

Tribute to Professor Jan C. Bastiaans, M.D., 1917–1997

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DR. BASTIAANS WILL BE REMEMBERED as a very passionate psychiatrist. At his funeral, his eldest son reminded us that “daddy” was always busy with his patients. He was always there for them and played an important part in the lives of many. Grateful ex-patients tried to keep in touch with him to the very end; many of them came all the way to the ceremony in his hometown to bid him final farewell.

IN his eulogy, the Director of Centrum '45 (the national center for medical and psychological treatment of survivors of World War II and members of the Resistance) explained that Bastiaans played an important role in the establishment of broad social recognition of the long-term effects of the evils of the war.¹

Unfortunately, Bastiaans did not evaluate the effects of his therapeutic work in a scientific way. He realised this at the end of his career, and tried in 1986 to interest the Ministry of Health in a study to assess his treatment methods. That is why he donated his archives to scientific research. Finally, it was decided that a pilot study should be conducted, to determine if the material lent itself to evaluation. Researchers concluded that a quantitative retrospective study was not possible, but a qualitative retrospective study on the other hand would be desirable, useful and sensible. In this way it would be possible to collect and document important data about LSD psychotherapy treatment for severely traumatized war victims in the Netherlands. Moreover, these hard-to-get data should be protected against loss.²

Until now, no such study has been undertaken, although many people think it would be very interesting and worthwhile. Therefore, the cVo-Addiction Research Institute of Utrecht University prepared a proposal and has sought funding for it. The central question is to find out how the Bastiaans' method can be characterized as constructed from the different data sources available (records, documents, files, notes, audiovisual recordings, letters, reports, etc.). This can be done by several methods, such as research into the records and files, interviews

with key figures (experts, colleagues and maybe ex-patients) and analysis of audiovisual material.

The aim of the study is to contribute to scientific research into the clinical use of hallucinogens and to prevent the loss of important data collected by Bastiaans and his staff members. Several organizations and institutes in the Netherlands are supporting the proposal. A study into LSD-assisted psychotherapy conducted by Bastiaans is considered relevant to the treatment of people who struggle with post-traumatic stress disorder.

At present, the application of this research proposal³ is under examination by a research foundation at Utrecht University. Additional funding will be necessary in the future. Readers who may be interested in contribution to this important study may contact the undersigned or make donations to MAPS, earmarked for our study. Posthumous respect for Prof. Bastiaans' scientific insights may then be added to the already existing respect for his human qualities. •

References

¹ Schreuder, B.J.N. (1997). *Ned. Tijdschrift Geneeskunde* 1997, 13 December, 141 (50).

² van der Ploeg, H.M., J.W. Reerds, W. Chr. Klijn, J. Mook, P.P. Moorman (1987). *Onderzoek naar de behandeling van oorlogsslachtoffers met LSD-psychotherapie: een verslag van een vooronderzoek*. Leiden: Rijksuniversiteit Leiden, vakgroep Psychiatrie, Kinder- en Jeugdpsychiatrie en medische Psychologie.

³ Maalsté, N.J.M., H.C. Ossebaard (1997). *Onderzoeksaanvraag Charles Wright Mills fonds: De "methode Bastiaans" in retrospectief*. Een inventarisatie en analyse van historisch materiaal met betrekking tot LSD-ondersteunende psychotherapie. Utrecht: Centrum voor Verslavingsonderzoek, Universiteit Utrecht.

Maalsté, N.J.M., H.C. Ossebaard (1997). *Proposal to Charles Wright Mills Fund. Bastiaans' method in retrospective: An inventory study of historical material concerning LSD assisted psychotherapy*. Utrecht: cVo-Addiction Research Institute, Utrecht University.

