



Systemic Perspectives & Global Social Issues

International Colloquium

24th – 27th November 2008

Woodbrooke, Birmingham, UK

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& Gaye Donaldson**

In collaboration with
The International Systemic Constellations Association (ISCA) &
The International Intensive Workshop on Systemic Resolutions

The Colloquium

This colloquium will use systemic thinking and systemic constellations to enquire into the political, philosophical and social implications of some of today's most pressing and seemingly intractable global issues.

We recognise that the various systems to which we all belong – personal, professional, social, cultural, national – are becoming increasingly interconnected: each individual and each system is becoming more consciously and intimately related to global society's problems and concerns. With this recognition comes an awareness that if we rigidly hold a position too small for the full truth of these interconnecting systems it will cost us the congruence and health of the whole.

The question that emerges is how we may develop constructive thinking and action that bridges the system boundaries which all too often divide us. It is this question that we invite you to explore with us.

Speakers will include **CSISS** patron Hunter Beaumont, Rupert Sheldrake and Anngwyn St Just, as well as systemic constellations facilitators, artists, storytellers and musicians who will all contribute to the expansion of our enquiry.

The Learning Journey

We will begin each day with a plenary speaker who will illuminate the theme for the day and then highlight aspects of it; following this introduction we will break into smaller groups to populate and animate the theme's field by drawing upon the specialist knowledge, personal experience and history of participants.

Systemic constellations will be instrumental in supporting this exploration, as will narrative, ritual and music, all adding alternative channels of access to our themes. The playful and heuristic spirit of Puck will weave through our gathering, fulfilling a vital role in supporting and harmonising large-group dynamics. The colloquium will conclude with a ritual to manifest our hopes, insights and aspirations.

Focus

The conference will revolve around three interweaving themes:

■ **The quest for survival - war, migration, concepts of identity, polarized religions and secularism**

Seemingly each day we are faced with issues exacerbated by globalisation – polarised religions and secularism struggling to co-exist or hold sway, local communities struggling to thrive within a global market, and an environment whose resources are stretched to breaking point by both the needs and the acquisitiveness of modern society. Viewing global issues through a systemic lens, we will explore creative and constructive responses to these issues.

What and where is our interconnection? How can we tolerate being 'alright' in the face of so much seeming 'all wrong'? How can we widen the field of compassion to the point where enmity dissolves?

■ **Presence, evocation, intention and the nature of the field**

We will explore the power of presence, of the acceptance of 'what is'. We will investigate how the attitudes and opinions we rigidly hold affect or limit the scope of any enquiry we may engage in, and look at ways to loosen the hold of our belief-systems in the interests of clarity and creativity.

How do we, simply by the quality of our presence, affect the spheres in which we move? With this understanding how can we best exercise our own personal capacities as summoners of the field? Almost nothing works without a sense of hope; where do hope and intention meet as we look towards our collective future?

■ **Contexts, contextual thinking and co-creation - the support of collective action**

We will explore ways to energise people when they are faced with the issues and difficulties that arise from belonging to a number of apparently conflicting value systems.

How do we take action that respects and meets the disparate needs and beliefs of these systems whilst also advancing and developing the whole? How do we find the resources and the spaces for collective action? In this light, how do we develop thinking that bridges different contexts in the world?

Programme

24th November 2008: Dinner & opening session at 6 pm

25th, 26th, 27th November 2008: We will meet from 9.30 am

27th November 2008: The Colloquium will close at 6 pm.

There will be time to meet informally.

Location

The Colloquium will take place at Woodbrooke, near Birmingham, UK. Woodbrooke is a Quaker Study Centre based in the former family home of the local chocolate maker, George Cadbury, himself a Quaker. The house is set in 10 acres of grounds with an organic walled garden, a lake, boathouse, and arboretum.

Woodbrooke is situated only 15 minutes drive from Birmingham city centre and is close to mainline rail services and Birmingham International Airport.

Accommodation

There are a limited number of residential places at Woodbrooke, and we can also provide you with a list of local hotels and B&Bs.

Eligibility

The Colloquium is open to those with a personal or professional interest in systemic thinking and social responsibility.

Fees

- The fee for the Colloquium for UK delegates is £ 345 + VAT
 - The fee for the Colloquium for International delegates is £ 290 + VAT
- (Fees includes all sessions, meals and refreshments)

Residential fee per person for 3 nights' accommodation at Woodbrooke

- single room with en suite: £ 165
- twin room with en suite: £ 120

Contact information

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