

## Editorial Statement—*Psychotherapy Research*

As *Psychotherapy Research* enters its second quarter-century of publication, the journal's editorial team is undergoing a transition, and we wanted to take this opportunity to share some thoughts with our fellow SPR members. First, we would like to express our gratitude to Chris Muran for his devotion to the journal as co-editor for the past six years. Chris has thoughtfully guided *Psychotherapy Research* with a remarkable mix of wisdom, diplomacy, humor, skill, and determination, and the society is indebted to him for his efforts. Fortunately, SPR will continue to benefit from Chris' leadership in his capacity on the Executive Council as President-elect. We also would like to thank an extraordinarily gifted and devoted team of associate editors, each of whom has served the journal for several years: Scott Baldwin, Miguel Goncalves, Martin Grosse Holtforth, Christoph Flückiger, and Shelly McMain. We are delighted that Christoph will continue as an associate editor, and we are equally happy to announce that the new associate editors are Lynne Knobloch-Fedders, Heidi Levitt, and Andrew Page. We are grateful to Lynne, Heidi, and Andrew for their willingness to share their expertise with the journal.

We also appreciate the work of the book review editors, Mariane Krause and Henning Schauenburg, and would like to welcome Ulrike Dinger as a new book review editor. Furthermore, we wish to publicly thank our editorial assistants, Julian Rubel and Jackson Taylor, as well as all of the advisory editors, abstract translators, ad hoc reviewers, and authors who contribute to the overall strength of the journal.

The vitality of the field of psychotherapy research, and the journal in particular, is reflected in the fact that nearly 300 manuscripts were submitted to the journal last year from scholars in 31 countries on 6 continents. The wide variety of topics addressed by these manuscripts is a testament to the widespread interest among researchers in understanding psychotherapy, how it works, and how to make it more effective.

As co-editors, we would like to continually elevate the quality of the journal. We believe that providing exceptional reviews and action letters will make authors want to submit their best work to *Psychotherapy Research*, ultimately enhancing the journal, its readership, and the field. We believe that authors should receive thorough, timely, thoughtful, and constructive feedback on their work, from reviewers as well as editors. We aspire to write action letters that encourage and help develop the thinking of all researchers, even--or especially--when we reject manuscripts. We believe such a stance fits with the pervasive recognition within SPR that we are all trying to advance knowledge about psychotherapy, and although some studies do so better than others, each researcher should be treated with collegiality and respect. We think that action letters should clearly explain the basis for an editorial decision, should be explicit about revisions that may be necessary, and should be cordial without exception. At the same time, with a broad international perspective of psychotherapy research, and including quantitative as well as qualitative work, high standards are needed to ensure the quality of the journal. We feel committed as editors to have our decisions greatly informed by the expertise and recommendations of our reviewers.

Our primary vision for the journal is for it to be considered the premier outlet in which scholars around the world seek to publish research on psychotherapy. To accomplish this goal, we will publish articles that are likely to have a significant impact on psychotherapy research and practice. For example, we will publish articles that feature novel content, creative research designs, cutting-edge methods, and theoretically significant findings. We believe that invited papers and special sections should be weighed carefully against the natural development of knowledge that results from free-standing submissions.

We will remain conscious of trying to raise the journal's impact factor. Although it is perhaps too narrow a measure of a journal's influence, the impact factor nonetheless is a common metric by which journals are compared, and it affects some researchers' decisions about where to pursue publication. In recent years, the impact factor for *Psychotherapy Research* has tended to range between 1.50 and 2.00.

Publishing more articles that have high visibility and broad impact on the field will likely increase the number of times those articles are cited.

Perhaps above all, we would like to promote research on ideas related to psychotherapy. We believe in the value of rigorous research with clear clinical relevance. Advances in research methods and data analysis have their place, of course, but these ultimately should enhance the practice of psychotherapy. We are somewhat concerned by the prevalence in our field of papers that are statistically sophisticated but which suffer from a lack of complexity in terms of clinical implications. The field does not need any more studies that conclude that therapists should pay attention to the working alliance, no matter how statistically sophisticated. We need to actively bridge the gap between science and practice, and so for studies other than those whose primary aim is to advance understanding of research methods or data analysis, we will expect authors to explicitly communicate the ways in which their findings inform the practice of psychotherapy. We occasionally will call upon professionals who function primarily as psychotherapists to review manuscripts, encouraging them to focus specifically on the theoretical underpinnings and clinical implications of a study.

The international composition of SPR is one of its strengths, as well as a source of healthy tension within the organization and the journal. The editorial team needs to be culturally sensitive without being politically correct, in our opinion. For example, we will be open to publishing papers on topics that may be especially important in certain parts of the world, so long as they bear some relevance to most of the journal's readers and do not compromise the standards of the journal. We believe strongly in diversity along multiple dimensions (e.g., methods, content, authors' country of origin) and will seek to be as inclusive as possible with the goal of elevating the quality of the journal.

We want SPR members to take great pride in their journal; we want psychotherapy researchers around the globe to submit their best work to the journal; we want readers to pick up an issue and expect to find high impact, thought-provoking articles that advance knowledge and enhance practice. We will do our best to make this vision a reality, and we hope you will support us by submitting your best work to *Psychotherapy Research*.

Sincerely,

Jeff Hayes (Incoming Editor) and Wolfgang Lutz (Managing Editor)