New PIL Sections: Aims and Scope

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Abstract The journal *Psychological Injury and Law* has added three new sections, increasing the reach of the journal. The three new sections are: Malingering and Symptom Validity Testing, Practice Matters, and State/ Provincial/ International Affairs. The editorial describes the aims and scope of each new section.

Keywords Journal sections · Aims and scope

The journal *Psychological Injury and Law* (PIL) consists of seven major sections: Law, Forensic Psychology, Disability and Work, Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Pain, Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), and Assessment. Each section of the journal is like an independent mini-journal.

The Three New PIL Sections

1. Symptom Validity Testing/Malingering As far as I know, this would be the first time any journal would devote a section exclusively to detecting psychiatric, neurocognitive, and somatic feigning. The section deals with not only malingering but also with the full range of response biases, such as symptom exaggeration and minimization and other pertinent influences, such as compensation and litigation distress. It is aimed at specifying the distinction among malingering, symptom magnification, a cry for help, and so forth. It is especially focused on publishing

state-of-the-art empirical research on the reliability and validity of psychological tests used in assessments of complainants in tort and related legal action. These might be either stand-alone instruments or tests with embedded scales pertaining to the issue. The tests should be constructed for use by psychologists working for either plaintiff or defense. This topic had been part of the Assessment section of the journal, which will now focus on studies of reliability and validity of tests, and other assessment issues.

2. Practice Matters This section will include how-to articles, clinical conundrums, clinical matters, professional guidelines, practical issues, practice guidelines, ethics, testing protocols, therapy templates, test reviews, etc., all from the PIL perspective. For example, we seek test reviews based on the four Daubert factors: (a) general acceptance, (b) testability/has it been tested, (c) error rate, and (d) peer review/publication. By approaching reviews of tests from this perspective, inevitably, the articles will present discussion of test reliability, validity, sensitivity, and specificity. The extent to which the tests have been researched and standardized for PIL populations should be indicated. These articles could cover the full range of tests, from personality to areas of psychological injury (such as PTSD/pain/TBI), to new ones emerging for disability/return to work. The embedded client validity scales of longer tests could be reviewed separately from the clinical scales. There are other test areas, such as somatization, anxiety sensitivity, and health psychology that might prove interesting to journal readers.

This section will deal with other matters, such as the following. For clinical concerns, there are numerous treatment rehabilitation and coding issues and rules within MHOs in the USA that could be clarified. Also, articles

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could focus on educating practitioners about how to assess and treat patients with PTSD, pain, and TBI in these organizational contexts. Aspirational forensic guidelines could be worth reviewing in the context of PIL. Another focus is how the typical process in standard PIL cases, such as tort action, differs in immigration and other cases in legal-related venues. Finally, this section will be sensitive to gender, minority, and cultural issues. PIL works according to standard procedures, but how much are local jurisdictional laws, rules, and regulations sensitive to such matters, how do practitioners deal with tests that do not take into account minority and cultural variations in these jurisdictions, and so on.

3. The State/Provincial/International Section We seek local jurisdictional reporters (mental health, legal reporters) on matters related to: (a) MVA rehabilitation and insurance regimes, rules, and regulations; (b) tort laws and evidence law in the different jurisdictions (e.g., *Frye vs. Daubert* influenced); as well as (c) workers compensation, veterans administration, social security, personal disability insurance, medical malpractice, immigration, police issues, and so on. The reporters should present either overviews of an area or breaking news on key laws or rulings. The articles should be short when describing laws and rulings. They should be longer when different jurisdictions are compared, when controversial topics are discussed, when a local law or ruling has national and international import, and so on.

There are 60 states and provinces that could be canvassed, although we would want especially reporters in the major ones, and there are about ten commonwealth countries of interest, with other developed countries (e.g., European), too. This section will also be taking charge of the continuing education component of the society that houses the journal, the Association for Scientific Advancement of Psychological Injury and Law (ASAPIL; www.asapil.org). Its work will prepare the way for creation of state/provincial and international branches of ASAPIL, and workshop presentations by them.

Conclusions

The area of psychological injury and law is an adversarial and contentious area of research and practice. The journal PIL is dedicated to publishing balanced research and having education workshops and research conferences with that same balance. This does not mean that sections as a whole or individual board members have to work equally both sides of the adversarial divide, but that they should adopt an impartial, scientific approach and that their research should reflect the same. The journal's readers, its board, and its contributors should look forward to working together regardless of the side on which they find themselves, because science, impartiality, and cooperation for the growth of the field are put first.

On the need for having Practice and State/Provincial/International sections of the journal, see Young (2008a, 2009). For a complete description of the aims and scope of the journal, consult Young (2008b). Note that the journal is planning other sections, such as a Student and Education section and a Return to Work section, which will be split off from the Disability section.

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