
Psychopathology – First Edition 2002

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With the first issue of *Psychopathology* in 2002, the Editorial Board will have a new – tripartite – structure: it will consist of the editors, the associate editors and the editorial advisory board.

The coordinating functions will be shifted from Vienna to Heidelberg. Juan Mezzich has joined in and will support the editors as a representative of the WPA, which implies that *Psychopathology* has become the official journal of the section ‘Classification of the WPA’ in addition to being already the official journal of the WPA section ‘Clinical Psychopathology’.

The introduction of the new board of associate editors aims at a more active recruitment of manuscripts in the future and more focussed editing work with particular competence in subspecialties of psychopathology. The composition of the invited associate and advisory editors mirrors in a way the desired future profile of the journal: there are the familiar fields of descriptive phenomenology and classification including psychometric validation of rating scales and manuals. However, the experimental part of psychopathology will be emphasised more in the future. The journal will probably serve the scientific community best by offering a forum for combining experimental findings with clinical phenomenology and the framing function of conceptualisation. This triangle seems to mark the forefront of innovation and enthusiasm in the field at the moment, and it also facilitates bridging psychopathology and neurobiology on the one hand and psychotherapy on the other hand.

The future emphasis of the journal on experimental psychopathology goes along with a closer alliance with neuropsychologists. The editors are very grateful to those distinguished researchers in experimental psychology who have decided to participate in the editing work. A considerable part of clinical psychiatry, with both its therapeutic and theoretical concepts, has its roots in psycholo-

gy. Examples are the constructs of locus of control, the causal attributional styles, originally worked out by Fritz Heider, later introduced to psychiatry by Kelley and then amalgamated with Seligman’s learned helplessness concept. The present therapeutic approaches to depression could not do without these intense interchanges between clinical psychiatry and psychology. In German psychiatry, the mutual stimulation of phenomenological psychopathology in the 1950s and 60s and experimental and conceptual Gestalt psychology represent another example of very fruitful and close interaction between psychology and psychiatry. The new editorial boards reflect this scientific kinship. Their representation of psychological expertise is meant to invite psychologists to also consider *Psychopathology* for publishing their studies.

Bridging psychopathology and psychotherapy will be another major aim of the journal in the future. Psychopathological analysis of better defined and narrowed-down mental functions are the bases for specific psychotherapeutic approaches. There is a plethora of examples for this, such as the findings of overgeneralised memory in depressives, which, according to some authors, predicts an unfavourable course of depression and is therapeutically changeable, as Watkins et al. [1] have shown. Other examples for neurobiologically clarified functions which may be exploitable for psychotherapy are the better understanding of interactional processes between procedural and insight-oriented declarative learning during psychotherapeutic procedures or the steering of arousing associations by emotions. One field which demonstrates the necessity of expertise in psychopathology in order to outline effective and ethically acceptable psychotherapy and psychopharmacology is that of early detection and intervention programs for patients with prodromal states of psychosis. This rapidly developing field is also represented in the new editorial boards. The field has not only

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gained strong initiating impulses from Scandinavian psychiatry, but also necessarily from child and adolescent psychiatry, since developmental psychopathology needs to be taken into account for understanding functions and dysfunctions in the very early prodromal states. We are very grateful to the Scandinavian groups for their co-operation and we are looking forward to a closer co-operation with child and adolescence psychiatrists, in particular with regard to the developmental psychopathological research which is so important for understanding and treating juvenile psychoses in adult psychiatry.

Important contributions to psychopathology, in particular nosology and the elucidation of risk constellations, have been made by epidemiological research. This field had great impact both on psychopathology and therapy in British and American social psychiatry in the 1950s and 60s when it almost dominated empirical research in the field. Although some of these activities still go on, e.g. in co-morbidity research, in population-based risk studies, in awareness programs and in application studies for diagnostic manuals, the overall impact of the field seems to have subsided. We are grateful that we could also gain the co-operation of a distinguished epidemiologist to strengthen the board with his expertise in this field.

Last but not least, the philosophical part of psychopathology should find a place in this journal. It is called anthropological phenomenology in continental European schools, works mainly with qualitative methods and thus causes methodological controversies but at the same time interesting interchanges to mainstream psychiatry. Although its roots are strong in those continental countries with 'idealistic' histories of philosophy, strongholds have also developed in the UK and in the USA with very active groups. Philosophy-based phenomenology has entered into intense dialogue with neurobiology and has achieved great impact on the ethical debate in psychiatry, e.g. concerning euthanasia and assisted suicide. Its holistic approach based on Max Weber's and Karl Jaspers' principle of 'ideal types' is a critical counterpart to the particularising contemporary diagnostic manuals, which may in some instances blur rather than clarify our view of the functional coherence of mental life. We are grateful to two very active editors in this field, who have come in with their expertise in both philosophy and empirical research to help keep this important part of psychiatry with its great history also in psychology.

We decided that *Psychopathology* should have a broad scope and not compete with highly specialised journals, but it needs a centre of gravity which could be defined as finding the relationship between the clinical, biological, psychological and social facets of disturbed mental func-

tions, as well as suggestions for theory and therapeutic consequences.

This first issue in 2002 presents with a new cover picture. It is an oil painting on canvas by Else Blankenhorn, one of the artists of the Collection Prinzhorn [2]. It was probably painted in 1906 when 33-year-old Else Blankenhorn was a patient in the sanatorium Bellevue in Kreuzlingen, Lake Constance, Switzerland. She had been given the diagnosis schizophrenia. In 1932, the Austrian poet and novelist Joseph Roth (Brand [3] and personal communication) somewhat teasingly wrote about the patients in Kreuzlingen where Else Blankenhorn remained until her death: '... spoiled lunatics out of wealthy homes are treated carefully and costly and in which the wardens were tender like midwives.' Blankenhorn – today considered as one of the most outstanding artists of the collection – took lessons in painting in Kreuzlingen and developed demanding ambition. She painted portraits and landscapes, and her style is reminiscent of 'art brut' and expressionism. Believing herself to be the charitable wife of Wilhelm II, she designed countless variations of bank notes in order to finance the resurrection of the dead.

The collection Prinzhorn with its almost 6,000 specimens has become a symbol of the possible affinity between creativity of expression and psychopathology, including both stigmatisation by the Nazis and exploitation by the avant-garde of the 1920s. The University of Heidelberg and the state of Baden-Württemberg, Germany have established a museum on the hospital precincts. It is open to the public and hopefully contributes to the destigmatisation of psychiatry and the works of art which have come forth from it.

I would like to finish this editorial by extending my deep gratitude to Eberhard Gabriel for his enormous engagement, honesty and friendship during the last two years. I am looking forward to continuing and to building up a broader international frame and editorial basis of this journal together with him. I would also like to express my gratitude to the publisher, Dr. Thomas Karger, for his support of remodelling the journal.

References

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- 2 Jädi I, Brand-Claussen B, Douglas C (eds): *Beyond Reason. Art and Psychosis. Works from the Prinzhorn Collection.* Hayward Gallery exhibition organised by M Caiger-Smith and A Partizio. The Southbank Centre, 1996.
- 3 Brand-Claussen B: *Geschichte einer verrückten Sammlung, Vernissage 2001, 7,9:6–17.*