

INTRODUCING THE INSTITUTES

The Milton H. Erickson Institute of Rezé, France

Written by Roxanna Erickson-Klein

Psychiatrist, Thierry Servillat, is the driving force behind the *Milton H. Erickson Institute of Rezé*, located in the small community of Rezé, in Nantes, in the west of France. This Institute had an energetic start with the promise of continuing quality and growth. The secret to its success is a dynamic engagement of others to share and build a vision. Along with Servillat, two other psychiatrists, Elise LeLarge and Isabel Stimec, serve on the Board of Directors and the training staff also includes psychotherapists, Bernadette Servillat, and Pierre-Henri Garnier, and Edith Bezard, a physician specializing in pain management.

Servillat was educated in the traditional psychoanalytic methodology, but sought a broader framework on which to develop his psychiatric style. In the early 1990s, he learned about the work of Milton Erickson from Jacques Antoine Malarawicz, who brought Ericksonian training to Nantes. The Ericksonian workshop was sold out prior to Servillat learning about it, and he had to wait a full year for another opportunity. Over the next decade, Ericksonian training proved a key factor that changed Servillat's perspective on how to help the patients he treated.

After that initial introduction, Servillat sought to learn more about Erickson's work from a variety of sources. The more he learned the more he recognized that Ericksonian methodology, with its forward thinking and creative approaches, was the right direction for him. By 2000, he had co-founded the *Erickson Institute of Nantes*, with a mission of bringing the concepts of brief therapy and hypnosis to the community. This Institute offered information to local professionals that focused on a modern appreciation for the use of hypnosis in clinical practice.

After a number of years working with the Institute of Nantes, Servillat wanted to explore the integration of a variety of approaches, and examine how hypnosis is relevant in a vast array of therapeutic directions. He developed a vision of ongoing research and training that explores the interface of Ericksonian hypnosis with a broad base of methodologies.

In 2012, Servillat joined with a group of like-minded professionals to found the *Erickson Institute of Rezé*. Institute goals include: exploration of a multitude of therapeutic directions for their utility in an integrated psychotherapy bringing high quality hypnosis education to the professional community; collaboration with institutes of higher education; and the nourishment of clinical research. The six faculty members represent many years of diverse clinical experience, including work

with children, kinetic approaches, and creative art using information technology.

Headquartered in the *Interdisciplinary Center for Integrative Therapy (CITI)* where some members hold their clinical practice, the group meets weekly to discuss cases, and plan and explore their future directions. A training program is in place, in which trainers do three-day workshops for the local professional community covering various therapeutic topics. The in-depth workshops, offered at 10-week intervals, bring new understandings about the broad use of therapeutic directions and how effective education can enhance resources brought together in clinical practice. This local training is complemented with training by experts from France and the international community. Recently, Roxanna Erickson-Klein and Kay Colbert from the U.S. presented a two-day program on the *Integration of Hypnosis with Mindfulness*. In concert with this latest workshop a documentary about the work of Milton H Erickson, *Wizard of the Desert*, was shown for the first time in France. The Institute sponsored the French subtitling and now holds the role of French distributor for this new film. Erickson-Klein was present for the premier and concluded the showing with an informal discussion with the large audience.

The Institute maintains a close relationship with the *Confederation French Speaking of Hypnosis and Brief Therapies (CFHTB)*. The CFHTB is a highly respected regional confederation of 32 institutes in France, Belgium, and Switzerland that work harmoniously to advance the study of hypnosis. The CFHTB is hosting the August 2015 *International Society of Hypnosis Congress* in Paris entitled the *Roots & Future of Consciousness*. A member of the organizational committee, Servillat, is also co-director of the scientific program.

Servillat is honored to have been bestowed the title of editor-in-chief of the French journal *Hypnose*. Now in its seventh year, the journal publishes articles regarding research and the practice of hypnosis. Based on Ericksonian values of creativity and ingenuity, *Hypnose* prints 4,000 copies, though it is not yet available online. The aesthetics of *Hypnose* are an integral part of the publication and it is designed so that readers will want to keep it in their libraries.

Research is another arm of interest for the Institute. At this time there is a collaborative with the University of Nantes in a study that uses a qualitative research design to better understand the role of therapists in psychotherapeutic intervention. This project seeks to delineate the nature of the relationship between therapist and patient, and to contribute to the understanding of how hypnosis affects the therapeutic relationship.

Servillat believes the *Milton H. Erickson Institute of Rezé* is a place that stimulates creative thinking. He describes hypnosis as a cauldron wherein a broad array of approaches can be introduced to training groups and investigated for their utility. The work done in the two short years of the Institute speaks for itself—it is the work of a dedicated group of health care providers in a stimulating environment, sharing their insights in a most generous way.



The Milton H Erickson Institute of Rezé: Pierre-Henri Garnier, Thierry Servillat, Elise LeLarge, Isabel Stimec, Bernadette Servillat, and Edith Bezard