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 individuals, and families, and even into the realm of organizational and institutional effectiveness. He is a leader in the field of Ericksonian therapy, an indirective model of play therapy, which along with transcultural and indigenous teachings, is one of the primary roots of his 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.”

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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://phxinstitute.com In this brief article, I have only touched upon their incredible resources. There is regular schedule of workshops, intensives, and focused training 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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