

International Balint Federation

The e-IBJ
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“The Swedish Association of Medical Psychology Writers Awards

This Award is given to writers – doctors and other professionals within the medical field – for essays on clinical work. This year we received 29 contributions, which made the work of the jury difficult and very stimulating as the contributions generally were very good.

In the Bulletin the contributions of the winners are presented and the first and second prize short stories are published. The first prize was awarded to the professor of otorhinolaryngologist Elisabeth Hulterantz “*A Gastroscopic obstacle*”. It is about a mature woman, a doctor, who is hit by a catastrophic anxiety as she as a patient is to have a routine gastroscopy. In spite of understanding doctors and staff the examination has to be cancelled and in the aftermath a series of painful childhood memories reach her consciousness.

The second prize was given to a GP working in a rural area, Inge Carlsson, for his short story “*Between the lines*” about the relations between the doctor and his patients.

In all 8 writers were awarded. The jury consisted of Lena Svidén, Inag Carin Landerö, Bengt Hamark and Henry Jablonski

“*A Real Balint Doctor*” by Anita Häggmark. A short presentation of the PhD dissertation book (The Doctor, the Group and the Task” by Dorte Kjeldman, GP, Eksjö, Sweden, followed by a lengthy interview of Dorte on her research work past, present and future.

A short report on the IBF Council Meeting in Potsdam March 23-25, 2007

“Female genital mutilation” – gynecological, sexological, psychological and cultural aspects.

The Association arranged a half-day seminar in February 2007 at the Swedish Society of Medicine in Stockholm. A short overview of the conference is given. The panel consisted of Lotti Helström, gynecologist and sexologist, Meri Liljegren, gynecologist and in charge of a specialised surgery for mutilated women, Ricki Neuman, journalist and writer of a series of investigative articles on this matter and Henry Jablonski, psychoanalyst.

Henry Jablonski’s paper at the conference “Some psychoanalytical aspects on Female Genital Mutilation” is published in extension.

(This subject was in November 2007 given the status of National Symposium at the National Meeting of the Swedish Society of Medicine.)

“*Medical students’ learning of the consultation and the patient-doctor relationship*” PhD dissertation paper by Mats Wahlquist, GP, Gothenburg. The dissertation consists of four different studies between 2005 till now. A summary of the work is published in English in the Bulletin.

The Bulletin is accessible in full at the home page of the Association – www.sfmp.se

E-Balint Journal

David Watt

Journal of the English Balint Society 2007

Editorial-Dr John Salinsky

In the life of a group the leader may encourage the group to work more and more on the Balint, or the leader's agenda. Perhaps some space should be allowed for the group's own agendas. Michael Balint advises "to be no more than half a step ahead of your patient". Perhaps this applies to leaders and groups as well

Reclaiming the Unconscious in Balint Group Work

Alan Johnson

Brief history of the unconscious, dating back to the late 17th century. Not invented by Freud. Important in science and art in general. Johnson uses the Johari window model to conceptualise Balint group work. Uses this as a scientific framework to justify looking at the unconscious in Balint work. Final quote from 1846 book "Psyche" by Carl Gustav Carus, court physician to the King of Saxony "The unconscious is the primordial source of life.the understanding of the unconscious in consciousness is everywhere the last and highest aim of science"

Restructuring the Unconscious in Balint Group Work

Alan Johnson

Describes conceptual framework for Balint work. Says that looking at the case in the Balint group allows the unconscious in to be discussed. The idea of the group as collective dreaming.

The Role of the Balint group Leader

Andrew Elder

1. Looks at the doctor patient relationship
2. Looks at the relationship between the presenting doctor and the group members
3. Looks at the relationship between the leader and the work of the group

Continuity

Andrew Dicker

Summary of work on continuity in Primary care, followed by a wonderful personal anecdote of continuity in his life. He feels that three things characterise successful general practice; continuity, curiosity and kindness

Donald Nease

Letter replying to an article in American Journal of Family Medicine

The article implied that we work within a set of strict rules. This is no longer the case round the world. Balint groups are a free area to discuss around an individual doctor patient relationship, rather than a generalised discussion.

Re-Entry: The last task of a Balint Intensive

Jeffrey Sternlieb

Getting back into the “real” world at work after a Balint Weekend can be quite a shock and difficult to understand at first. Perhaps Balint weekends should attend to this problem at the end of the course.

The Empowerment Concept and Balint Groups

Yuval Shorer, Stanley Rabin, Aya Biederman, Asher Shiber, Itzhak Ben-Zion, Meir Nadav and Benjamin Maoz

Discusses the concept of empowerment for the professional thorough Balint work. A group for occupational therapists is discussed, where the participants felt empowered in many aspects of their work and in their professional lives, This is a useful concept to think of in Balint work.

17th Michael Balint Memorial Lecture

Dr Kenneth Sanders, Psychoanalyst

General practitioners work on the border of mind and body. This is a very interesting but difficult area and Balint groups helped GPs to work like this. Author gives a summary of late Freudian, Kleinian thought modified later by Bion and Meltzer. Acknowledges that Balint did not like this kind of theoretical work and took a more practical approach.

A Narrative Approach to Clinical supervision

Dr Helen Halpern

Describes a model directly labelled as clinical supervision for GPs, which uses systemic theory ideas, though acknowledging that modern psychoanalysis has absorbed a lot of systemic ideas. She also asks the question “was Balint the first person to write about clinical supervision for GPs?” The model uses narrative between supervisor and supervisee but, unlike Balint group work, it is a dialogue based on questions about the story from the supervisor, rather than free interaction involving feelings as well.

Where the Wild winds Blow

Diana Bass, Psychotherapist

Description of work counselling South Asian medical students who come to the university counselling service in a large London teaching hospital. These students may be particularly vulnerable because of immigration history, possible family poverty and different cultural and religious background. They are also trying or being pushed to succeed in a foreign culture, possibly beyond previous family achievement. Ms Bass finds this work stimulating but difficult

Reflections on themes in Death in Venice and their relevance to elements of the doctor-patient relationship in General Practice

Sophie Park, winner Balint Prize Essay 2007

This essay focuses on Achenbach's, the hero's, failure to integrate emotional and intellectual life. She reflects that we need to integrate our lives and our patient's lives, better in medicine and that Balint groups are helpful for this.

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GERMAN BULLETIN

Steffen Häfner

Balint-Journal March 2008

**Zeitschrift der Deutschen Balint-Gesellschaft, der Österreichischen Balint-Gesellschaft
und der Schweizerischen Balint-Gesellschaft**

www.thieme-connect.de

www.thieme.de/balint

Scheerer S (2008) Die frühe Störung in der Balintgruppe (The Basic Fault in the Balint Group). Balint-Journal 9, 1-4.

Sigmar Scheerer describes the development process of the interplay between the presenter with his case presentation, the group, the leadership – and possibly the supervisor in seminars – from the supervisor's view in leaders' seminars for the first three successive groups of study meetings. Early disorders of the cases presented come across a developing Balint group viewed as a whole organism. D. Sander's treatises (1978) containing excellent descriptions of the history of group theories as well as the extensive research work carried out by the working team around K. Höck (1981/1982) are applied to the Balint group dynamics. The concept of basic fault (M. Balint, 1968) and the psychotic/borderline organization of the personality (O. F. Kernberg, 1996) are described as an early disorder and are related to the bonds theory (J. Bowlby).

Schiltenswolf M (2008) Medizin der Schmerzen – Divinum est dolorem sedare (Pain Medicine). Balint-Journal 9, 5-11.

While antique medicine derived its poor capacities of pain treatment by rising into divine expressions, the last decades brought along a pain medicine of its own. Patients are recruited as customers for a pain free life. Surgical and pharmacological treatment options are preferred to biopsychosocial approaches despite poor prognoses. The influence of industry on the pain market is striking.

Portwich P (2008) Zeitgemäße medizinische Patientenversorgung mit Balint – Wege zu einer personenzentrierten ärztlichen Berufspraxis in dem Kontext einer postmodernen Gesellschaftskultur (Contemporary Medical Care with Balint – Ways Towards a Person-Centered Medical Practice in a Context of Postmodern Society and Culture). Balint-Journal 9, 12-17.

Philipp Portwich points out that medicine is challenged by new tasks: In a postmodern social context, patients need an individualistic and holistic treatment with an appropriate communication and adequate ethical and value oriented attitude of the doctor. The epidemiologically proven increase of psychic and psychosomatic disorders requires extensive professional psychosocial competence of the doctors. This constellation makes changes of the

medical system necessary with the ideas of Michael Balint and with Balint groups as essential elements. They contribute to the application of the patient-centered method in medicine and they support the doctor to gain clinical expertise in order to decide on the practical implementation of evidence-based knowledge for the individual patient.

Barthe C (2008) Herzlich willkommen beim Hausarzt! Über die Schwierigkeit, als Herzpatient in seinen Ängsten vom Hausarzt verstanden zu werden (Welcome to Your General Practitioner (GP)! About the Difficulty of Patients with Heart Diseases to be Understood by Their GP). Balint-Journal 9, 18-22.

The amelioration of quality of life is the task of modern medicine. Patients with heart disease are moving between their general practitioner and the specialist. Besides technical management of their heart disease they are looking for partnership in managing the psychosomatic problem of their disease. The work in Balint groups reveals the unspoken needs of the patient and makes the general practitioner more able to understand by recognizing his own blind spot within the conflict with the patient.

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E-BULLETIN BALINT n° 53 SPRING 2007

BALINT FRANCE

Louis Velluet

Reflection

« Objects language, according to Pierre Benoît » by Jean Perroy (“Le langage des objets selon Pierre Benoît »)

The «objects» as a psychoanalytical concept was one of the main thinking works of Pierre Benoît, pediatrician and psychoanalyst, member of Jacques Lacan’s “Ecole Freudienne and Françoise Dolto friend.

Live from provinces

“Intervision”: an innovator tool by Alain Bardoux (“Intervision: un outil novateur”)

Exchange groups about common addict patients between GP’s, specialists and social workers are now being held in the North. To speak about the difficulties or the needs (those of the patients as well as those of the professionals) is a way for a better compliance of the patients and more efficiency for the doctors.

Day mood letter

“When Balint is related to us” by France Meslet-Guerazzi (“Quand Balint nous est conté”)

Some thoughts about Hélène Oppenheim book (“Read Michael Balint a pragmatic clinician”) and the friendly, but obtuse, relationship of Lacan with Balint.

Who’s got a case?

“ I’ll name them: “the lames” by Jean Maclouf (“Je les appellerai: les boîteux »).

The practitioner guesses it’s a really bad-matched couple but apparently only their daughter is sick and limping.

Free paper

“Free thinking what a venture!” by Pierre Gelly (“La liberté de penser: quelle aventure!”)

A professor was narrating to three medicine students a tale: a pregnant woman said that her baby was a dog. Two of them explained to her that according to medicine this was impossible. The third boy lets go him fancy and sought secret sense, and he was right... and so balintian!

Books report

By Marie-Anne Puel

“Sex, belief and menopause” from Daniel Delanoé, psychiatrist and anthropologist (Sexe, croyance et menopause”, Hachette editions). The varied approaches of this eventful women’s life period.

“Practices” (“Pratiques”) n°36. New presentation of a French “progressive” review. Theme: Human Sciences significance in medical training.

French Society life

“Training seminars for GP’s: outcome” by Françoise Auger

Since 2004 French Balint Society is recognized by the O.G.C. (French” Organisme de gestion conventionnel”) and officially entitled for GP’s post-graduate training. Since that date more than 200 practitioners were in our seminars.

BALINT INTERNATIONAL

“The “after-Balint”: an English example” by Marie-Anne Puel

Chapter 4 translation of John Salinsky and Paul Sackin book (“What do you feel Doctor?”) proposed to the French readers.

BULLETIN BALINT n° 54 SUMMER 2007

BALINT FRANCE

Louis Velluet

Original paper

“Training balint and psychoanalytic drifts” by Louis Velluet (“Formation balint et dérives psychanalytiques”. A main and specific French failure is the high-brow mentality. Last years in France many psychologists and psychiatrists wanted to lead training groups with intellectual prejudices. The author tries to recall the original balintian thought and the significance of practitioner responsibility and clinical realities.

Day mood letter

“The Observation” by France Meslet-Guerazzi

To grow into a group leader require patience. For a long time, as group observer, we must learn to keep quiet and listen things said...or unsaid. Hard work indeed, but essential.

French society life

“The Workshop for medical training story” by Françoise Auger

The author relates the long and difficult way for French Balint Society enabling to organize national medical training seminars.

Theoretical reflection

“The indispensable metapsychology” by Roger Lagueux

(“La nécessaire métapsychologie ») For Sigmund Freud metapsychology is the process to clarify and get down thoroughly into hypothesis about unconscious. For the balintians the theoretical process of Michael Balint, especially in “the fundamental fault”, gets on the same way.

Books report

Marie-Anne Puel recalls :

« The Doctor, a psy ignorant of himself » (“ Le médecin un psy qui s’ignore, Médecine de Famille et psychanalyse ») Louis Velluet (Lharmattan 2006)

and « From oneself lost to the others care » (“ De la perte de soi au soin des autres”) Brigitte Greiss (Doin 2007)

Reflection

« Visibility and uneasiness » by Brigitte Greiss (« La visibilité et l’inquiétude »)

The sight of the patient body in its setting can be for a balintian nurse the start-point of deep thoughts. How to stay medically objective when there are people hurt or in suffering with their whole real life around them?

Live from provinces

“Balintians from Poitou-Charente start to be opened for the network care system”

by Jacky Goimier. That organisation, in palliative care for example, is a way to prevent practitioners burn-out and Balint groups can complete the system.

BALINT INTERNATIONAL

“What kind of training for the leaders?” by Marie-Anne Puel

During the IBF meeting in Potsdam (Friday 23 and Saturday 24 March 2006) there were two kinds of demonstration groups. First in classic way, two members exposing one after other particular or difficult leadership cases, second as a fishbowl with a beginner young lady for group leader.

“Week-end at Longhirst by Michelle Moreau-Ricaud

The Newcastle group was born four years ago. Our colleague reports on the exciting weekend organized with the London Balint Society, and by the leaders of the group: Jane Drommers (GP's) and Esti Rimmer (psychologist). In an aristocratic place, the beautiful Hall of Longhirst in Scotland, classic Balint groups and fishbowl alternated with pleasant dinners and walks. The author wishes are to see also in France, a Scottish-British-French meeting, why not?

BULLETIN BALINT n°55 AUTUMN 2007

BALINT FRANCE

Louis Velluet

History. Archives

« Evidence Based Medicine or Emotion Based Medicine?» by Michelle Moreau-Ricaud

This lecture was done in September 2007 in Lisbon for the IBF Congress. Author was reminding the psychoanalytic researches to consider recognition of patients' emotions as an essential part of therapy in medicine.

Free paper

“Response to Louis Velluet” by Pierre Gelly

Some reserves on LV's paper (See Bulletin n°53: “Training Balint and psychoanalytic drifts”)

Day mood letter

“Jealousy” by France Meslet-Guerazzi

Swifts thoughts in connection with the great Will, his “Othello”, and a sad story in a female issue.

Survey

“Expectations for training by Roger Lagueux (“Attentes en formation”)

Results of an inquiry among the French Balint Society members.

Books report

“A republishing much expected by Luc Canet (“Une réédition très attendue”)

“Revival of Budapest school” (“Le renouveau de l'école de Budapest) book of Michelle Moreau-Ricaud is a fascinating description of Michael Balint theoretical research, since 1926 to his death, on the birth of the “subject” and the development of psychoanalytic training group for practitioners.

BALINT INTERNATIONAL, by Marie-Anne Puel

Right from Lisbon

“Balint for students: obligatory or optional?” by André Matalon, Benjamin Maoz, Tzivia Nahmani and Stanley Rabin. (“Les groupes Balint d'étudiants: obligatoires ou facultatifs?”)

Communication at IBF Congress. Three years of an experiment work in Tel-Aviv University confirm the results of French works (René-Descartes University ParisV: 2001 to 2008). They show that obligatory groups for students in Family Medicine are accepted and appreciate. Immediate results were no different of those from “adults” practitioners groups.

“Praise of moan versus complaint” by François Berton: where you understand that “la plainte” (in French only one word) may be or a moan or a complaint: very useful to understand what the patient finally wants: just to say things or ask something.