School for Girls at Hudson. He was director of research from 1932-1934. Moreno's working relationship with Jennings gathered strength as they put into practice the principles of spontaneity in interpersonal relationships. They designed tests to study relationships and improve living arrangements for the delinquent girls. This process was the most complete sociometric experiment of a community that Moreno had ever conducted. He assessed that the best criterion for measuring the adjustment of the girls was by the number of girls who ran away. He achieved a remarkable success rate, with a very low number of runaways following his sociometric reconstruction (Moreno & Jennings, 1938). Moreno also started to use role-play, psychodrama, and group therapy to change the girls' attitudes and behavior. He found that his techniques improved not only the community life, but also the internal emotional health and well-being of the girls. Moreno's book, *Who Shall Survive?* summed up both his philosophies as well as the research results of this sociometric experiment (Moreno 1934, 1993; Marineau, 1989).
3. The third most significant event that shaped Moreno's life and career during this period was the acquisition of a small psychiatric hospital that Moreno would make into both a training school and a sanatorium for patients. At Beacon Hill Sanatorium, Moreno built his first psychodrama theatre. The sanatorium would also become a therapeutic community that supported Moreno's beliefs and philosophy and would be a testing ground for his theories (Marineau, 1989).

The Later American Years (1942-1974)

- 1942-1945: Group therapy was used in military and veteran hospitals. Army personnel and members of the Red Cross were treated at St. Elizabeths hospital in groups that used psychodramatic practices. Because of the success of its practices, and because so many war victims needed treatment, psychodrama was implemented in hospitals and universities around the United States (Overholser & Enneis, 1959; Buchanan & Enneis, 1981; Marineau, 1989). Moreno was also invited to conduct psychodrama lectures and demonstrations at Harvard University (Moreno, Moreno, & Moreno, 1964).
- 1942: Moreno organized the first professional association for group therapists, The Society for Group Psychotherapy and Psychodrama (Marineau, 1989). He opened the Sociometric Institute and Theatre for Psychodrama on Park Avenue, New York (Marineau, 1989; Blatner, 2000). Here he offered open sessions, attracting many professionals from other professions, including, Fritz Perls, S. H. Foulkes, Margaret Mead, and Eric Berne (Marineau, 1989). This was the *third phase of sociometric development* (Renouvier, 1956). From this point on, Moreno's work spread to an international arena.
- 1945: Moreno began the second journal publication: *Sociatry: A Journal of Group and Intergroup Therapy*, which became the official organ of the American Society for Group Psychotherapy and Psychodrama. Later it was renamed *Group Psychotherapy*. He also published *Psychodrama Volume 1* (Moreno & Toeman, 1945; Marineau, 1989; Hare & Hare, 1996; Blatner, 2000).
- 1946: The method of the "T-Group" (an ongoing reflective group dynamic) was developed by Ronald Lippitt and Leland Bradford (Lippitt, Bradford, & Benne, 1947),

who were familiar with Moreno's methods. T-groups were modified and later became known as sensitivity training, which later fused with the emerging field of humanistic psychology to become the encounter group (Blatner, 2000). Moreno was invited to London in 1950 to share ideas with the staff of the Tavistock clinic (Marineau, 1989).

It is worth noting that until the 1950s, mainstream psychoanalysis did not accept the innovations of group psychotherapy (Blatner 2000). Meanwhile, Moreno encouraged the use of all kinds of creative arts for treatment. He published one of Chace's (1945) first articles on dance therapy in his journal, *Sociometry*. He continued to emphasize the interactional approach of psychodrama, and he helped to organize many national conferences that showcased new approaches and encouraged the exchange of new ideas, including Satir's family therapy, M. Jones' therapeutic community, and Vassilou's art-therapy techniques for group psychotherapy (Blatner, 2000). Today psychodrama trainers are encouraged to include related fields in their training modules.

Unfortunately, there was also a great animosity between Moreno and Slavson (1940), who was identified with the psychoanalytic group therapy movement, as to who originated group psychotherapy. This conflict negatively influenced the development of the field of group psychotherapy and restricted the collaboration between group psychotherapists and psychodramatists in the USA and internationally. Moreno founded the first International Association of Group Psychotherapy in Paris, which organized the first International Congress of Group Psychotherapy in Toronto in 1954. The members made a great effort at that time to be inclusive in spite of the differences expressed by the two opponents and the two traditions (Marineau, 1989). This conflict between the verbal analytic community and the dramatization

and creative expressive movement was a reflection of the conflicts in the professional culture at large.

Moreno inspired many innovators in the field of group psychotherapy who acknowledged him in their works. Included among those are Schultz (1971), Berne (1970), and Maslow (1968). Schultz, a leader in the encounter movement wrote, “Virtually all of the methods that I had proudly compiled or invented [Moreno] had more or less anticipated in some cases forty years earlier... (1970, p. 108). All of these people attended open sessions of psychodrama held by Moreno in New York. Hare and Hare (1996) also note that “many of Moreno’s ideas and techniques found their way into the human potential movement and various action therapies including Fritz Perls, founder of Gestalt therapy who used the ‘empty chair’ as one of his principle techniques” (p. 110).

In reviewing Moreno’s professional history, he was first a psychiatrist and a medical doctor, second a social psychologist, and third a psychodramatist. Had he been more socially engaging with the social psychologists of the 1930’s and 1940’s he might have been able to join with them and share his developing ideas, and perhaps together they could have forged a path that was inclusive of more of each other’s theoretical concepts. Moreno, however, chose to seek differentiation and clarity through challenging the social psychologist’s theories and hypotheses. As noted in the literature, there are some references to Moreno by the social psychologists. He did indeed contribute to the journal *Sociometry* for ten years until he formed his own journal. Mead, Dewey, Lewin, and many others shared with Moreno a common vision and would have benefited from collaborating with each other’s ideas. They may have achieved much more by jointly researching group dynamics and engaging in social action research toward solving social problems. They shared a common language and a common vision for improving relationships

and building healthier working communities. The potential for this collaboration still exists today.

Moreno worked diligently to encourage the growth of both psychodrama and group psychotherapy throughout the 1960s. He died in 1974, leaving as his epitaph, “The man who brought joy and laughter back into psychiatry” (Blatner, 2000, p. 23).

Following Moreno’s death, the American Board of Examiners of Psychodrama Sociometry and Group Psychotherapy was established in 1975 as an ethical examining body to test and certify the various levels of practitioners, including CP, (certified psychodramatist) and TEP (trainer, educator, practitioner).

The history of psychodrama, Moreno’s “art work,” cannot be separated from the life of Moreno until his death. Since then, the development of psychodrama has been significantly influenced and developed by many respected members and contributors to the psychodramatic community in the United States and abroad (Williams, 1989; Holmes & Karp, 1991; Kellerman, 1991, 1992). Many new ideas and additions to role theory, sociometry, group therapy, often combining the approach with their own theory of social interactions, have been set forth by researchers and practitioners (Blatner, 1973; Yablonsky, 1976; Leveton, 1977; Starr, 1977; Hale, 1985; Kipper, 1986; Blatner & Blatner 1988; Sternberg & Garcia, 1989). The lists of contributors to psychodrama would fill volumes; this discussion is limited to those persons who have shaped some of the new theories of psychodrama that are practiced today. In the section about current literature are included those who have most recently contributed to the focus of psychodrama that support this research. It is important to note Moreno’s “Invitation to an Encounter” has left a legacy that travels today through national and international psychodrama conferences and the international group psychotherapy conferences. An ongoing dialogue among

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professionals in psychodrama and group psychotherapy is actively unfolding today. Zerka Toeman Moreno still teaches, trains, and writes about psychodrama. She remains the Mother of Psychodrama (1941, 1959, 1965, 1978, 1983, 1987, 1990 and 2000).

New leaders and teachers have emerged in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. It does not include those leaders in the 21st century who are writing and adding to the depth of practice and theoretical development of Psychodrama. The new leaders and teachers included, based on their significant contributions, are these:

- Dale Richard Buchanan, who continued the training program at St. Elizabeths after the death of James Enneis and continues to serve as the executive director of Board of Examiners now for over 20 years. Buchanan wrote a frequently cited article, “The Central Concern Model,” for group therapy (Buchanan, 1980). He has written numerous articles on psychodrama (Buchanan, 1984, 1995 and 2000).
- Jonathan Fox, who created playback theatre and these important texts: *The Essential Moreno: Writings on Psychodrama, Group Method & Spontaneity* (1987); and *Acts of Service; Spontaneity, Commitment, Tradition in the Non-Scripted Theatre*, (1994).
- Antonina Garcia and Patricia Sternberg who further developed the theories of sociodrama and wrote the book *Sociodrama: Who’s in Your Shoes?* (2000).
- Ann Hale who wrote the seminal book on sociometry, *Conducting Clinical Sociometric Explorations, a Manual for Psychodramatists and Sociometrists* (1985), compiling, articulating and expanding Moreno’s theories.
- Carl Hollander, who created and described the “Hollander Curve Model” (1978). This model further refined Moreno’s’ description of the psychodramatic therapeutic process.

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- Kate Hudgins who created and wrote the *Experiential Treatment for PTSD: Therapeutic Spiral Model* (2002) using psychodrama and object-relations therapy specifically refined for traumatized and abused individuals.
- Marcia Karp is a leading trainer in England who wrote *Psychodrama: Inspiration and Technique* (Holmes & Karp, 1991).
- David Kipper, a major force in promoting research and networking with the international community, was an editor of the *Journal of Group Psychotherapy, Psychodrama and Sociometry* (1997-2004) for many years. He wrote *Psychotherapy through Clinical Role-Playing* in 1986.

This literature review is limited and does not include some of the leading lights in the International community who continue to write and expand on the theories of Psychodrama.

In closing, it has been the author's privilege to work and meet with many of the innovators in current Psychodrama practice and teachings. She encourages all psychodrama trainees to meet and read about those new emerging trainers and innovators and to further the development of psychodrama in the 21st century.

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