



STOKS WORKSHOP 2016

PAOLO BERTRANDO

KØBENHAVN D. 8 OG 9. APRIL 2016

Hvilken fordel kan psykiatrien opnå igennem den systemiske teori og praksis, og hvilken fordel kan systemisk teori opnå ved at anerkende diagnoser?

Paolo Bertrando MD, PhD, is a psychiatrist and a systemic therapist. He was trained in the Milan Approach to systemic therapy by Luigi Boscolo and Gianfranco Cecchin in the 1980s. He has been a trainer in the Milan Centre for Family Therapy, from 1993 to 2002, and the director of the Episteme systemic training centre from 2003 to 2012. Currently he is the scientific director of

the Systemic-Dialogical School in Bergamo.

Among his books, *The Times of Time* (1993), and *Systemic Therapy with Individuals* (1996), both co-written with Luigi Boscolo, and *The Dialogical Therapist* (2007). His next book, *Emotions and the Therapist*, is due for publication early in 2015.

Dr. Bertrando has travelled widely holding workshops and

seminars on several topics related to systemic therapy, in Italy, Spain, Norway, Denmark, Greece, United Kingdom, Ireland, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Singapore, New Zealand and Australia. His present interests concern the relationship between psychiatric and systemic thinking, the effects of social and economic conditions on therapeutic practice, and the dynamics of emotions according to a systemic view.

STED: Metropol, Tagensvej 18, 2200, Kbh N
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PSYCHOPATHOLOGY, DIAGNOSIS, AND THE SYSTEMIC MODEL

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Psychiatric diagnostic and psychopathological categories are considered with some diffidence by most systemic therapists. The obvious (from a systemic standpoint) shortcomings of such diagnostic systems as DSM 5 obscure, to them, the possible advantages of taking them into consideration.

Apparently, unconditional supporters and detractors of psychopathology share at least one basic idea: that psychopathological and diagnostic categories are somewhat absolute and a-historical. If we see them, instead, through the lens of history and development, we can see that they, on the one hand, are human artifacts (and, as such, fallible and subject to changes and revisions), on the other, they do reflect, at least to an extent, something that actually happens within and between people.

We can say, in other words, that psychopathology is not fully arbitrary. Provisional and changeable as psychiatric diagnoses have proved to be, they give some indications all the same, and should be properly understood, in order to use what may be profitable in them, without accepting or being subjected to the now prevailing ideology of diagnostic (and biological, and medication-centred) psychiatry.

The leading question in this work-

shop is, therefore: What psychopathology may gain by interacting with systemic theory and practice, and what systemic theory may gain in turn by recognising points of interest in psychopathology? In order to answer it, the following points will be considered and developed:

- Investigating psychopathology, its evolution in time, and its possible relevance for the understanding of (some dimensions of) people;
- Understanding the historical dimension of diagnosis, and its relationship to social, economical, and cultural, as well as scientific, developments;
- Exploring the structure of some of the most relevant diagnostic systems, including DSM and ICD;
- Revisiting some of the most important family typologies devised by systemic and other family therapists;
- Investigating the implications of the use of diagnostic categories and diagnostic language (including both its misuse and lack of use) for the everyday therapeutic practice;
- Exploring the implications of it in working within institutions, especially when connected to the Mental health system;
- Evaluating the possible use of psychopathology and diagnosis to

maintain and increase differences in professional power;

- Overcoming diffidence towards the psychopathological and diagnostic dimensions of clinical work;
- Learning how to disconnect diagnoses (when necessary) from the prevailing values of today psychiatry.

The application of basic systemic principles to psychopathology and diagnosis will be discussed both theoretically and with the help of casework, performed during the 2 days of the workshop. The participants will be encouraged to bring their own cases in supervision.

SUGGESTED READINGS

Paolo Bertrando (2006) The evolution of family intervention for schizophrenia. A tribute to Gianfranco Cecchin. *Journal of Family Therapy*, 28: 4-22.

Paolo Bertrando (2007) The Dialogical Therapist. *Dialogue in Systemic Practice*. London, Karnac Books.

Paolo Bertrando (2009) Surviving in psychiatry as a systemic therapist. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy*, 30 (3): 160-172.

Paolo Bertrando (2015) *Emotions and the Therapist*. London: Karnac Books.

