
EDITOR'S REPORT

It is a rare privilege to be selected to continue the rich traditions of the *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, traditions so ably articulated and framed in historical perspective by Leon Eisenberg and David DeMaso in their introduction to this journal's forthcoming 50-year index.* That sense of privilege is quickly eroded—"overmatched" is perhaps the word from our all-pervasive sports metaphors—by an oft viscerally experienced sense of responsibility for stewardship of those traditions.

For the traditions I refer to are many, and not alone those of excellence and of leadership—as precious as we count those qualities. "Ortho," the *Journal*, much as Ortho, the Association, has accepted and met the challenge of a multidisciplinary approach, both to scholarly inquiry and action. It wisely understood, earlier than most, that the knowledge base, perspectives, analytic tools and methods of disciplines well beyond those of our early holy triad must be incorporated into the study of human behavior: not simply welcomed, or accepted as membership category F (promptly encapsulated and walled off like a foreign body), but truly infused, absorbed. This *Journal*, as its parent organization, has not sought to be "all things to all men," but to an increasing extent has sought to encompass those disciplines contributing to the study of mental health and, more broadly, of human adaptation. Multidisciplinary can mean, and in some quarters has meant, little more than parallel play, a politely controlled cacophony involving proximity without communication. The *Journal* and the Association have sought more, sought to be *interdisciplinary*, aimed higher than simple sums of parts. By contrast with many cousin disciplinary journals, we have welcomed theoretical contributions as well as research reports, critical conceptual analyses as well as new data. And while we have not demonstrated a catholic or Whitmanesque, much less promiscuous,

embracing of each and all research strategies and methodologies, we have developed a proper respect for a wide array of methods, qualitative as well as quantitative, when employed in sophisticated fashion appropriate to the specific questions at hand and the general state of inquiry in an area of investigation. Illuminating case presentations, fieldwork reports, naturalistic observations, and analyses of archival data have shared space with experimental and correlational studies to our readers' enrichment.

If our tradition has indeed welcomed a broad spectrum of divergent theories and research contributions, surely that has been paralleled in our representation of modes of intervention—individual therapies, couples, family, multi-family, group; crisis, short-term, symptomatic, sector, intensive reconstructive; private and public; outpatient, day treatment, night treatment, half-way settings, residential, and hospital; preventive, therapeutic, rehabilitative, and, alas, custodial; biological, psychological, educational, social. Such is the richness of our field that the above entries just bespeak easily recognizable nodal points surrounded by a welter of variants and combinations. More to the point, as our worlds of practice and program gradually expanded to include more than assessment, treatment, and rehabilitation, an increasing set of forms of human services—as celebrated as day care, as quietly diffuse as home visit programs for the elderly—entered our meetings and our *Journal*. Even in this *Journal's* earliest decades, lively articles on creativity could coexist comfortably back-to-back with articles on severe delinquency or care of post-encephalitics: it hardly startles us today to find a paper on treatment of early autism nestling alongside papers on health promotion or programs for enhancing social competence in normal preschoolers. With sharply increased awareness of social context, of milieu, of ecological variables, our tradition has extended to study of small and large social organizations, including our basic societal institutions—and inevitably the dynamics of organizational intervention and change processes in those spheres, too.

* *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry: Annotated Index, Volumes 1-50, 1930-1980*. JAI Press, Greenwich, Conn. (1984, in press).

Finally, anyone acquainted with Ortho recognizes immediately the vigor and pervasiveness of its social conscience. Destructiveness, inequity, coercive control, violence to body or spirit, injustice, abuse, gross maldistribution of societal resources, rewards or privations, distorted or warping social values, crippling national policy—the list is illustrative rather than representative or exhaustive—will, to capture the plea at the end of the play, “be paid attention.” So, too, from another perspective, will the anguish and the rights of the vulnerable, the neglected, the disadvantaged, the abused. Over the span of years whatever respect we are due for not often lapsing into the cosmic, into self-congratulatory moral indignation, into knee-jerk reflex political positions, or into Olympian disdain, perhaps the larger triumph or more compelling tradition is that of Ortho's willingness to question, probe, scold, and, ultimately, hold up to the harsh spotlight of inquiry some of our very own cherished (and unexamined) assumptions, policies, procedures and practices, some of our own inviolate turf, profit centers, security blankets, and cards of identity.

It is no accident that I have extracted for special emphasis these particular traditions from my longstanding, fully requited love for our *Journal*: they rank high among the traditions I hope to uphold and extend. Clearly, from volume to volume and Editor to Editor, we have had, and no doubt will continue to have, transient tilts, excesses, even shocking lacunae in this journal as in our disciplines. Solid of timber as our ship has been, we claim no immunity from buffeting by the winds of doctrine. Yet our essential values and vision have rarely been long or significantly submerged.

Indeed, one fragment of any journal's tradition is that the editors' compensation includes license for their minor bigotries. This new editor's bigotries, with all the reliable force of the return of the suppressed, will undoubtedly surface repeatedly. In their bilious forms, they include dyspeptic or, at least, narcoleptic reactions to: chatty talks cosmetically disguised as scientific papers; pot-boilers designed more for impact on promotions committees than to enlighten; pseudoquantification; multiple

overlapping presentations of the same study in numerous separate journal articles; ill-described, hopelessly unrepresentative, or disappearing samples; rote, uncritical reviews of relevant literature; single-measure studies, preferably with home-made measures; “here's how we do it in our program” articles *sans* relevant data on effectiveness; “product differentiation” papers trying to establish memorable differences between minimally varying techniques or programs; reports of development of tests or measures sold well before their time; replays of conceptual positions already well staked out if not becalmed; statements of the depths of our good intentions and opposition to social evil; attributions substituted for arguments; cheap-shot quasipolitical slurs; bibliographic entries for scientific data which refer exclusively to an Eastern seaboard newspaper; language usage that transmogrifies time-honored nouns into verbs (we will prioritize exclusion of these, and promptly finalize efforts to savage such, rather than let them gradually attrit).

Jest and sporadic attacks of acidity aside, we must and will be sharply selective, by weight of sheer numbers of submissions as well as demanding standards. Phrased in larger terms, I am reminded of the remark of a noted historian when asked sweetly after his lecture whether one mustn't always keep an open mind. “Yes,” he replied, “but not to the point that one's brains fall out.”

Selective, yes, with an accent on new conceptual vistas, theory refinement, meaningful and multiple measurement, productive syntheses, original findings, critical analysis, vigorous appraisal of efficacy, robust explanatory models, theory and research with implications for practice or public policy, rich configurational analysis, relevant cultural or historical insights. And, especially in editorial and opinion columns, discourse that provokes: undermines our cliches, pricks our conscience, and challenges our most ingrained assumptions and practices. Most of all, that which illuminates, extends, reformulates, reveals.

So, let us begin, and by so doing, let us continue.

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