

## Welcome to Issue 7.2 (finally!)

I guess it may seem slightly unusual for me to be in the role of editor of this journal when I am not a member of ASORC, nor am I a rehabilitation counsellor. However, I do have a research interest in rehabilitation and have published a number of articles dating back to around 1992, and mostly with Dr Bert Biggs who most of you will know as the former Editor of this journal. The focus of these articles has been job stress, training and other occupational concerns of those involved in human service provision. My other research interests centre around mental health (particularly PTSD and traumatic experiences), health service utilisation, and bicultural psychology.

My apologies for the late arrival of this issue of the journal. The main reason for the delay was essentially a lack of manuscripts being submitted for consideration for publication. I simply did not have, until recently, enough manuscripts that had gone through the review process and were available and acceptable for publication. I do not think that this reflects an unduly stringent or punitive peer review process — the consulting editors do an excellent job of providing timely, informative, and constructive reviews of the manuscripts that I send them. The lack of submissions may perhaps reflect the fact that some ASORC members work in environments where research and publication is not reinforced or recognised appropriately and hence it becomes difficult to find the time/energy to climb on board the 'publication treadmill'. I am not familiar enough with ASORC and the multiple constituencies represented by its membership to know what some of the barriers to research and submission of articles might be.

I would certainly encourage readers to consider submitting their material for publication. I attended the ASORC conference on the Gold Coast last year and was very impressed with the interesting, innovative and imaginative work that was being presented and I am certain that they would appeal to a wide readership. Similarly, there may be individuals who have smaller scale research projects that they have completed that don't warrant a full length journal article. I would encourage those people to consider writing a brief research report (perhaps 1500–2000 words). This may be a mechanism for encouraging individuals to submit articles that are less daunting to write and it would be a way of getting a more diverse set of research findings out to the readership. As is often the case in other rehabilitation journals (e.g., the *International Journal of Rehabilitation Research*), there could be a dedicated Short Reports section of the journal for such articles.

I mentioned briefly at the Gold Coast Conference that I want to encourage submission of papers from a broad range of theoretical and methodological perspectives. I also want to encourage publication of more student papers, especially thesis-based research. The journal has run a competition for the best student manuscript in the past but this has not been highly successful mainly due to a lack of submissions — perhaps this needs to be advertised more widely or the ASORC publications committee might consider other possible mechanisms for encouraging graduate student publication in the journal. I would also want to look at the publication of special issues focussed on particular themes and have spoken with Greg Murphy about this idea. I would welcome suggestions about themes for such issues. As I

alluded to earlier, it would be desirable to be able to encourage and enhance the commitment of both academics and practitioners to publishing in the journal although I recognise this is often not easy for those working 'at the coal face' and managing large caseloads and other multiple demands.

Some more practical concerns that are likely to become salient for the journal in the future in my view include growing the subscription base. There are relatively few institutional subscribers to the journal and these are necessary in my view in order to raise the profile of the journal on the international rehabilitation scene. Ideas here on how this might be done are more than welcome. You will also be aware that many academic journals are now on-line in various forms. This does not mean that the print-based version of the journal should or would disappear but having the articles in the journal indexed on-line by some of the large-scale 'user-pays' type databases such as Ingenta can only serve to raise the profile of the journal and the research being done in this part of the world.

Finally, I hope that readers enjoy the offerings in this issue of the journal. They are a broad coverage of interesting topics and are a good reflection of the sophisticated and insightful sorts of research going on in the Australasian rehabilitation scene.

Ross Flett Ph.D, *Editor*

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