



## ESSPD Newsletter

A publication of the  
European Society for the  
Study of Personality  
Disorders

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Anthony W Bateman

## Message from the President

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2012 and a warm welcome to all our new members. The Board of the ESSPD have been busy working on the forthcoming conference 27-29th September 2012. All our speakers are confirmed and we have to thank Thomas Rinne, Chair of the Organising Committee, and Theo Ingehoven, Chair of the Scientific Committee for all the hard work they have done in arranging an exciting programme. A large number of abstracts have been submitted which means that a wide range of people from many different countries will be presenting their work, many of them for the first time, and we hope to be able to award a young researchers award. We have a large number of pre-congress workshops and these are filling up fast so please register now if you want to be sure of a place. All the details are on the website. Don't forget that if you join the ESSPD you will recoup the cost of your subscription through a reduced conference fee.

We propose to develop a research focus for the ESSPD and Martin Bohus has enthusiastically agreed to take a lead in this development. The first meeting will be during the Amsterdam conference. I will give you more details of this nearer the time. We hope to be able to support young people developing research projects by linking them with more senior people involved in the same area of investigation. Let me know if there are other ideas you have for a research role of the ESSPD.

Finally we remain concerned about the proposals for classification of personality disorders in the DSM. Hans Nordahl outlines the proposals in this newsletter. Our offer to participate in field trials was not taken up so we await the outcome of the trials that have taken place. In the meanwhile members should start considering the ICD-11 proposals as they are currently out for consultation. There is already some concern about the proposals being expressed in the literature and, again, please let me know if you have any strong views you would like to be communicated to the membership.

In the meanwhile enjoy 2012 and I look forward to meeting many of you in Amsterdam.

Anthony W Bateman  
President ESSPD

### The Development of New Diagnoses of Personality Disorders for DSM-V

The American Psychiatric Association (APA) has now received a lot of feedback on the draft of the new criteria of the diagnostic criteria for personality disorders in the Fifth Edition of the diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders, (DSM-5). The ESSPD, represented by the board, has previously expressed some scepticism about some of the principles for the new diagnosis in the draft. Their main concern has been that the new proposed model is more complex and difficult to use, making the diagnoses unreliable.

In the current edition of the DSM-IV-TR, the disorders are presented as behavioural categories. The main argument for a substantial revision of the personality criteria is the substantial research showing that behaviour-based criteria have several shortcomings. The consequence of this has been excessive co-morbidity: i.e., most patients meet the criteria for two or more personality disorder diagnoses. A second problem has been the system of polymorphic criteria sets, indicating that there is substantial room for heterogeneity within each diagnosis. The third problem has been that "personality disorder not otherwise specified" is the most frequent diagnosis if one uses the DSM-IV-TR correctly. This is of little help for the clinician in his or her clinical practice.

The chair of the Work Group, Andrew Skodol, MD (University of Arizona College of Medicine in Phoenix) stated that "in the past, we viewed personality disorders as binary. You either had one or you didn't. But we now understand that personality pathology is a matter of degree".

The new personality criteria in the proposed draft are different in many substantial ways but the main difference is the introduction of a new dimensional model. A new concept of the personality is emphasized, which is *personality functioning* and the concept of the personality disorder seems to lose ground. The concept of personality functioning is covering disorder types with pathological personality traits and various levels of impairment.

The DSM-5 Personality and Personality Disorders Work Group is currently recommending a reduction in the number of categories to cover broader personality disorder types. These are:

- Borderline
- Avoidant
- Obsessive-compulsive
- Narcissistic
- Schizotypal
- Antisocial

A diagnosis for one of these types would also require significant impairment in both areas of personality functioning on:

The self (how a patient views self and identifies and pursues life goals)

The interpersonal (understanding others' perspectives and forming close relationships)



Hans M. Nordahl

# Scientific News

In addition, pathological personality traits will need to be present in at least one of five broad domains:

- Negative Emotionality (10 trait facets)
- Detachment (5 trait facets)
- Antagonism (8 trait facets)
- Disinhibition (4 trait facets)
- Schizotypy (5 traits facets)

“Our proposed criteria get away from the idea that personality pathology is just a group of disorders. We're instead defining it as a much broader characteristic”, says Andrew Skodol (pers. communication February 2011).

## What constitutes the new diagnosis of personality functioning?

First the levels of personality functioning on the dimension of the self or interpersonally (from 0= no impairment to 4 =extreme impairment) should be assessed with the description of matched personality disorder types (from 1= no match to 5= very good match). As an alternative to the personality types it is possible to define the personality traits, of which thirty-seven have been suggested. Thus the levels of personality functioning are based on the level of functioning with matched personality disorder type or alternatively excess personality traits.

In its current form the new diagnosis of personality disorder will be based on the ratings of the combination of these assessments:

- Criterion A: The rating of mild impairment or more in self or interpersonal functioning on levels of personal functioning
- Criterion B: Good or very good matches with one personality disorder type OR with rating of a “bit like that trait” or with more on one or more personality trait domains
- Criterion C: Features are stable across time and consistent across situations
- Criterion D: Should not be better understood as a cultural norm
- Criterion E: Should not be due to direct physiological effects of a substance or medical condition

Many concerns have been raised in relation to the new proposed system due to the complex design and potential problems with reliability. Dr. Skodol asserts that an advantage of the new criteria is the flexibility in its usage to maximize clinical utility. However, five field trials are now underway in order to test the applicability of the criteria. Their purpose is to evaluate the new draft criteria for personality functioning in real-life clinical settings.

One aspect which is not often discussed is that the new model is intended to describe the personality psychopathology of all patients, whether or not they have a personality disorder. Therefore the applicability of the new model is relevant for all mental health diagnoses in the forthcoming DSM.

The diagnostic criteria will be revised and the final draft of DSM-5 will be submitted to the

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APA's Council on Research, Assembly, and the Board of Trustees for their review and approval. A release of the final approved DSM-5 is expected in May 2013. The 11<sup>th</sup> revision of the ICD classification of personality disorders is expected to be released in 2015.

Hans M Nordahl, Ph.D, Department of Psychology, NTNU, Trondheim



  
in cooperation  
with ISSPD

**2<sup>nd</sup> INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON BORDERLINE  
PERSONALITY DISORDER AND ALLIED DISORDERS:**  
matching research, need and demand to treatment and resources

27 – 29 September 2012 // RAI Amsterdam, The Netherlands

<b>Keynote speakers</b>	<b>Speakers/Debatters</b>		
▶ John Gunderson	▶ Otto Kernberg	▶ Paul Links	▶ Peter Tyrer
▶ Marsha Linehan	▶ John Livesley	▶ Sigmund Karterud	▶ Roel Verheul
▶ Jan van Busschbach	▶ Anthony Bateman	▶ Andrea Fossatti	▶ Frank Yeomans
▶ Christian Schmahl	▶ Martin Bohus	▶ Nancee Blum	▶ Wim van den Brink
▶ Andrew Chanen	▶ Arnold arntz	▶ Stephan Doering	
▶ Klaus Lieb			

## European Activities

### **Associazione Italiana per lo Studio dei Disturbi di Personalità: AISDP (Italian Association for the Study of Personality Disorders)**

The AISDP was established in Milan, Italy in 1994 with the aims of promoting scientific knowledge, spreading best clinical practice and contributing to the high-level continuous education of professionals involved in the process of diagnosing and treating Personality Disorders (PDs); charter members of the AISDP were a team of Italian psychiatrists and clinical psychologists actively involved both in research and clinical management of PDs. Since its beginning, the AISDP has tried to play a role in bridging the gap between the advancing research in PD diagnosis and its treatment and the domain of clinical practice in Italy. From the time of its establishment, the AISDP was highly sensitive to keeping the Italian PD scene closely connected to the international scene of PD research. The AISDP has been affiliated to the International Society for the Study of Personality Disorders (ISSPD) from the start; the connection of the AISDP with the ISSPD led to the circulation in Italy of the *Journal of Personality Disorders* which has played a major role in disseminating research findings on PDs throughout Italy. Since 1994, AISDP members have actively participated in the global ISSPD International Congresses on Personality Disorders and have also taken an active role in the ISSPD. Of course, the AISDP's disposition towards international research has recently led to their enthusiastic participation in the European Society for the Study of Personality Disorders. The election of the founder and past-president of the AISDP as President of the ISSPD was the crowning achievement of the AISDP international vocation.

The continuous organization of seminars on current and updated hot topics in PD clinical management has led the AISDP to become a preferential source of information and formation for all the professionals who are actively involved in PD clinical management. Several of these events involved top-level international scholars including: Arnold H. Modell ("Self psychology and psychotherapy techniques", February 1995), Joel Paris ("The Bio-psycho-social model of PD treatment", May 1998), Per Vaglum ("Treating PD with co-occurring substance abuse/dependence disorders, October 1998), Joseph D. Lichtenberg ("Motivational system theory and PD treatment", June 1999), H.D. Kibel ("Borderline PD and group psychotherapy", October 2000), Otto F. Kernberg ("Transference-focused psychotherapy for borderline personality", March 2001), Peter Fonagy ("Attachment disorders and PDs", May 2001), and Glen O. Gabbard ("The therapeutic relationship in PD psychotherapy, December 2002).

During the first seventeen years of its existence, the AISDP played a major role in promoting a continuous education on PD diagnosis and treatment among Italian clinicians, and has represented a forum for exchanging information among Italian researchers, as well as between Italian researchers and the community of Italian clinicians actively involved in PD clinical management. The AISDP has actively supported the spread in Italy of international research findings and kept the Italian PD scene closely connected to the international research on PDs. In 2012 we will celebrate AISDP's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday; I wish AISDP to be as successful in its adulthood as it was in its childhood.

Andrea Fossati  
AISDP



Andrea Fossati

# Upcoming Meetings and Conferences

## ESSPD Conference Calendar 2012

### MAY

5th to 9th May 2012, The 165<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the American Psychiatric Association, Philadelphia PA, USA.

[www.psych.org/MainMenu/EducationCareerDevelopment/Meetings/Scientific-Programs](http://www.psych.org/MainMenu/EducationCareerDevelopment/Meetings/Scientific-Programs).

### JULY

8th to 12th July 2012, The 22<sup>nd</sup> Biennial Meeting of the International Society for the Study of Behavioral Development, Edmonton, Canada.

[www.psych.ualberta.ca/issbd2012/](http://www.psych.ualberta.ca/issbd2012/)

10th to 14th July 2012, The 16<sup>th</sup> European conference on Personality (ECP16), Trieste, Italy.

[www.the-office.it/ecp16](http://www.the-office.it/ecp16)

22nd to 27th July 2012, The 30<sup>th</sup> International Congress of Psychology, Cape Town, South Africa.

[www.icp2012.com](http://www.icp2012.com)

### AUGUST

2nd to 5th August 2012, The 120<sup>th</sup> Annual convention of the American Psychological Association, Orlando Florida, USA.

[www.apa.org](http://www.apa.org)

### SEPTEMBER

27th to 29th September 2012, The 2<sup>nd</sup> International Congress on Borderline Personality Disorder and Allied Disorders, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

[www.esspd-borderline2012.eu/](http://www.esspd-borderline2012.eu/)

## Newsletter Submissions

Submissions to the *ESSPD Newsletter* are accepted on an ongoing basis. Subject areas may include issues from clinical practice, views and comments on current development within PD, reports from affiliated societies, member information, national and international events and conferences, research updates on personality disorders and more.

We are interested in submissions from practitioners and researchers from within and outside of Europe. The length of submissions should be from 300-800 words and formatted in Word. We suggest that the authors limit their use of references. Please enclose author photos with the all text.

Submissions should be emailed to Dr. Hans M Nordahl, Trondheim  
([hans.nordahl@esspd.eu](mailto:hans.nordahl@esspd.eu))