Editorial

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Categories: New and (Re)visited

In this issue, we inaugurate a new category of article appearing in CMP. This category carries the rubric of ‘*Communiqué*.’ Under this rubric will appear papers that are intended to make a statement of an author’s position on a matter of interest to CMP. The Communiqué is not a full article or an Opinion. Rather, it communicates a statement of a position of the author. It may not be based upon research, as such. The first exemplar of this category is from the renowned *doyen* of Chinese psychiatry, Professor Xu Youxin of the Beijing Medical University. His paper came our way through the good offices of Professor Sheng Li, also of the Beijing Medical University, and Professor Arthur Kleinman of Harvard University (CMP’s Founding Editor). Professor Kleinman has kindly written an introduction that succinctly contextualizes Professor Xu’s career and his conceptualization of mental disorders. We are grateful for the opportunity to publish this piece that delineates Professor Xu’s conception of mental disorders and their relationship(s) to one another.

The diagram Professor Xu has drawn up should instigate reflection on how disorders are conceptualized vis-à-vis other disorders and what are the defining or essential characteristics of the various psychiatric disorders. We hope this discussion will turn toward US psychiatric classification as professional ethnopsychiatry seeks to differentiate various disorders on biological grounds, though there is as yet no clear articulation of definitive characteristics differentiating one disorder from another. We are reminded of the Schneiderian “first-rank” symptoms of schizophrenia that stood for decades without the realization that none of the putative definitive symptoms was unique to schizophrenia, nor was there even a unique constellation of symptoms that characterized the disorder. We also note that, at the

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beginning of the last century, there was no unity to schizophrenia; rather today's single entity was referred to as the "group of schizophrenias."

A Reminder of the New Sections of CMP

The presentation of the first Communiqué is an appropriate time to (re)present and (re)view the new categories of articles that have been put in place since I took over the editorship of CMP with Volume 31 in the September issue of 2007. Here, in addition to noting another new section, *Communiqué*, above, we (re)visit the other new sections of the Journal. The following adapts the original presentation in Volume 31, pages 276 to 278, to denote the passage of time.

Beginning with the September issue of CMP, I sought to enhance the Journal's dynamic character, to widen its audience and to make it a more useful tool for a broadening range of scholars. Toward this end, I added several new sections. The first new section was *Circumstantial Deliveries (CD)*, an example of which appeared in that first volume under my editorship. The article, by Eric Engstrom, a German historian of medicine (psychiatry), signaled one of the directions in which I hoped to take CMP, viz. an historical gaze on issues medical. Circumstantial Deliveries are important papers that have been given at professional meetings, workshops, conferences and/or in other professional 'circumstances.' Circumstantial Deliveries is a Journal section that provides for a more dynamic presence of CMP in that it serves to promptly disseminate new ideas in a more formal, citable context.

Opinion was the second new section added to the Journal. The Opinion section is a forum for the expression of opinions and comments by scholars on a variety of issues such as the thrust of an important meeting, a new health policy under discussion or recently implemented, concerns for work that needs to be done but appears not to be receiving adequate attention and so on. Opinion, as in the Lancet, represents a kind of Guest Editorial and is not intended to be a peer-reviewed research paper as are CDs, but rather an opinion editorial, or Op/Ed. The first of these appeared in Volume 31, Number 4. It was written by Peter Whitehouse, M.D., Ph.D., and was an account from the front lines of a most prominent dementia researcher on the influences of pharmaceutical companies on medical research, scholarship and discourse and the ethical concerns thereby engendered. A second, by John Sheehan, MD, a noted endocrinologist and diabetologist, concerns the gross inadequacy of care for Diabetes Mellitus in the US and will appear in our next issue.

The new section, *Illness Narratives: Stories of Patients and Healers, Caregivers and Researchers (IN)*, took its name from two of Arthur Kleinman's many influential books (*Illness Narratives*, 1995; *Patients and Healers*, 1980, respectively). This section appears episodically, as does the Opinion and CDs sections. It provides the chief outlet for medical humanities pieces that include narratives of illness experiences of sufferers as well as those of healers, caregivers and researchers. It is hoped that some of these will be multimedia presentations on the web as well as appearing in print.

Cultural Case Studies (CuCS) have paralleled the traditional Clinical Case Studies (CCS) that have appeared for some time in CMP. However, the Cultural Case Studies' perspectives are from the 'anthropological clinic' rather than the psychiatric. The focus of Cultural Case Studies is on cultural and psychocultural aspects of a case and its social/cultural context rather than specific, formal criteria of psychiatric evaluation. The elements of significance, thus, can vary from case to case. We have published several of these Cultural Case Studies and continue to publish Clinical Case Studies as well.

In my second year as Editor, 2008, CMP added another new section, *Instrumentalities*, in response to submissions that concerned a specific psychiatric or other instrument but did not represent themselves as full articles. The Instrumentalities category thus filled a need for critical evaluations or revisions of instruments that were of use to clinicians and social scientists. The first of these appeared in the March issue of 2008 (CMP 32(1)).

End Matters (EM) contain three subsections that increase the utility of the Journal. In part, it reorganized elements that had previously appeared in the Journal. However, the first subsection was entirely new. It was labeled *Comings and Goings* (C&G). The initial example of this subsection appeared in the first September issue. This section includes notes on the movements of important scholars as they go from institution to institution or into retirement. At this point, we do not anticipate that this section will present obituaries. For that, another new section has been inaugurated since the original formulation of the EM and which is called *Passages*. It appears as a separate entry and is not part of C&G.

A second subsection of EM is *Conferences of Note*. Entries in this section continue to appear as they have historically in CMP. The last section of End Matters is also a section that has traditionally appeared in the Journal; it is *Books Received*. These are books received that may be requested for review by CMP's readership. Such reviews could possibly then appear in CMP.

Book Reviews must now appear in print as well as on-line, as my original notion of having them appear on-line only conflicted with the publisher's rule that all that appears there must also appear in print.

We here at CMP hope the changes meet with the approval of our readers and that you presently enjoy, and will continue to enjoy, the new, more heterogeneous content of CMP.