

Editorial

Welcome to the South Pacific Journal of Psychology, Volume 9! As the incoming Editor, my first job is to thank the outgoing one, David Lea, for steering the journal through Volume 8, and for his continuing editorial work for us. David thankfully remains with us, but Ross St. George has now retired from the Board, to take up a new position running Human Factors Research and Development with the Civil Aviation Authority of New Zealand. Ross became an Associate Editor in 1992, and has been actively contributing to SPJP since 1991. For that unstinting support, we thank him heartily, and wish him every success in his new position.

Stepping into the gap left by Ross is George Shouksmith. George has agreed to stand in for two or three years, helping David Thomas to coordinate representation in the journal from New Zealand. In particular, we hope to encourage representation from the indigenous communities, not only from New Zealand but from elsewhere in the region. If you are interested in that possibility, please do not hesitate to contact George or David, or any one of us on the Editorial Board.

Also new to the Board, from the University of the South Pacific, are Tupeni Baba, who is the departmental Chair in Education and Psychology, and Robin Taylor. It is hard to conceive of a South Pacific journal without such representation, and we are hopeful that the USP will, as before, play an ever-increasing role in the way SPJP continues to develop. Professor Baba is Chair of the Department of Education and Psychology, while Robin has kindly agreed to take on the running of a new section in the journal, aimed at disseminating preliminary findings and short papers. In this volume, Dr. Taylor has already provided us with a set of guidelines for submission to that section.

Another clearly vital player in the development of the journal is Papua New Guinea, which is not only where SPJP started its life, but which is still a co-publisher of the journal. We are therefore delighted to welcome to the Board Leo Marai. Over the years, Leo has made a number of valuable contributions to these pages, and has recently joined the Psychology Department at UPNG, as a Lecturer. Appropriately enough, his opening paper provides us with an excellent overview of the journal's history, background, and future prospects.

From the University of Hawaii, we are also delighted to welcome Professor Anthony Marsella. Through his work with the WHO and other major organisations, Tony brings a real depth and breadth of experience to the journal - a contribution recently recognised through his 1996 APA Award for the International Advancement of Psychology. We have published case studies in the past (see our web site), and he has agreed to take over a new section devoted to qualitative methods, as well as to explore the possibility of a special issue on evaluating changes in the quality of life following aid project interventions. This idea of special issues is something that we might wish to develop further, and the Board is receptive to any serious proposals in that regard, e.g., regional conference proceedings.

Another new section is headed by Paul Watters. He alone has been responsible for setting up an SPJP web site on the internet. If the journal is to grow, it surely must keep abreast of technological developments, and I think that we shall soon be seeing a number of innovations in that regard. In this particular volume, Paul and Maya Watters offer us a policy paper on the new section in the journal, as well as make a call for submissions.

Related to that, Don Munro has offered to reintroduce book reviews back into the journal, within a formal section which will also place an emphasis on new and exciting regionally relevant publications, including multimedia materials for teaching and/or research

purposes. Reviewed in the present volume are books linking psychology and cultural anthropology, as well as modernisation and quality of life.

The author of the latter book is Tod Sloan, from the University of Tulsa. Tod has worked extensively in Central and South American communities, and has kindly agreed to translate any future submissions from our Eastern South Pacific neighbours, especially Ecuador, Peru, and Chile. Bringing these countries formally into our "catchment area" will increase the great diversity in our readership, and in proportion to that the capacity for cross-fertilisation of ideas and practices. Limitations are not the only things that we can discover! If this bridging effort begins to work, we might consider the possibility of forming a South Pacific Association of Psychology. That could give SPJP considerably more focus and direction.

Through the recently held InterAmerican Congress of Psychology, held in Brazil, we hope to attract the attention of our South American colleagues, as well as to secure some new representation to the Editorial Board. In the interim, we would welcome any expressions of interest, or contributions, from those countries concerned.

Turning to the present contributions, I am struck primarily by their freshness and originality. The contributors and Consultant Reviewers (including Board members) must be thanked for their valuable time and invaluable advice. Obviously, readers will decide for themselves on the quality of the contents, but I would like to say that originality often depends on contributions from "new talent," and if we wish to retain innovativeness as one of the key characteristics of SPJP, then perhaps we should be doing as much as we can to encourage those newcomers to see the journal as "the preferred home" for their work. That is the message of our first contribution, and it is something that we could surely nurture further - perhaps by reviewing nationally nominated student projects every year?