

# INTRODUCING THE INSTITUTES

## Phoenix Institute for Ericksonian Therapy

By Roxanna Erickson Klein RN, PhD

Phoenix, long recognized as a hub of Ericksonian teaching, training and interest is now home to an Institute as well! Perhaps, the Foundation being located in Phoenix obscured the very real need for an independent Institute. Many of the requirements for study and training have been well-managed by the Foundation. But, there was still a call for year-round "hands-on" types of interaction with the community at large as well as a definite requirement for a clinical "arm." So, recently, a group of extraordinary Ericksonians, long involved as teachers, authors and clinicians, have joined forces to create an Institute dedicated to this and to providing a vast array of clinical services.

Spearheaded by Stephen Lankton, MSW, DAHB, and joined by Kathleen Donaghy PhD, and Joyce Mills PhD, LMFT, RPT-S this Institute is now up and running. As a team, as co-founders and co-directors, and as trainers, they are all committed to keeping Ericksonian ideology in the forefront as well as to bringing it forward as the world and the world of psychotherapy evolve.

Lankton is well known for his tireless contributions to Ericksonian approaches. Among his many honors is the 1994 Lifetime Achievement Award given by the Foundation. He was one of Dr. Erickson's most apt and energetic students in the 1970's and has since continued with avid interest and ambitious explorations. For more than a decade, he served as a primary editor for the *Erickson Monographs* series. While maintaining a busy clinical practice, and international training schedule, he also authored and co-authored 17 books, all of which were well-received and many of which have become classical references in the field. His books created a model and framework for understanding and implementing effective Ericksonian psychotherapy strategies. Additionally, he has excelled in multi-faceted teaching with emphasis on the health of indi-

viduals, and families, and even into the realm of organizational and institutional effectiveness. He rounds out his busy international teaching by serving locally as adjunct faculty at Arizona State University's Dept. of Behavioral Science and Sociology.

To add to his talents, he also brings a wealth of knowledge in the computer field having initially set up the Foundation web site. He has long been a facilitator for interactive web site called "Behavior OnLine" and most recently created the informative and user-friendly site for the Institute. In addition he is the moderator for the Foundation's official "List Serve."

Kathleen Donaghy is a licensed counseling psychologist. She has an extensive background in research and treatments for cancer. Her in-depth experience in palliative treatments makes her a perfect fit for the methodology offered within the Institute. Donaghy has authored and co-authored numerous book chapters and articles in journals and has much appreciation for the rigors attached to research. She combines this with the gentle touch that is especially needed working with seriously ill patients. She conducts a busy general private practice and juggles her time teaching as adjunct faculty at ASU's Department of Behavioral Science. For the last two years she has been a regular contributor and reviewer for the Foundation Newsletter, where she has repeatedly demonstrated her impeccable writing skills.

Joyce Mills is also well known in Ericksonian work. She is the founder of Ericksonian Play Therapy, an indirective model of play therapy, which along with trans-cultural and indigenous teachings, is one of the primary roots of her work. Her excellence with trauma survivors and with children is an area of work where she has earned

recognition. Author and co-author of seven books, Mills was the recipient of the 1997 Play Therapy International Award for "Outstanding career contribution to the field of child psychology and play therapy." Mills is also Founder and Executive Director of the "StoryPlay Center; Creative Solutions for Positive Change." She developed ways to encourage and build upon the positive possibilities that are present even in the most dire of situations. Mills has shown her imaginative capabilities and their formidable impact on healing that takes place through non-traditional means. She has been on the Board of Directors of the Turtle Island Project for nearly two decades.



Stephen Lankton, MSW, DAHB; Marilia Baker, MA;  
Joyce Mills, Ph.D.; Kathleen Donaghy, Ph.D.; Dan Short, Ph.D.

This Phoenix-based non-profit organization works with Native-American spiritual and educational leaders; Mills co-leads retreats for women. The energy she generates brings opportunities for experiences and a sense of power that is often elusive and even unattainable with more traditional approaches.

In addition to an impressive list of notables on their international advisory board, the Institute's work party is joined by local clinicians serving as Training Affiliates. Dan Short PhD, and Marilia Baker MSW, LMFT add to the scope and diversity of the Institute. Each of these therapists is a respected clinician and has shown sustained dedication to the advancement of Ericksonian methodology. They help provide greater depth and

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breadth to the Institute's clinical and teaching offerings through work in local and international venues. Other Training Affiliates are expected to join the staff soon.

Baker's first book: *A Tribute to Elizabeth Moore Erickson* is an innovative perspective on the contributions of Erickson's widow. It has been published in Portuguese and Spanish and is currently being expanded for the English edition. Baker is founding director and a board member to two Latin-American Erickson Institutes and is also an international advisor and consultant to the Centro Ericksoniano de Mexico. Baker's professional contributions to the furtherance of Ericksonian ideas span nearly 17 years.

Short, a licensed psychologist in private practice, is a volunteer for "Doctors' of the World" Human Rights Clinic and is a member of the graduate faculty at Ottawa University. For two years he held the position of Associate Director of the Erickson Foundation where he oversaw the preservation and organization of the archives. Prior to that appointment, he served as Editor for the Foundation Newsletter for five years during which time he introduced the concept of Guest Editors, an innovation which has substantially enhanced the publication. Author of numerous book chapters and professional publications, Short is preparing his first book, a treatise on understanding the psychotherapeutic strategies of

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Milton Erickson simultaneously in seven languages. Each foreign version of the work represents the collaborative harmony of Short working with a prominent co-author. Beginning with the same core constructs, each adaptation has developed in a complementary, but uniquely different direction.

The team of professionals that constitute the Phoenix Institute has produced a plethora of publications on a multitude of topics. What also makes this organization unique is the group's ability to work as an integrated team. All of these therapists are respected clinicians and have shown sustained dedication to the advancement of Ericksonian methodology. Individually and cooperatively, they provide a great depth and breadth to the Institute's clinical and teaching offerings in both local and international venues.

I would encourage everyone visit their website, <http://phxinstiute.com> In this brief article, I have only touched upon their incredible

resources. There is regular schedule of workshops, intensives, and focused trainging offered locally and in other cities. There is also a listing of books, articles and multi-media resources that are available.

Perhaps a truly distinctive characteristic of the Phoenix Institute of Ericksonian Therapy is its spirit of dedication and harmony. I have personally known all the founders and the faculty and I count them among the warmest and most personable in my fellowship of friends. The talents that come together here promise to provide wide-reaching and extensive efforts that benefit the local community and even larger venues.

Thank you for answering the long awaited call for superb clinical skills and focused expertise in training opportunities and psychotherapeutic work. I—and the Erickson family—are all deeply gratified to see the formation of this robust and expansive resource that will complement in such a worthy way, the important work done by the Erickson Foundation.

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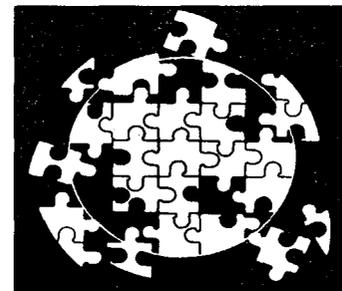
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