The Journal of Psychiatry and Neuroscience: past, present and future

Russell T. Joffe, MD; Simon N. Young, PhD

The Journal of Psychiatry and Neuroscience (JPN) was launched in its present form in 1991 by Dr. Yvon Lapierre, who was then chairperson of the Department of Psychiatry, University of Ottawa. The editorial he wrote for the first issue started:

In this era of geometric expansion of scientific knowledge and of subspecialization, scientists and academics have become more focussed and more knowledgeable in their areas of interest. Rapid developments in technology have contributed significantly to our increased understanding of the brain and its functioning — both in health and in illness. During the last two decades, there has been a marked change in the focus of our psychiatric academic centers from psychodynamic to biological approaches. This has created the need for an integrative scientific publication in biological psychiatry. The past few years has seen a proliferation of new journals, a large portion of which are focussed and narrow in their outlook. This is occurring at a time when the impact of the neurosciences on clinical psychiatry is becoming more substantial. Furthermore, current developments in the neurosciences suggest that this impact will continue to grow. The Journal of Psychiatry and Neuroscience (JPN) is a response to this trend.

This was not Yvon’s first effort at bridging the gap between basic scientists and clinicians. More than a decade earlier, Yvon was one of a group of Canadian scientists who explored the idea of setting up a society of people with an interest in biological psychiatry, which would act as a forum to enhance mutual understanding between basic scientists and clinicians. The result was the founding of the Canadian College of Neuropsychopharmacology (CCNP). Yvon became the first president of the CCNP in 1978. When JPN started, it was soon adopted by the CCNP as its official journal. Although the focus of the JPN is international, it is well supported by CCNP members. One of the highlights of the journal is the articles by the winners of the CCNP Heinz Lehmann Award, Innovations in Neuropsychopharmacology Award and Young Investigator Award.

JPN mutated into its present form from the Psychiatric Journal of the University of Ottawa, which had existed for 15 years. JPN initially continued to be published by the Department of Psychiatry of the University of Ottawa. In the 1990s the editorial board reflected this connection with the University of Ottawa, as 3 of the associate editors — Pavel Hrdina, François Mai and Terry Pivik — came from the Department of Psychiatry, while the fourth — Simon Young — came from McGill University in nearby Montreal. However, as the journal prospered, the need for a professional publisher became apparent, and under Yvon Lapierre’s guidance JPN moved to the Canadian Psychiatric Association and then the Canadian Medical Association (CMA), which has proved to be a most satisfactory publisher. The progress of the journal over the years came despite the fact that a vari-
ety of organizations, including the US, European and International Colleges of Neuropsychopharmacology, as well as the British Association for Psychopharmacology, started competing journals within a matter of a few years. JPN’s success is indicated by its impact factor, which was 1.7 in 1999, placing JPN at 29th of 80 psychiatry journals listed in journal citation reports. More important, the impact factor has been rising steadily over the years (by about 0.2 each year), so further improvements can be expected.

Having successfully launched and built up JPN, Yvon Lapierre recently stepped down from the position of editor-in-chief. This coincided with his official retirement from the University of Ottawa, although rumours suggest that the various projects he is involved in keep him as busy as he was before he retired. Following Yvon will be a hard act. After consultations with the CCNP, the CMA appointed us as co-editors-in-chief. The goal of JPN will remain the same: to help bridge the gulf between the basic science and clinical aspects of biological psychiatry by publishing excellent basic science and clinical research reports and reviews that will interest, as much as possible, all those who desire to know more about the brain and its role in mental disorders. JPN will remain a journal with an international orientation, while highlighting world-class research carried out in Canada. While a focus on these objectives and on excellence will remain, the way that these will be achieved will, inevitably, change over time. Information technology has already had an important impact on journals. For example, starting with the previous issue of JPN, all articles are available to be downloaded free of charge (as PDF files) from the JPN Web site (www.cma.ca/jpn). The CMA, as publisher, is preparing for the electronic world, and electronic submission and review of manuscripts will become the norm within a few years. It remains to be seen whether the paper copy of the journal, with its distinctive cover, will still exist in another decade.

We wish Yvon Lapierre well in his retirement and will do what we can to ensure the continued success of the journal he founded, whatever form it takes in the future.

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**CANADIAN COLLEGE OF NEUROPSYCHOPHARMACOLOGY**

**COLLÈGE CANADIEN DE NEUROPSYCHOPHARMACOLOGIE**

**Jock Cleghorn Prize**

This prize, which will consist of a suitably engraved plaque and a cheque for $500, will be awarded by the CCNP for the best poster presentation by a research trainee (graduate student or clinical resident) at the Annual Meeting of the CCNP. Candidates wishing to have their poster presentation considered should send a covering letter and a copy of their submitted abstract to Dr. Andrew J. Greenshaw at the address below. Those already applying for travel bursaries will automatically be considered for the Jock Cleghorn Prize. All others can contact Dr. Greenshaw.

The poster presentations will be judged at the Annual Meeting by a committee consisting of at least 3 members of the Awards Committee (or substitute judges to be chosen by the Council from the CCNP membership if Awards Committee members are unable to attend the Annual Meeting). Topics on either basic or clinical aspects of neuropsychopharmacology will be considered. The poster should represent research in which the graduate student or resident is the primary investigator, and (s)he should be the first author of the submitted abstract. The winner of the award will be announced in the first Newsletter following the Annual Meeting.

Research trainees should send a copy of the abstract they are submitting to the 2001 meeting of the CCNP along with a covering letter stating that they wish to have their presentation considered for the prize to:

Dr. Andrew Greenshaw
Dept. of Psychiatry
University of Alberta
1E1.01, 8440-112 St.
Edmonton, AB T6G 2B7
or by fax 780 492-6841
or e-mail: andy.greenshaw@ualberta.ca

*The deadline for submissions will be March 31, 2001.*