

In Memoriam: Dianne Dulicai, 1937–2017

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Professor Dianne Dulicai, née Beverly Dianne Looney, died peacefully at her home in Fairfax Station, VA, on March 27, 2017, after a long and courageous struggle with pulmonary disease. She was 80. Born in Dallas, Texas, Dianne danced professionally in New York City before establishing a dance school in Houston. She earned a B.A. in 1974 and an M.A. in 1976 from Goddard College, then received her Ph.D. from Union Institute in 1995. Professor Dulicai was the first director of the Dance/Movement Therapy Program at Hahnemann Medical College and

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Hospital in Philadelphia (the program now part of Drexel University). She later replicated that program at the Laban Centre/Goldsmiths College, University of London. Professor Dulicai is survived by her loving husband of 50 years, Jim Dulicai, of Fairfax Station; son, Charles, of Sanford, FL; daughter, Kimberly, of Alexandria, VA; numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren; and brother, Mike Looney, of Overland Park, KS. Besides her family, her great loves included soccer, from her grandsons to FC Barcelona, her garden, and Argentine tango, at which she was—typically—full of grace and passion. Funeral services are private. A memorial service will follow. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to: Dianne Dulicai Memorial Fund at Drexel University, College of Nursing and Health Professions giving.drexel.edu/ways/online/.

Reflections

In 2004, I had the honor of introducing Dr. Dianne Dulicai at the annual Marian Chace Foundation Lecture titled *In Honor of the Spirit of Continuity*. Her lecture reflected her lifelong passion for learning. What a privilege it was and what a privilege again to honor her memory and reflect on her life, her work and legacy. Once more, I am struck with what a special person she was and breadth and depth of her many accomplishments. In her myriad roles as clinician, educator, administrator, mentor, political advocate, movement analyst, writer and researcher, she was an extraordinary dance/movement therapist, who greatly expanded our dance. It was my good fortune to have known her for almost 40 years as my boss, mentor, colleague and dear friend. Along with the sadness, this is also a time to celebrate her life and achievements and major contributions to the field of DMT.

Dianne's journey to becoming a dance/movement therapist began in Texas. A real "yellow rose of Texas" girl, her diverse ethnic and racial family background, including English and full blood Cherokee heritage and her personal experiences in the social climate of the Texas of her youth, gave her awareness, appreciation and respect for cultural, ethnic and racial differences. This greatly influenced her later commitment and active involvement in the civil rights movement of the 60s and carried over into her concern and sensitivity to social and political issues throughout her life.

Dianne was a lifelong dancer, beginning when she was 3 years old. Her great love of dance grew out of her considerable athleticism and became a positive force in managing the difficulties of adolescence. By the late 1950s she took master classes with Louis Dapron, traveled to New York for 18 months to study Graham technique, ballet, musical comedy and even danced on the Perry Como show. She returned to Texas, continuing to dance and choreograph state musicals. The love of dance in her own life continued through the years, sharing an intense passion for Tango with her husband Jim.

It was also during the late 50s that she studied psychology at Texas University and University of Houston, where she became enthralled with human development and interaction as well as with culture and anthropology. These disciplines shaped

some her future clinical and research interests. The intertwining of dance and psychology that was to direct her life was beginning to come together.

Her first steps into the realm of dance/movement therapy were with deaf children at the Pilot Institute of Dallas. She noted their ability to relate through rhythm. Through this work came the invitation to meet Marian Chace and take courses at Turtle Bay. It was the early 60s, jobs were not available and Dianne returned to Texas. It was there, in 1966, that she met and married Jim Dulicai. In 1967, Dianne and Jim moved to New York when Jim was hired by the Wall Street Journal.



In New York, Dianne began studying with Irmgard Bartenieff at the Dance Notation Bureau and developing her great acumen for and love of movement observation and analysis. At the DNB she met Elissa White, a dance/movement therapist at Bronx State Hospital. Dianne took the Turtle Bay workshop with Elissa

and Clarie Schmais, interned at the hospital and was later hired by Elissa. She fondly acknowledged all that she learned from them as her first group instructors. At Bronx State, Dianne also worked with Chief Psychiatrist, Dr. Israel Zwerling. She earned a BA in Dance Therapy from Goddard College in 1994 following an MA in Nonverbal Communications in 1976, also from Goddard College.



Dr. Zwerling moved to Philadelphia to head the Department of Psychiatry/Mental Health Sciences at Hahnemann Hospital. Recognizing Dianne's special gifts and he asked her to direct the dance/movement therapy section of the Creative Arts Therapy Program, which was in the process of development. Dianne creatively set the foundation for a rigorous academic and clinical program including research. From 1974 to 1989 she nurtured and expanded the Hahnemann program, now part of the Department of Creative Arts Therapies in the College of Nursing and Health Professions at Drexel University. She retired in 1989 leaving the program in the deft and gifted hands of Sherry Goodill, who continued to help it flourish.

In 1984, Dr. Marion North asked Dianne to duplicate Hahnemann's graduate DMT program at the Laban Institute, Goldsmith College in London. Integrating an American graduate program within the British system was no small feat but Dianne did accomplish this. Out of this also grew Dianne and Marion's long and dynamic collaboration.

Dianne was the consummate educator. She was uniquely generous and flexible, teaching so many individuals, both in the United States and abroad, whether at Hahnemann/Drexel, the Laban Centre in London, in a single course or workshop or all of those that reached out to her over the years for clinical supervision or help with a research project. Students were always awed and inspired by the clarity, knowledge and expertise she brought and weaved together. As a former student shared with me, "Dianne was a genius." She was always looking to put theory into practice and, with a focus on the relationship, transforming student into therapist. As

Dr. Sherry Goodill shared at Dianne’s memorial “she really saw each person and taught us to trust that knowing and using our true selves was the best way to be a good therapist.” Even in Dianne’s last presentation in 2016 for the Maryland/DC/Virginia ADTA Chapter, when her energy was ebbing, she provided such an integrated richness, presenting her Family Dance/Movement Therapy work. Part of her excellence in teaching grew from her own search for knowledge. By example, she served to inspire students, colleagues and those she mentored to remain open to possibilities of learning and growth. Her own learning curve integrated a knowledge of neuroscience, with appreciation for the biological component of movement and behavior.



Movement observation and research became an early passion, going back to a 1973 research project at the Bronx State Hospital, reported in the publication “Movement Therapy on a Closed Ward.” She readily and graciously always acknowledged those mentors who taught and influenced her, including her training with Irmgard Bartenieff, Elissa White, Claire Schmais, work and collaboration with Martha Davis and later relationship and collaboration with Marion North and William Freeman. Dianne focused on movement observation and analysis as it led to research as well as clinical application. She saw this as crucial for validation of our discipline and clinical work. Dianne, as much as any dance/movement therapist, had the vision to realize the importance and value of research inquiry for our profession and helped influence our understanding and perception of this avenue of professional development. Movement observation, assessment and research were not a disconnect or distance from clinical work but a substantiation of it.

While directing the Hahnemann program, Dianne developed her research ideas, integrating her clinical expertise in movement observation, with studies of family interaction and early childhood development. In 1977, after studying parent and child interaction at The Developmental Center for Autistic Children supported by Dr. Burt Ruttenberg, she published “Nonverbal Assessment of Family Systems” in

the *JADT*. There was a follow up study in 1983 with Sasha Silberstein titled “Expressive Movement in Children and Mothers focus on individuation” published in *The Arts in Psychotherapy*. She completed her Ph.D. in 1995 from The Union Institute. Her dissertation, “Movement Indicators of Attention and Their Role in Identifiers of Lead Exposure” again focused and integrated her interests in children, family interaction and social issues with neurological development.

Dianne published widely and throughout her long career, from that first 1973 Bronx State study into the last year of her life. She authored or co-authored numerous journal articles, reviews, and book chapters on a range of topics including clinical work, assessment, research, and legislative advocacy, in both US and international publications.

Throughout all of the years, Dianne’s commitment to the field of dance/movement therapy and the ADTA continued. Her many talents, energy and passion were given to our profession and its development, serving in various roles and committees over 30 years including: Approval Committee, Educators Committee, National Conference Chair, 1974; Secretary; Bylaws Chair; Vice President, 1995; President, 1998–2002, Past President, 2002–2003. She served on the editorial board of the *American Journal of Dance Therapy*, 1984–2003 as well as *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, An International Journal from 1977 on. She received numerous awards and honors, culminating in the ADTA’s Life Time Achievement Award in 2008.



Dianne never really retired. She continued to serve as the ADTA’s representative to the National Alliance of Pupil Services and Consortium Citizens with Disabilities. She gave workshops, courses, and presentations in the US and

abroad, notably in London, Argentina, Germany and Spain, and Scotland. She served on the Dean's Advisory Committee for Health Sciences at Drexel University, where she also continued to advise master's theses and to teach the Family Dance/Movement Therapy course until 2014. Her collaboration and development of work with Dr. North, including a new book to be released in the future, continued over the years and remained a dynamic and rich source of creative thought, research and friendship, as did her investment in the collaborative work with William Freeman and Elise Tropea, which continued up until the last months of her life.

With Dianne's many accomplishments, one of her most exceptional gifts whether as teacher, mentor or friend was her great perceptiveness and sensitivity in appreciating a person's potential and aptitudes and offering support and opportunities to develop those unique talents along with helpful but honest direct feedback. She then gave the person space to develop. It was the empowering and yet respect and acceptance of the individual choice which continued to astound me—a wisdom, respect and insightfulness that I believe she brought to all her work. She was extremely generous with her time and energy to all who reached out to her over many years. In her 2004 Marian Chace Foundation lecture, Dianne acknowledged and stressed her deep appreciation for all those who had mentored her and encouraged us to do the same.

Dianne Dulicai's career and achievements are indeed impressive. Although there is sadness in absence, there should also be a celebration of her accomplishments and contribution to our field. There is an anonymous quote, "Every job is a self-portrait of the person who did it, autograph your work with excellence." For Dianne, it should read "Every life's work is a self-portrait of the person who did it and Dianne autographed hers with graciousness, dedication, generosity and excellence."

In ending this reflection, I would like to share a moment from Dianne's memorial in Washington DC. It took place in a large Unitarian church. Dianne had expressed a desire some years ago to have a second line (from the New Orleans funeral tradition) at her own funeral. It came to life at the end of her memorial in the form of a modified movement choir led by her former student Cathy McCoubrey. Imagine two giant circles, filling the room, everyone up and moving, movers and non-movers, young and old, dancers and non-dancers, passing each other down the center of the church pews, circling around, waving white handkerchiefs, greeting each other. I believe Dianne would have been delighted and loved every minute of this wild and exuberant ending.

Gayle Gates

MA, BC-DMT, NCC, LPC was Clinical Assistant Professor and Associate Director of Dance/Movement Therapy Education in the Department of Creative Arts Therapies at Drexel University (and its predecessors) for almost 40 years, initially hired by Hahnemann program founder and director, Dianne Dulicai. Throughout a relationship that began in 1977, she contributed to the program's development through her administrative, teaching and supervisory work. During the replication of the program 1985-1987 at the Laban Centre in London, Gayle served as acting director of the that program, winter quarter 1986. She taught various courses covering clinical skill development for work with adults and children. As an educator, supervisor and therapist, Gayle's teaching and clinical expertise focused on child development, dance/movement therapy with children and the treatment of a wide range of childhood and adolescent disorders. For most of these years, she divided her time between the education

program and direct clinical work as a therapist in an outpatient psychiatric clinic serving children and adolescents with learning, emotional and behavioral disorders. In this capacity, she supervised and trained many graduate DMT students. In 1995, Gayle also developed and implemented the first program utilizing the creative arts therapies for court ordered visitations between non-custodial parents and their children through the Family Court of Philadelphia. Since retiring from the Associate Directorship in 2014, she currently remains an Adjunct Professor, continuing some teaching as well as supervision and thesis advisement. She also maintains a small private practice with adults and children/families. Gayle's personal, professional and academic interests have come to focus more intensely on the importance/nature of play, creativity, early development and clinical application in dance/movement therapy with children. She has presented and consulted regionally and nationally on these topics and related clinical issues, including the 2016 spring conference MA/DC/VA, ADTA Chapter with Dr. Dianne Dulicai, "Movement and Play in Dance/Movement Therapy" and 2009 American Dance Therapy Associations Conference where she presented a workshop "Play and Creativity in Child Dance/Movement Therapy: Potential for Ego Resiliency."