Essay Review

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Foundations of Dance/Movement Therapy:

This book is a wonderful overview of both the work & the life of Marian Chace. The introduction can stand alone as a useful guide for the student who would know more about Chace and about dance therapy. The editors have organized the previously published materials written by and about Marian Chace in an effective sequence; an introductory and concluding section provide a kind of frame for this re-issue of her collected writings and for a section of articles by dance therapists (and one drama therapist) who have been strongly influenced by her. Familiar and newly written biographical material is placed at the beginning and newly published reminiscences at the end, giving a multi-dimensional view of this unusual "artist" therapist. This is important because the dynamics of her personality colored her work as a dance therapist and as a pioneering teacher.

To this reviewer the contents of this book do justify its title, which identifies Chace's life and work as a major component of the development of dance/movement therapy as a profession. The "book" itself, in hard cover, is beautifully and professionally bound and the photographs of Marian as a young dancer, as an elderly mover, connector in the hospital, and as an excited recipient of an award, all enhance the reader's percep-
tions of this amazing woman. She was not the only important pioneer of
dance therapy, but I believe it's safe to say that her influence was key to
the successful beginnings and development of dance therapy as a recog-
nized and validated form of psychotherapy.

In this book Sandel, Chaiklin and Lohn each contribute valuable in-
sights into Chace's work, in addition to their thoughtful work as editors.
Their contributions and those of the other authors reveal the tremendous
advances that have been made in understanding Chace's legacy and
reconciling her teachings with the discoveries and principles of leaders in
psychoanalytic theory, such as Mahler, Winnicott and Kohut. They shed
light, as well, on the theorists who influenced Chace, such as Sullivan
and Fromme-Reichmann. However, the most critical task, which I feel
they have solved so successfully, is to provide, through descriptions and
analyses, a well rounded picture of this complex person's character and
accomplishment.

The first section of the book, with its information about Chace's child-
hood, her performance experience with Denis-Shawn, and the ideas she
developed as a teacher, reveals the integrity of her developmental process
toward using dance for therapy. She knew in 1942 that she wanted to
work with patients in groups, even before the administrators at St.
Elizabeth's Hospital discovered that group work would be absolutely
necessary for the large number of disturbed veterans of World War II who
needed psychiatric treatment. As Sarah Shelley writes, "Marian Chace
brought to St. Elizabeth's the opportunity to develop relationships
through the use of rhythmic action and personal movement expression."
(p27) Her contributions were quickly recognized and incorporated into
hospital programming by staff and administration who were interested
in utilizing the arts in treatment.

Chace progressed from volunteering in the Red Cross program, to part
time employment by the hospital to a full time professional position as a
dance therapist in 1947. Her basic principles were well developed by the
1950's, before the advent of behavior-modifying medications. She had also
joined the staff of a private mental hospital, Chestnut Lodge, in 1946
where former psychiatric administrator Dr. Jarl Dyrud became ac-
quainted with her and her work. He became and has remained one of the
most articulate spokespersons and advocates for dance therapy in the
field of psychiatric medicine. "To Dyrud, dance therapy was a way of
reorganizing the developmental sequence of individual behavior and
emotional expression . . . (and) provided a direct route to patterns of inter-
action and responses normally established during infancy." (p.37) Dyrud's
description of Chace is quoted in the introduction, "She and her technique
were one, carefully focused and relevant to the point of seeming inadver-
tent." (pxiii) Many of the ways in which Chace developed her work and
established its validity and importance are described in this introductory
section.