



Editorial

Moving on toward the 3rd decade of the 21st century[☆]

Research in psychiatry has come a long way in the past 100 or more years. Large population studies and anecdotal reports of unusual syndromes or responses to treatment were published early on, but ethical review boards to provide oversight for research on human subjects had not been widely available or used seriously until the last couple of decades. World political events such as international wars uncovered some widespread misuse of political power to allow the conduction of human experiments that broke through the bounds of moral obligations to fellow human beings. In addition, mental illness was stigmatized and patients with such symptoms were generally sent away to asylums that were far outside cities and isolated from population centers, never to return to their communities of origin. The way to combat stigma is generally thought to be through education and research. Yet little of this was emphasized.

In the late 1960's large publicized adoption studies examining the nature versus nurture hypothesis of schizophrenia, suggested the importance of an underlying biology of serious mental illness. However, these studies were published mostly as book chapters and thus not in peer reviewed journals. When I entered the field in the late 1970's, Monte Buchsbaum and Fred Goodwin, two prominent biological psychiatrists and researchers at the National Institute of Mental Health in the USA were just establishing the journal, *Psychiatry Research* as a new forum to communicate findings along with its off-spring, a neuroimaging journal. The field was in great need of a venue for communicating new findings rapidly, but specifically after rigorous peer review.

Dr Buchsbaum with the considerable help and support of his wife and partner, Sherry led this journal over several years as it became established and began publishing research reports from a wide range of countries, many outside of the USA. Today the journal receives well over 2000 manuscripts a year on a variety of research topics relevant to psychiatric disorders. As of this month, January 2019, Monte and Sherry have retired, although remain as the journal's founders and continued advisors, while I begin to take on the challenge of bringing this publication steps further through the twenty-first century. While keeping the Buchsbaum legacy of striving for excellence in scientific research world-wide, we will also look for ways to make each publication meaningful for improving the quality of prevention, care and recovery for people with psychiatric illnesses.

We currently have the 5th version of the USA Diagnostic and Statistical Manual for consistent diagnostic rules and boundaries (DSM-V) and have advances in technology well beyond what could have

possibly been foreseen in the 1970's. Computer and internet world-wide connections are now common place. The field of medical imaging and particularly brain imaging has advanced from X-Ray, CT and MRI to amazing ways of using MRI for microscopically viewing brain connectivity and individual neuronal function and chemistry. The field of molecular genetics has exponentially risen from finding a gene for phenylketonuria to sequencing the entire genome, and developing tests for various rare and common diseases. Commercial companies have been flourishing particularly in the field of genetics, offering not only new ways for doctors to use genetics in the clinic, but direct to consumer testing that raises ethical and moral issues about how to use the information now known about a person's entire genome and risk for disease. "Personalized Medici" has become a catch phrase in all fields of medicine and in human pharmacology in particular, as unique genomic variations gives rise to disease and also to variable response to medications. In the need to understand the relevance of research findings to the patient in clinical practice, a new field of "implementation science" has come to light for outcome studies and treatment trials that incorporate research findings and include information that is necessary for clinicians in their everyday practice.

As we move forward with some new emphasis for the future, I hope to contribute my leadership of this journal to making the varied observations and findings accumulated in psychiatry in the past and over the years to come relevant to clinical practice and to have this journal be a useful tool for researchers along their pathways of scientific exploration, and for clinicians in their emphasis of evidenced based practice in psychiatry. Research in this field is as important as research in any other field about the human body and we hope that brain research, psychiatry research and human disease research are integrated and communicate with each other, as each patient is one entity with multiple organs interacting to produce a continuum of wellness and disease as they age.

In summary, in moving on to a new era for this journal, we will strive to publish only first-rate quality science regardless of its country of origin, providing it is performed in an ethical manner and providing its influence on the field and the corresponding illness it addresses is significant.

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