Editorial

The discussion concerning the borderline between psychosis and neurosis is an old one. Yet it has grown on the heels of the new interest in classification problems taken with regard to both classificatory models and diagnostic criteria. DSM-III stimulated that process. It seems that for a long period of time the topic was an important focus in psychiatric research in the USA but not in European countries, where the concept has even undergone rejection. This is the main reason why we have devoted a particular issue of Psycho-pathology to the analysis of the borderline problem in psychiatric research on the European continent.

Together with two papers which do not question the borderline concept and represent American efforts to clarify the sociological background of borderline cases and apply the concept to a special area of psychiatry, three European papers are published in this issue: the Viennese one deals with a special psychopathological problem and thus is in line with a local methodological focus in psychiatric research; the two Scandinavian papers deal with the validity of the concept from a comparative point of view. (It may be that the Norwegian school is particularly well prepared to make this comparison because it keeps to the diagnostic traditions of reactive and schizophreniform psychoses, both of which are situated on borders.)

It seems that for French psychiatry the problem is not of great interest. As for the German-speaking countries in general a comprehensive analysis of the concept has been published earlier [Sass H.; Köhler K.: Borderline Syndrom: Grenzgebiet oder Nie-mandsland. Nervenarzt 54: 221–230 (1983)].

P. Berner/E. Gabriel