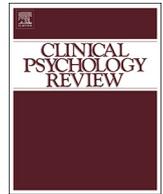




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Editorial

Four decades of excellence: An overview of the past, present, and future of clinical psychology review



The year 2020 will be the 40th year of *Clinical Psychology Review*! The journal was the brain-child of Drs. Alan Bellack and Michelle Hersen, who stated in their inaugural editorial that there was:

a definite need for a publication which meets the need of clinical psychologists to update their knowledge by presenting scholarly but readable reviews of topics relevant to the field, [that] the material should be current, accurate, and reported in a professional and unbiased fashion, [and that] it should not be weighted down with endless citations and molecular details of specific studies (1981; p. 2).

In this spirit, the journal began publishing review articles in 1981 and quickly established itself as a staple resource for clinical psychology researchers and practitioners, a function it continues to serve nearly 40 years after its inception. Indeed, under the leadership of its Editor-in-Chief, *Clinical Psychology Review* has become one of the most influential journals in the clinical psychology field, building to an all-time high InCites Journal Citation Reports impact factor of 9.904 in 2018 and ranking 2nd of 130 journals in the Clinical Psychology category.

As a consequence of increasing popularity over its first decade, the number of *Clinical Psychology Review* issues published annually increased from 4 in 1981 through 1983, to 6 in 1984 through 1991, to 8 in 1992 to the present. A variety of styles of review articles have been published over the years; but, also as a consequence of increasing popularity, meta-analyses became particularly prominent during the past 2 decades, comprising upwards of half of all published articles in *Clinical Psychology Review* in recent years. In efforts to increase international reach, in 2000 Dr. Nick Tarrier was introduced as the European Editor, a role that he held through to its discontinuation in 2011. Dr. Hersen departed shortly thereafter in 2011, leaving Dr. Bellack as the sole Editor-in-Chief in 2011 through early 2018, at which time the role of Editor-in-Chief was assumed by Dr. Gordon Asmundson.

While core aspects of *Clinical Psychology Review* remain true to the original vision of Drs. Bellack and Hersen, in early 2019 the journal rolled out several changes to its senior editorial team, its editorial structure, and the editorial model from which it operates. These changes, led by publisher Kate Wilson and Dr. Asmundson, were initiated to address several observed inequities and inefficiencies in journal operations. Herein we wish to briefly outline these changes, provide an update of key journal features that are relevant to readers and potential authors, and highlight some of the initiatives that the new senior editorial team is planning over the coming years.

Changes to the senior editorial team and its structure were made to address current and ongoing evolution in the way science

communication operates. With the support of Elsevier, we have re-structured editorial responsibilities, moving away from the Editor-in-Chief model. Rather than the sole Editor-in-Chief model common to many journals and practiced by *Clinical Psychology Review* since the departure of Dr. Hersen in 2011, with one lead editor determining the course and vision of the journal, we have adopted an approach in which 5 editors have equal input on the vision, direction, and policy of the journal. In collaboration with Elsevier, the editors were selected to represent and cover the broad range of clinical psychological science that is reported in the journal, to be multi-national, and to have balanced gender. Joining Dr. Asmundson on the senior editorial team are Drs. Ernst Koster (Belgium), Christine Purdon (Canada), Annemeike van Straten (The Netherlands), and Michael Zvolensky (United States). Also, on a rotating basis, 1 of the 5 editors will assume a newly established role as Developmental Editor, with specific responsibility for initiation of special issues, implementing the initiatives agreed upon by the larger senior editorial team, conducting initial screening of submissions to the journal, and providing daily oversight of journal operations.

It is our intention to maintain the reputation of *Clinical Psychology Review* as a journal that publishes work which yields authoritative conclusions about psychopathology, assessment, and intervention across a diverse range of issues pertinent to clinical psychology. As committed scientist-practitioners, we also envision *Clinical Psychology Review* as facilitating translation of knowledge into practice and, true to the vision of Drs. Bellack and Hersen, of being an essential resource for clinicians. As noted above, the style of reviews has shifted over the years, with a significant increase in the proportion of meta-analyses. We have noticed that this increase is characterized by the inclusion of a considerable number of meta-analytic reviews that are based on small samples or provide updates with small incremental value. One of our content goals is to deprioritize those types of meta-analyses in favour of narrative systematic reviews that have a broad relevance to the clinical community and yield a strong, general set of conclusions. Papers on highly specific clinical topics or topics with a narrow empirical basis will be redirected to specialty journals.

Given the high volume of submissions that *Clinical Psychology Review* receives, combined with our continued commitment to publish 8 to 10 manuscripts per issue, we will carefully screen manuscripts for consistency with our guidelines, vision, and scope. As noted above, initial screening will be conducted by the Development Editor; however, in order to ensure transparency and fairness in situations where the Development Editor has questions regarding the appropriateness of a review, at least 2 members of the senior editorial team will make a determination about whether it should proceed to the review phase. We are committed to fair and rapid screening of manuscripts in order to

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ensure that only responsible requests are made on the time and efforts of our Editorial Board members and ad hoc reviewers and so that the manuscript submission and review process is as efficient as possible for authors.

There have been many advances over the last decades in research methodology relevant to review papers and meta-analysis. There is now a host of novel techniques and powerful statistical tools that facilitate highly technical reviews. As such, the senior editorial team includes academics with substantial statistical backgrounds and with expertise in meta-analysis, and we will continue to strengthen the expertise in these areas. To this end, we also plan to publish a series on different review techniques that are relevant to clinical psychology and that provide state-of-the-art examples for potential authors and serve as a reference for reviewers. Although not a requirement at present, we also wish to actively encourage preregistration of reviews, data-sharing policies, and compliance with methodological advances and requirements for review papers (e.g., Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses [PRISMA]). Again, these practices will help us ensure that we are publishing the most relevant, useful, and readable review articles on issues of importance to clinical psychologists.

We are dedicated to promoting diversity in the journal in a number of ways. First, we are in the process of expanding our Editorial Board to achieve balance in expertise, gender, and ethnicity. Second, we will

strive for similar equity and balance with respect to ad hoc reviews. Finally, we have an explicit interest in providing a platform for reviewing and integrating scientific research on diverse issues in the field of clinical psychology. This is evident in recent special issues, including Gender and Mental Health and Advances in Cognitive Science and Psychopathology, as well as forthcoming special issues on Integrating Evolution and Clinical Science.

In closing, as your new senior editorial team, we are excited to face the challenge of providing the most relevant and sound scientific research reviews to researchers and clinicians working in the broad field of clinical psychology. Although we are initiating a number of changes that will ensure we are able to effectively and efficiently deliver on this challenge, our intent for the years to come is to remain true to the spirit of Dr. Bellack and Hersen's (1981) original goal "to publish articles which meet the reader's intellectual and professional curiosity about topics outside of his/her immediate area of expertise" (p. 2) while also making unique contributions that have strong potential to advance the field.

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