Schoop, Trudi (9 Oct. 1903-14 July 1999), mime and dance and movement therapist, was born Gertrude Schoop in Zurich, Switzerland, the daughter of Friedrich Maximilian Schoop, a newspaper editor and president of Dolder Hotels, and Emma Olga Böppli Schoop, a freethinker who was uninterested in the conventions of the time. All three of Schoop's siblings were artistic. Max became a painter, Paul later wrote the scores for Trudi's dances, and Hedi was a dancer, actress, ceramist, and painter. Their home was always open to artists and intellectuals. Trudi, brought up in this free-wheeling environment, suffered mightily the rigidity of school in Zurich.

Schoop spoke of her formal schooling as a time when her spirit and body separated. She developed many secret fears and compulsions, and doctors sent her for a cure to a sanitarium in the Swiss mountains. Yet she retained her love for what she defined as the elements of life: energy, rhythm, melody, and space. When she danced she was both courageous and happy. Through dance she expressed her own ideas and feelings. She locked herself in a room and improvised dances that metaphorically became structured expressions of her anxieties. These dances enabled her to externalize her fears, and the experience became a strong underpinning to her later work as a dance therapist. With no training, Schoop created dances. At the age of sixteen she rented a big room, hired a pianist, and enveloped herself in choreography. About six months later she gave her first public performance. In The Slave, a dance she found especially meaningful, the ending represents the final breaking of chains. At this time dancers in Europe, such as Mary Wigman, Rudolf von Laban, and Emile Jaques-Dalcroze, searched for new forms and moved away from the limitations of ballet. Schoop left for Germany to study. She attended the school of Ellen Tells, a disciple of Isadora Duncan, while continuing to perform throughout Switzerland and Germany to great acclaim. In 1924, after the unexpected death of her father, Schoop returned to Zurich and opened a school for "artistic dancing." The studio was successful, and Schoop enjoyed teaching. Soon after she opened her studio, a physician sent a schizophrenic man to her class, and for weeks he did not move. **Schoop subsequently became an intense observer of movements when people danced and when they performed tasks. She became fascinated with gesture, posture, and facial expression and the conflicts expressed in individual bodies and in their movements**. When she returned to choreography, Schoop found a stylized way of storytelling about human foibles, the comic mime form for which she became famous. Her brother Paul composed the music for her pieces. In the late 1920s she performed solo works in Berlin, in an avant-garde café called Die Katakombe, with a group of artists seeking to respond to the emergence of Nazism. This became an important part of Schoop's artistic life. In 1932 Schoop was invited to participate in the International Dance Congress in Paris. She took a group of her best students to perform in a new piece, her first for an ensemble. It was then that she created her character Fridolin, an awkward young person in conflict with the world. The judges awarded her work a prize, citing hers as "the message of humanity in our time." Schoop met Hans Wickihalder, who owned Corso, a musical comedy theater, and who also was in the import-export business, and they married in 1929; they had no children. Wickihalder was greatly supportive of Trudi's art and enabled her to form a troupe that consisted of acrobats, ballet dancers, and musical comedians. The troupe included many nationalities and personalities, but Schoop eventually molded acompany that performed her pantomimes, humorous statements about human fragilities. Known as Trudi Schoop and Her Comic Ballet, they traveled throughout Europe, and Sol Hurok, the impresario, eventually saw them. He arranged a tour in the United States from 1937 to 1939. They were well received in every city. Some of the better-known pieces were Fridolin, Want Ads, The Blonde Marie, and Hurray for Love. Schoop became known as "the female Charlie Chaplin." Thomas Mann wrote of her, "This woman is a phenomenon in her talent for humorously affective expression," and the dance critic John Martin hailed The Blonde Marie for its "great gusto and good humor."
 When war broke out in Europe, the company disbanded. Schoop returned to Switzerland and her husband. She was fondly remembered by the Swiss decades later for her dances in the political café Cornichon. It was dangerous to make political statements, even in neutral Switzerland, and the performers developed a sign language that defied censorship. Friends let them know if German officials were coming so they could alter material. Schoop performed a burlesque of The Dying Swan in which she portrayed Adolf Hitler, complete with black tutu and a mustache, ending with the equivalent of frenzied salutes before Hitler fell moribund. The German consul was outraged, and the Swiss government

never allowed her to repeat the performance. After World War II, Schoop re-formed her group and again toured Europe and America. In 1947, tired of traveling and dispirited, she disbanded her troupe. She was in the United States when her husband suddenly died in 1951. She put down new roots in Van Nuys, California, a home filled with dogs and cats and open to friends. Eventually her energy needed a new outlet.

In 1957 Schoop decided she wanted to dance with psychotic patients. In her book Won't You Join the Dance? (1974) she described, with her humorous sensibility, how she began, erred, and came back to try again. Her experience with observation of gesture and posture and her understanding that people either expressed or were conflicted about expressing feelings enabled her to develop a technique for working with psychotic patients. **She recognized that the mind and body are reciprocal in their interactions and that the body becomes "a blabbermouth." She later developed her theories by speaking of the Ur experience, a German word that encompasses (englobe)endless and boundless energy, time, and space**. **She believed dance enabled humans to deal with the reality of their finite world and simultaneously with the transcendent experience of all humans in time and space**. Schoop worked for many years in psychiatric hospitals, including Camarillo State Hospital, where research confirmed the success of her work. She taught many who wished to become dance therapists through classes and workshops in the United States and Europe, and she wrote a seminal book describing her work and her beliefs that has been translated into several languages.

Schoop is recognized as one of the pioneers in the field of dance and movement therapy by the American Dance Therapy Association. Above all she lived life as the essence of humanity. She was a woman who showed kindness, humor, empathy, and willingness to give of herself.

Bibliography
Schoop wrote Won't You Join the Dance? A Dancer's Essay into the Treatment of Psychosis(1974) with the help of Peggy Mitchell, and her sister Hedi Schoop illustrated it. Schoop's 1978 lecture in Los Angeles about her theories of Ur and her early demons is "Motion and Emotion," American Journal of Dance Therapy 22, no. 2 (Fall-Winter 2000). Joan Chodorow wrote of her experiences in Schoop's classes, Dance Therapy and Depth Psychology: The Moving Imagination (1991). The University of California Extension Center for Media and Independent Learning has two films about Schoop, Come Dance with Me (1992), which shows her work with long-term patients at a psychiatric clinic in Switzerland, and The Conquest of Emptiness (1993), a portrait of Schoop speaking about herself and her work, interweaving interviews, archival footage of her dancing, and scenes of her interactions with patients. Obituaries are in the Los Angeles Times, 21 July 1999, the San Francisco Chronicle, 22 July 1999, and the New York Times, 23 July 1999