

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & BELONGING

AmSAT Annual Convention  
& General Meeting  
New York, 2019

ARTICLES

JOHN HENES & INDIRA M. RAMAN on Inhibition

LARRY BALL on Wholeness

MALCOLM WILLIAMSON on Conscious Control

EVE BERNFELD on the Developing Self Course

# Alexander in Secondary and Tertiary Education

by Judith Kleinman, reviewed by Eve Bernfeld

*Alexander in Secondary and Tertiary Education: A Workbook and Practical Guide to Teaching the Alexander Technique in Secondary Schools and Tertiary Institutions*, by Judith Kleinman. The Developing Self, 2018 ([www.thedevelopingself.net](http://www.thedevelopingself.net)).

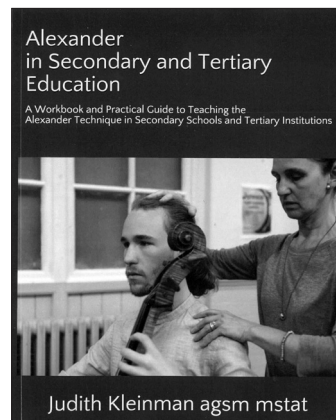
I WAS ONLY TWENTY-FOUR when I was first offered a job working with teenagers—choreographing a high school production of *Grease*. “Hell, NO!” I thought—I *loathed* high school. But I was at loose ends, and it was working alongside a teacher and director I respected, so I gave it a shot—and was gobsmacked when I actually liked it. I liked it so much, I got a master’s degree and started teaching high school drama.

I think many people, perhaps remembering how challenging it was to be a teenager, similarly balk at the idea of working with young adults. And this is a shame because they can be terrific to work with—beginning to think deeply and critically, while still possessing an appreciation of fun and silliness. Fortunately, Judith Kleinman proves an excellent guide to this adventure in her book on teaching the Alexander Technique to high school and college students. Having first encountered the Technique as a teenager at Music College, Judith now has decades of experience teaching students at the Royal College of Music and the Junior Royal Academy of Music.

Judith examines what Alexander work offers to youth. I agree that it is crucial to be specific about this, not only to get ourselves into classrooms, but also to get buy-in from the students. Many young people have as much pressure and stress as their parents, with the additional challenge of a hurricane of hormones. In her book, Judith says, “I sometimes say to young people Alexander is a practical embodied philosophy, like a martial art that helps you to be the authentic you.”

One might consider starting *Alexander in Secondary and Tertiary Education* by reading through the appendices, which

Judith Kleinman (right), author of *Alexander in Secondary and Tertiary Education*, is pictured here with Sue Merry, author of the companion title *Alexander in Primary Education*.



are a treasure trove of bullet point suggestions and questions to pose to students. Then comes a whole section of curricula for teaching secondary or university classes and for leading a professional development day for teachers. It is concrete, concise, and totally adaptable.

Do not neglect the rest of the book, however. While I found the sequence to meander a bit, there is gold in

every chapter. From general pedagogical reminders to include visual, aural, and kinesthetic information in each lesson to specific suggestions on keeping feedback positive and *hands-on* work simple—touching joints rather than soft tissue.

One of my favorite elements of the book is the way it is peppered with excellent questions with which to encourage student thinking and discussion. In my teaching, I have struggled with asking the kind of “hot” questions that lead to dynamic conversations. Judith’s questions are designed to engage:

“Most animals fix and get smaller when they are frightened. Do you?”

“How would you like to stand? Are you available for rebalancing and/or turning?”

Judith’s book is the companion to Sue Merry’s book entitled *Alexander in Primary Education*,<sup>1</sup> and both books are companions to their course entitled “The Developing Self: Specialized Postgraduate Training for Alexander Teachers Working in Education.”<sup>2</sup> I was delighted to encounter all three together. However, Judith’s book is still an essential stand-alone guide to anyone wishing to work with teenagers and young adults (or experienced teachers looking for new inspiration and material). And she also cautions us not to forget one of Alexander’s most important principles and perhaps, one of hers too: “It is useful to remember, while teaching, to look after our own use first and to stay in touch with the most important sense of all, our sense of humor!”

## NOTES

- 1 Sue Merry, *Alexander in Primary Education: A Workbook and Practical Guide to Teaching the Alexander Technique in Primary Schools* (The Developing Self, 2018). Ruth Rootberg’s review is in *AmSAT Journal* N°14 (Fall 2018): 47.
- 2 See Eve Bernfeld’s report on pp. 52–53.

## Contributors

JOE ALBERTI, PhD (Alexander Technique Center of Albuquerque, 2017) trained with Karen DeWig. He is an assistant professor of voice and acting at the University of Oklahoma. Joe is also a Designated Linklater Voice Teacher, a Certified Colaiani Speech Practitioner, and the author of two books.

JOHN A. BARON (North London School for Alexander Technique, 1985) has been a full-time teacher of the Alexander Technique for thirty-five years. He has taught in England, Italy, Germany and the US and also worked with a wide range of organizations including: San Francisco Ballet, San Francisco Opera, Fireman's Fund Insurance Co, Cal State University Hayward, the Esalen Institute, the Sundance Institute, the annual Malibu AT Retreat and Google Inc. John has been co-director of the Alexander Educational Center in Berkeley, CA, for over twenty-five years and gives private lessons from his studio in Sausalito.

Over the last four decades, GLENNA BATSON (SCD, PT, MA, ISATT, STAT) has drawn from multiple forms of dance, human movement science and somatic education as catalysts for teaching and mentoring, research, and artistic growth. Since qualifying as an Alexander Technique teacher (1989), she has advocated for the Technique by helping articulate the unique principles across disciplines. A former dancer (MA, dance education, 1978), Glenna also holds a Masters and Doctorate in physical therapy (1983/2006). Since moving to Ireland in 2017, she has been actively teaching, as well as advising and facilitating dance-for-health initiatives and art-science collaborations.

Glenna is professor emeritus of physical therapy at Winston-Salem State University (USA). She has received recognition for her clinical research in bringing complementary medicine approaches to performing artists and adults with disabilities. In 2007, she conducted the first clinical study of the Alexander Technique on balance in the elderly (with teacher Sarah Barker). Other research focus includes mental practice of motor imagery (ideokinesis) post-stroke, the Feldenkrais Method® post-stroke, and improvisational dance in people living with Parkinson's disease.

EVE BERNFELD (Oregon Center for the Alexander Technique, Rebecca Robbins, director, 2011) holds a Master's Degree in Theatre Education from Emerson College and taught drama for a dozen years before changing her focus to the Alexander Technique. She lives in Portland, Oregon, teaches at Lewis & Clark College and her studio In Balance Alexander Technique, and she attempts to be a good role model of self-regulation to her three five-year-olds.

JOANNA BRITTON (Centre de Formation Technique Alexander [Paris], 2016) previously studied languages and music in the United Kingdom. She is currently based in Brussels where she works as a teacher and translator. She is also active as a musician, singer and community organizer in Yiddish culture, as well as feminist and anti-racist collectives.

SANDRA BAIN CUSHMAN (Virginia School for Alexander Technique, 1990) discovered the Alexander Technique at Cornell University in 1977 and began her training ten years later. In 1988, Frank Sheldon, Director of Training at the Virginia School for Alexander Technique, took his trainees to a Guitar Craft course at Claymont Court, w.v. From that time forward Sandra's practice of the Technique has been informed by the principles and practices of Robert Fripp's Guitar Craft, later Guitar Circles North America, South America and Europe. Sandra "has developed a field for creative action in Orchestral Maneuvers" (R.F.), and Orchestral Maneuvers' newest initiative "Safe Space Together." Work in the Circle allows us to explore the Alexander Technique in an inclusive, egalitarian, and challenging way...and it's fun! Sandra left her private practice in September of 2019 to focus on Orchestral Maneuvers projects worldwide. She also teaches for the Meriwether Lewis Institute and the Contemplative Sciences Center at the University of Virginia.

GENOA DAVIDSON (Alexander Technique Center of Albuquerque, 2018). In addition to teaching the Alexander Technique, Genoa is an actor, acting coach, and writer. She and her partner, Joe Alberti, have just written and produced their first full-length play, a modern adaptation of Kafka's *The Trial*. Genoa is currently certifying as a Colaiani Speech Practitioner and will complete Jessica Wolf's *Art of Breathing* in July. With Dr. Alberti, she is currently working on a new play about the lives of John and Abigail Adams.

HEATHER DENNEE (Alexander Technique Training Center, Charlotte, 2014) is a member of AmSAT and a Reiki Master. As an accomplished collegiate soccer player and nationally licensed soccer coach, Heather has developed and facilitated individualized and team soccer programs in her area that incorporate the Alexander Technique. She helps kids to be the boss of their own bodies, to self-regulate, focus, perform with ease, enjoy freedom of movement, coordination and to stay injury free. Continuing her work with children, Heather is currently bringing mindfulness programs to elementary public schools, creating classroom environments that are more calming and comfortable for their students so they may excel as lifelong learners. Using mindfulness to gain greater body awareness, coordination, freedom of movement, and strengthening the relationship between mind and body can have a profound and positive effect. She looks forward to bringing out each and every authentic self and reducing chronic pain, stress, and enhancing performance and freedom of movement.

LISA FIRST (Alexander Institute of Boston, 1992) currently lives in Charlotte, North Carolina, where she teaches private and group lessons in the Alexander Technique. Lisa teaches nationally and abroad. She also has an MA in Dance and Movement Studies from Wesleyan University, Middletown, Ohio, and a BA in Dance and Visual Arts from Antioch College, Yellow Springs, Ohio. She has been the Founder and Executive Director of Link Vostok East/West International Dance Exchange since 1993.

JOAN FROST (American Center for the Alexander Technique, 1983) has been training teachers at ACAT since 1984. She was Director of Teacher Certification at ACAT from 2001 to 2008. Joan maintains a private teaching practice in Manhattan, in Rockland and Westchester Counties, and in Stratford, Connecticut.

KARIN HEISECKE (Schule für F.M. Alexander-Technik Berlin, 2017) combines her practice as teacher of the Alexander Technique with her work as political and philanthropic advisor. Karin has been involved in social justice activism, with a focus on women's human rights, for over twenty years.

JOHN HENES is a member of STAT and AmSAT and was certified through STAT in 1979 after graduating from Goddard Binkley's Teachers Training Course in Chicago, Illinois. His primary teachers were Joe Armstrong and Goddard. John also took lessons from Frank Pierce Jones, Walter Carrington, and Joan and Alex Murray. John has been teaching the Alexander Technique at the Bienen School of Music, Northwestern University since 1980.

INDIRA M. RAMAN is a Professor in the Department of Neurobiology at Northwestern University, where she holds the Bill and Gayle Cook Chair in Biological Sciences. She completed her PhD in Neuroscience at the University of Wisconsin–Madison and did her postdoctoral training at the Vollum Institute for Advanced Biomedical Research and at Harvard Medical School. Her research is in the areas of ion channel biophysics, synaptic transmission, and cerebellar physiology.

THE RIVERSIDE INITIATIVE FOR THE ALEXANDER TECHNIQUE (RIAT), founded by Nanette Walsh, is a place for community, growth, and learning. It is dedicated to the practice and teaching of the Alexander Technique, and committed to the cultivation of greater resilience, health, and well-being in the world at large. We offer: intense personal study through a three-year AmSAT-certified Teacher Training Program (TCP), private lessons, supervised small group study, opportunities for daily, weekly, or monthly periods of intensive study and workshops, and for opportunities to be a student in supervised instructional settings and clinics. Whether you are a new student or a qualified teacher, the Riverside Initiative offers individually oriented learning based on well-established methods while maintaining a commitment to diversity, creativity, and community outreach.

HOLLY ROCKE (Alexander Technique Urbana, 2006) serves as the Secretary for AmSAT. Holly is a Professor of Theatre at Eureka College in Illinois.

ANNA SOBOTKA (Alexander Technique Denver, 2019) trained with Heidi Leathwood, Maedée Duprès, and Nada Diachenko. Anna has her own business teaching violin, viola, piano, and the Alexander Technique. She loves living in Colorado, hiking, mountain biking, fly-fishing, rock climbing, running, and slack-lining (tightrope walking).

ALLYNA STEINBERG (Balance Arts Center, 2017) co-founded the Alexander Technique Diversity Coalition in 2017 and completed her teacher training with Ann Rodiger in 2017. She has a master's degree in public health and over twenty years of experience supporting communities to improve their health. Allyna teaches the Alexander Technique at New York City's Health Department's Worksite Wellness program as well as privately in New York City and New York's Hudson Valley.

Allyna's website is [AlexanderTechniqueForLiving.com](http://AlexanderTechniqueForLiving.com).

FABIO TAVARES (American Center for the Alexander Technique, 2014) was born and raised in Brazil where he started off as a competitive gymnast before running away to join the circus at the age of fifteen to become a professional acrobat. Mr. Tavares has pursued a lifelong career as a physical actor, dancer and movement educator, and since moving to NYC in 1999 he has had the honor of working and studying with an amazing group of artists and teachers. Mr. Tavares also toured the globe performing and teaching for the high-impact Dance Company STREB EXTREME ACTION for over fourteen years and has since done some regular post-graduate work with Caren Bayer. He's also been a certified Klein Technique™ teacher and a Zero Balancing practitioner since 2009. Mr. Tavares was an adjunct teacher at PACE University 2014–2017 and has done some extensive teaching (both in groups and privately) in Brazil, Portugal, and NYC.

MALCOLM WILLIAMSON (Constructive Teaching Center, 1984) studied viola at the Royal College of Music and was subsequently a member of several orchestras, including the London Festival Ballet (English National Ballet), the National Orchestra of Iceland, and the Scottish National Orchestra. He trained as an Alexander Technique teacher with Walter and Dilys Carrington, and began teaching the Technique at the Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester, in 1985. He served on STAT's governing council for twelve years in various roles including Treasurer, Chairman, and Editor of *Statnews*. Malcolm has campaigned widely for the Alexander Technique as a foundation for music training and has been involved with several research projects. He is interested in the history of the technique, as shown by his current article, which explores ideas of metaphysical forces—instinct, élan vital, and willpower—as drivers of human behavior in a pre-Freud and Watson psychology.



## Photograph Credits

Full preview article on pp. 8–9

page	
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