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## SOCIOMETRY SECTION

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### Editorial MANY SOCIOMETRIES

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The phenomena of the 70's in the area of Morenian and Morenian-influenced therapy has been the development of many different types of applications of sociometric processes—"many sociometries".

At the end of the last decade (or perhaps shortly before) the world of sociometry was neatly divided into two areas: 1. Coastal/psychology/very informal/clinical oriented and 2. Interior/sociology, rural sociology or social psychology/academic/research oriented.

Most practitioners apparently accepted the conveniences of this arrangement. Partially as a result of this apathy, the pace of the development of sociometry moderated. Sociometry entered a dark age. For a few years some Morenians would have felt strange about including sociometry presentations at the ASGPP conventions. Ultimately, the *International Journal of Sociometry* was reduced to the *International Handbook of Sociometry*. The Handbook quietly became a special sociometry section of the journal you are now reading. The interests, economics, and directions of Moreno's followers were not such as to continue the support of this publishing activity. Sociometry was kept alive by a handful of caretakers working independently, often in isolation, and by graduate students working on masters' and doctors' theses.

A big opportunity for the revival of sociometry came with the First International Congress of Sociometry in Baden, Austria in 1968. There, the pioneers and the second generation sociometrists excitedly mingled—freely and spontaneously—perhaps for the first and last time.

Sociometrists such as Mary Northway, John McKinney, Kurt Back, J. L. and Zerka Moreno, Charles Loomis, Jim Enneis, Joe Hart, Ellen Siroka, Anne Ancelin-Schutzenger, Bob Siroka, and many others including the students of Merl Bonney, Leslie Zeleny, and Mary Evans were there. These sociometrists were joined by a large number of outstanding sociometrists from the Balkan countries. Instead of ushering in a new era of development in sociometry, the Congress seemed to mark the end of an age.

The creative expression we call sociometry had been dammed up for too long. Already new channels were being cut by the research and clinical application activities of people "outside" the sociometry fraternity—people who did not identify themselves as sociometrists. Many of these individuals were relatively unaware of Moreno or his contributions. Many of these individuals "learned"—"were exposed to"—sociometry from third, fourth, or fifth-hand sources. They worked in diverse fields such as anthropology, communications, parapsychology, economics, business administration, humanistic psychology, nursing, public school administration, organizational development (OD), and psychiatry. Moreno's prophecy of a governmental department of sociometry has come true. In response to this widespread, diversified interest in sociometry-like phenomena, the U. S. government, through the National Institute of Education, set up a network division (in fact the first sociometry department in a U. S. government agency, but ironically no one inside or outside of government has recognized it as such). Despite these scholars' lack of "grounding" in the traditional literature of sociometry, their achievements were astounding. *The dynamic power of sociometry could not be denied or weakened.*

Today, these diverse groups not only work without contact with the traditionalists, they often are unaware of the existence and activities of each other. To some degree, this is attributable to the fact that each group developed its own vocabulary. Today, several words used as substitutes for the term "sociometry" are: Social networking, Support systems networks, Interpersonal communications, Team development, Social acceptability studies, Linkages, Identification of nexus individuals, Relationship therapy, Contacts/contacting.

In response to, interaction with, and in interface with, these developments more traditional sociometrists have begun to make sharper distinctions between different content areas—approaches in our field, and develop newer, more dynamic, more time economical, and more relevant sociometries. At this time, this editor feels the following sociometries exist.

1. *Stage sociometry.* Use of sociometry as (a) a warm-up for or (b)

drama facilitation within or (c) closure technique after a psychodrama session. Common techniques are social atom work, role diagrams, and public choosing activities (construction of group sociograms without meeting criteria of privacy/confidentiality—done appropriately in the context of a clinical group exploration). Unfortunately, many psychodramatists do not proceed very far beyond this area in their study and efforts to develop as a professional practitioner. They become sociometry drop-outs upon graduation from kindergarten.

2. *Institutional sociometry.* This academic area has given us 90% of our empirical research in sociometry. Basic values of the practitioners using this approach are (a) the data gathered via the use of the sociometric questionnaire will always be used for the benefit of group members—usually through a group restructuralization process, (b) confidentiality of sociometric responses, and (c) a view of sociometry as a future-oriented research method. Institutional sociometry is used in education, business, sports, the military, advertising, economics, family research, social work, youth programs, population studies, and in prisons.

3. *Perceptual sociometry.* Emphasis is on studying group members' ability to predict the reactions (choices) they will receive from others in the group. Perceptual sociometry has had a strong influence on the more mathematical sociometry of the sociologists from 1956–1978 (the years of their publication of the journal, *Sociometry*). This is, perhaps, the least developed area of sociometry. Little was done after a few pioneer studies were completed by Katz et. al. The work and research of Warren Bonney (brother of Merle Bonney) shows promise and should be followed closely. He is interested in developing ways of studying "deep level" reasons for sociometric choice declarations.

4. *Community sociometry.* From Moreno's and Jennings' early studies to F.D.R.'s resettlement projects (see studies conducted by C. Loomis, et. al.) to Clare Danielson's Intimate Communities, to my own and Alan Wickersty's explorations with the use of sociometry to predict elections, to my staff's and students' use of sociometry to develop "real neighborhoods" in a 16,000 population model city neighborhood in the Texarkana, U.S.A. project 1969–1973, *community sociometry* has been an enduring and productive "special" area of sociometric investigation. As an aside, the reader might be interested in knowing that Johnny Cash was raised in a sociometrically formed community. Watch for a forthcoming article on Johnny Cash by this author and Hannah Weiner.

5. *Clinical sociometry.* The emphasis of clinical sociometry is on (a) the "why" of choices and, (b) the effect of choices. Past and current activities in this area have centered around the study of: psychotic

behavior, sexual impotency, family system analysis, alcoholism and drug abuse, criminal populations, interpersonal conflict, fear of success, accident proneness, heartbreak, death, loneliness, child abuse, cancer victims.

6. *Pop sociometry*. Popularized studies of loneliness, jealousy, isolation, fear of rejection, making contact (with opposite sex), sex and personal appeal, risk taking, and the development of support system networks, are examples of pop sociometry. In most issues of *Playboy*, *Penthouse*, *Woman Today*, *Saturday Review*, or the Sunday supplement of the local newspaper at least one article classifiable as pop sociometry can be found. These popularized articles have replaced the "test your personality" articles of past decades.

7. *Action Sociometry*. This specialization, which I demonstrated at the International Group Psychotherapy Congress in 1977, uses sociometric research results as the empirical base for developing relevant, scientifically grounded therapeutic training, and workshop procedures (called exercises). These may be used as psychodrama warm-ups, encounter group activities, teaching devices, or as basic therapeutic processes. One of the major philosophical contributions of action sociometry is that the mere act of allowing/asking subjects to make sociometric choices has great motivational and therapeutic value. See Hart and Nath article, this issue, and article by Jane Nance and Al Wright (GP, 1977).

8. *Cosmic sociometry*. Sociometry is seen as a research model that can be used to help researchers in various parapsychology areas design better ways of studying psychic phenomena. During the Summer of 1977, this author and a number of IBM executives/researchers interested in the interface of electronics research and parapsychology investigations met weekly to explore possible uses of the sociometric research model as an aid in their investigations. Outcomes of these interactions have been the development of action sociometric techniques for:

(a) working with groups of terminally ill cancer patients to create a cosmic social network (social atom work for the "hereafter");

(b) development of the F-group (futures-group) technique to foretell the future (for a description of this process, see *Saturday Review*, June 9, 1979, pp. 6-7);

(c) development of the concept of "Futurism as Therapy" (presentation made at the National AHP meeting, Princeton, N.J., August, 1979).

9. *Somatic sociometry*. (Who is the matter with me?). This approach is based on the assumptions that:

(a) all phenomena, ideas, feelings, thoughts, actions etc. have a sociometric referent;

(b) that aches, pains, and psychosomatic illnesses are manifestations of dysfunctional and/or inappropriate interpersonal relationships;

(c) that the body is a sociogram and the sociobodygram (SBG) is a process for somatic sociometric measurement; and,

(d) that social grounding (developing an awareness of our sociometric reference points) is facilitative of all medical and/or psychological treatment activities.

10. *Social networking.* This is the broadest of the newer areas of sociometry (or of research areas drawing upon, and interfacing with, sociometry). Because of the diversity and vitality of this area of investigation, we invited Barbara Mueller, an outstanding specialist in social networking to be a guest editor for this issue of GPPS for the purpose of gathering together a set of representative articles in this area—or at least in one portion of this area. Hope you, our readers, enjoy this special section on social networking.

If those of us who have worked to keep sociometry alive, and have made our own modest contributions to its development wish to keep our area of interest growing we must (1) become aware of the explosion of interest in sociometry under many other names (2) become conversant with and skillful in using the “many sociometries” springing up around us and (3) by remaining sociometrically expansive invite other leaders/researchers/practitioners into our social atom. We have a choice. We can be sociometrically expansive and retain (or regain?) our leadership or we can be exclusive-rejective of these “upstarts” and sit in the bleachers in the #1 box reserved for “Moreno disciplines”, “ASGPP”, etc. and watch the game be played by those who “study networks”, “treat relationships”, and teach others to “improve their interpersonal relationships.” At the beginning of this, the new decade, it is within our power to determine what our response will be. What is the answer? *In what manner will we, the sociometric traditionalists, survive?*