

EDITORIAL: CHANGES AND CONTINUITIES

Richard P. Kluft, M.D.

As *DISSOCIATION* begins its fourth year of publication, a restructuring of the Editorial Staff and the Editorial Board is in process. The transition from the original founding team to a new work group will not be complete until the year is well advanced. The impact of the new arrangement will not be fully appreciable for some time. Nonetheless, I would like to take this opportunity to explain the rationale and motivation for these changes, and to share with you, our readers, some of the specifics of the rearrangements that will be appearing on the inner front cover of this and subsequent issues.

DISSOCIATION Progress in the Dissociative Disorders, is the official journal of the International Society for the Study of Multiple Personality and Dissociation. The Editorial Staff, the ISSMP&D, and Ridgeview Institute, which has supported the journal from its first issue, are committed to producing the best possible publication for the advancement of the study of the dissociative disorders, the enhancement of the expertise of clinicians who treat dissociative disorders, and the promotion of the well-being of those who suffer dissociative disorders. To these ends, our efforts have been geared to quality in scientific and clinical communication, and to maintaining the cost of the journal within modest limits.

We also are committed to nurturing the efforts of new contributors to the field, to encouraging the efforts of first-time authors, and to involving many interested clinicians and investigators in the process of reviewing the papers that have been submitted. This involves the expenditures of considerable amounts of Editorial Staff time in a manner that, while it encourages productivity in the field in the long run, is often fairly educative, and is not always consistent with serving other valuable mandates, such as promptness of publication. While we have helped many aspiring scientific writers move toward becoming published, at times other priorities have suffered. While many individuals have been enabled to participate in the reviewing process, our current review protocol has proven inefficient and unduly time-consuming.

In addition, efforts to work with a small Editorial Staff, while it succeeded as designed to facilitate rapid and facile communication and decision-making, resulted in an unrealistic distribution of work, with many undesirable consequences. A few have done the work that is done by a much larger group of people for comparable journals. When one of those individuals is forced by circumstances to attend to other matters for a period of time, *DISSOCIATION* is unduly delayed.

With these and several other considerations in mind, a series of steps have been taken to better distribute the editorial duties, to speed the review process, and to move toward more efficient production without retreating from the other goals stated above. One basic change regards format. In the past, when the delivery of the publication-ready versions of the articles announced in the tentative contents of future issues have been delayed for any number of reasons (and there are many!), *DISSOCIATION* virtually always waited until the announced contents could be published, feeling an obligation to the authors involved, and the expectancies created in the readership. Also, *DISSOCIATION* attempted to have uniform numbers of articles in each issue. These policies have been discontinued. Anticipated contents will not be announced, freeing the Editorial Staff from certain of the vicissitudes that this policy has imposed. Also, the issues may be more uneven in length, if holding out for "symmetry" threatens to delay production of the issue in question.

Most important, a number of changes will occur in the Editorial Staff. I will continue as Editor-in-Chief, Bennett G. Braun, M.D., will continue as Associate Editor, and Beth Gault will continue as Production Editor. It is difficult to overstate the effort and energy that Catherine G. Fine, Ph.D., has dedicated to *DISSOCIATION*. Dr. Fine has been promoted from Assistant Editor to Associate Editor. David L. Fink, M.D., has contributed tirelessly. He has been promoted from Assistant Editor to Senior Assistant Editor.

DISSOCIATION has needed a strong and responsible Editorial Staff sufficiently large and diverse to respond to our authors' submissions, and both deep and flexible enough to back up our reviewers in situations that involve a delay in the processing of the manuscripts that have been submitted. I am delighted that Judith Armstrong, Ph.D., Eve Bernstein Carlson, Ph.D., Philip M. Coons, M.D., Edward J. Frischholz, Ph.D., George Ganaway, M.D., Richard J. Loewenstein, M.D., Frank W. Putnam, M.D., and Lucy Quimby, M.S.W., Ph.D. have accepted my invitation to become Assistant Editors. Additional individuals may be named in the near future.

I anticipate that these changes will strengthen *DISSOCIATION* and speed the way to its becoming an even more responsive and useful forum, an even more effective voice for those who study and treat the dissociative disorders.

Richard P. Kluft, M.D.