



# American Board of Examiners in Psychodrama, Sociometry and Group Psychotherapy

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## A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN BOARD OF EXAMINERS IN PSYCHODRAMA, SOCIOMETRY AND GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPY

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With the impending death of J. L. Moreno, M.D., the issue of certification for psychodramatists resurfaced. A Board of Examiners had originally been created in the early 1960's but it disbanded because of conflicts. In April 1974, the American Society of Group Psychotherapy and Psychodrama (ASGPP) led by its President and Executive Council appointed a five-member committee: Bob Siroka, Jim Enneis, Jim Sacks, Don Clarkson and Dale Richard Buchanan to create an independent Board of Examiners. The Committee prepared the working documents and articles of incorporation that led to the incorporation of the Board in January of 1975.

Once established the Board appointed six Directors: Don Clarkson, Marjorie Creelman, Dean Elefthery, Jim Enneis, Zerka Moreno and Bob Siroka. The Board's first task was to create Trainer, Educator and Practitioner (TEP) standards and to grandparent individuals on the basis of those standards. The first grandparenting process for TEP certification was open from April of 1975 until August 30, 1977. Seventy-nine individuals were grandparented as TEPs. The first directory was published in 1978.

In 1978 Martin Haskell and Jim Sacks became the first elected Board Directors with three year terms of office. Thereafter elections were held each year. Over time the Board was expanded from six to nine Directors and the requirement that all Board Directors be TEPs was changed to six TEP Directors and three CP Directors.

Grandparenting for TEPs was reopened in April of 1979 and continued until April 1980. Simultaneously practitioner certification standards were developed and grandparenting for practitioner certification began in April 1979 and closed in April 1980.

The grandparenting process for TEPs and CPs closed in 1980. In the third Directory of Certified Psychodramatists, published in 1981, 130 certified practitioners and 96 certified trainers, educators and practitioners were included.

The first written and on-site examinations for TEP and CP certification were conducted in October 1981; those who passed were listed in the 1983 Directory of Certified Psychodramatists. Since then examinations occur yearly, and an annual Directory of Certified Psychodramatists is published each summer.

Over time the annual Directory of Certified Psychodramatists was expanded to include the certification standards, the process of obtaining certification, and guidelines for requesting certification application materials and for submitting application materials.

In 1991 the membership approved changes in the trainer, educator and practitioner certification standards to establish a Practitioner Applicant for Trainer (PAT) registration category as a midway process between the practitioner and the trainer, educator and practitioner certification levels. The new PAT category allows those individuals who are enrolled in the PAT process to offer training credits to students working towards practitioner certification and requires those PATs to obtain minimum levels of education, training workshops offered and consultations received. The old standard did not allow practitioners to credit training hours to students. The requirement for certification was simply, "Three years of progressively responsible supervised training and education, and experience in psychodrama, sociometry and group psychotherapy after receiving practitioner certification."

In 2004 the practitioner certification standards were changed to allow for a minimum of 580 hours of training from individuals certified as trainers, educators and practitioners rather than the original requirement of a minimum of 780 hours of training.

To change the certification standards, the Board of Directors must initiate a request for change process as follows. The Board of Directors must approve the recommended change. The membership must then be surveyed regarding the proposed change. Finally the proposed change must be put to a vote of the membership. The certification standards can be changed only if a majority of the membership approves.

In 2007 the Board established a website that included an on-line directory of certified psychodramatists, a workshop calendar, a search engine for finding certified psychodramatists who offer specific services (therapy, training, consultation, etc.), the certification standards, application forms and other materials. In the summer of 2007 the Directory of Certified Psychodramatists distribution was restricted to members only. This change was made to offset costs of the website.

Since the first elections nine persons have completed at least three 3-year terms of office as a Board Director: Alton Barbour, Dena Baumgartner, Jeanne Burger, Elaine Camerota, Nina Garcia, Kate Hudgins, John Raven Mosher, Sandra Wood, and Elizabeth White. Alton Barbour served a total of thirteen years. The Executive Directors and their terms of service are as follows: Steve Wilson, 1975 to 1980; Robert Werlin, 1980 to 1984; Mary Watson-Stribula, 1984 to 1985; and Dale Richard Buchanan from 1985 to the present.

## BOARD LISTINGS BY YEAR

	CP	TEP	ALL
1978		79	79
1980		92	92
1981-82	130	96	227
1983	119	100	219
1984	129	105	234
1985	137	105	242
1986	157	109	266
1987	158	108	266
1988	174	107	281
1989	177	112	289
1990	176	114	290
1991	190	121	311
1992	196	129	325
1993	206	134	340
1994	211	137	348
1995	215	142	357
1996	216	143	359
1997	219	148	367
1998	215	156	371
1999	198	156	355
2000	198	161	359
2001	199	167	366
2002	206	175	381
2003	199	180	379
2004	199	181	380
2005	203	181	384
2006	214	185	399
2007	211	192	403
2008	222	186	408