

# Operationalized Psychodynamic Diagnosis OPD-2: Manual of Diagnosis and Treatment Planning


*By Opd Task Force*

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

The OPD-2: Manual of Diagnosis and Treatment Planning offers a sehr gut, in fact, an excellent alternative to the DSM-IV, PDM, ICD-10, and other psychiatric classification systems.... As an alternative, the OPD-2 gives a comprehensive view of psychodynamic thinking, while embracing findings from other psychological disciplines.

The book is generally readable yet theoretically precise; it should be enriching even for those who do not plan to strictly follow the operationalization. Technically more of a manual than a book with extensive narrative material, OPD-2 offers an excellent alternative to DSM-IV description [and] also offers extensive material on treatment. The system can also be used by mental health administrators in planning and in designing treatment programs and accountability tools. Further, the highly detailed presentation is excellent for teaching purposes to help beginning clinicians gain a fuller understanding of psychodynamic considerations in diagnosis and treatment. The interview and case study sections provide a clear approach to the process of diagnostic understanding. Both authors of this review believe the OPD-2 is a worthy alternative to DSM and ICD in presenting psychodynamic themes. The OPD-2 deserves careful consideration during this period of reevaluation of diagnostic systems. --Dolores McCarthy & Franziska Hoffmann in *PsycCRITIQUES*, November 5, 2008

"Translated from German, Operationalized Psychodynamic Diagnosis OPD 2: Manual of Diagnosis and Treatment Planning offers a sehr gut, in fact, an excellent alternative to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders(DSM IV; 4th ed., text rev.; American Psychiatric Association, 2000), Psychodynamic Diagnostic Manual (PDM; Alliance of Psychoanalytic Organizations, 2006), International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems (ICD 10; 10th ed.; World Health Organization, 1992), and other psychiatric classification systems. This review is written from the perspectives of an American university professor with colleagues in Heidelberg (where the book was written) and of a German from Berlin as a visiting scholar in the United States. Dolores McCarthy, as an American academic, was most impressed by the complexity of the system; Franziska Hoffmann, a German graduate student, was more aware of the ideological and political complexities underlying the system. The most accepted diagnostic systems include the DSM IV (American Psychiatric Association, 2000), the PDM (Alliance of Psychoanalytic Organizations, 2006), and the ICD 10 (World Health Organization, 1992). Although the DSM IV is the most accepted nosology in the United States, it has many critics (Gert & Culver, 2004; Ghaemi, 2003; Lewis, 2006; O'Donohue, Fowler, & Lilienfeld, 2007; Sadler, 2004; Widiger, 2007). While many of the diagnostic systems stress objectivity, some professionals believe that they do so at the loss of psychological dynamism. Both systems [DSM IV and ICD 10], however, in their effort to simplify and thus facilitate communication and research have reduced the richness and clinically appropriate level of diagnosis in psychiatry... . The OPD... is a major effort to bridge the gap between descriptive clarity and precision on the one hand, and clinical sophistication and appropriate individualized differentiation, on the other... . It is a diagnostic system that successfully attempts a synthesis between descriptive and dynamic features, and respects the interaction between biological, psychodynamic and psychosocial determinants of illness. The OPD 2 is warmly recommended to all professionals in the mental

health field. (v vi.) The OPD 1 and its current revision, OPD 2, are specialized systems in Germany, not commonly used in regular clinical practice; the ICD 10 (not DSM IV, which is also considered specialized) is the most common (Gabriele Haertel-Weiss, personal communication, June 2, 2008). The ICD 10, like the DSM IV, is descriptive and symptom based. As an alternative, the OPD 2 gives a comprehensive view of psychodynamic thinking, while embracing findings from other psychological disciplines.

Psychodynamic theory, deriving from Freud's work, has had a contentious history in diagnostic systems. The OPD is representative of the pluralistic system of modern German psychology. In fact, psychology historians refer to the current period as the (relative) consensus stage (Sprung & Sprung, 2001). Starting in the 1930s, all major schools but depth psychology integrated themselves into an all-embracing system of psychology, forming general standards of methodology. With the OPD, psychodynamic theory is joining into that process. Being a scientist influenced by the great Romantics of the early 19th century, Sigmund Freud was committed to providing insight into the mystery of the human psyche. His inheritors have become increasingly concerned about reaching more clarity in psychodynamic concepts, thereby making them accessible for evaluation and research efforts....." -- PsycCRITIQUES, Vol. 53, issue 45, November 2008, Excerpt from the review by Dolores McCarthy & Franziska Hoffmann

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