The Journal's Task

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Psychotherapy and Psycho-somatics started in 1953 as *Ada Psychotherapeutica et Psychosomatica*. From the very beginning it was characterized by a unique blending of psychotherapeutic and psychosomatic research and a strong clinical orientation. These features were maintained throughout the years and grew under the editorship of Peter E. Sifneos (1974-1991), also because of his research background as a leading investigator both in short-term dynamic psychotherapy [1-4] and psychosomatic medicine [5-7]. It is now my task to continue his work, together with Hellmuth Freyberger, as Editor-in-Chief for Special Publications, a renewed Editorial Board and the statistical consultants. We will continue to publish contributions concerned with psychotherapy

research as well as psychosomatic medicine, in its broadest meaning. Such meaning was summarized in an editorial statement introducing the first issue of the journal *Psychosomatic Medicine* in 1939, as follows: to study in their interrelation the psychological and physiological aspects of all normal and abnormal bodily functions and thus to integrate somatic therapy and psychotherapy. As a result, contributions on topics that are often subsumed under rubrics other than psychosomatic (stress medicine, psychoneuroendocrinology, psychoimmunology, behavioral medicine, consultation-liaison psychiatry, health psychology, organic psychiatry) are welcome. Each issue will contain some or all of the following elements: Editorials, Special Articles (such as reviews), Regular Articles, Clinical Notes (clinical observations at the interface between medicine and behavioral sciences that may be helpful to clinicians and stimulate more systematic research), Book Reviews.

The clinical emphasis of the journal is portrayed by the Special Article that opens this issue and this year. George L. Engel [8], the father of American psychosomatic medicine, provides a discussion of the challenge of a new humanistic clinical science in a medical world that seems to have diverted attention from the dialogue that is necessary between patient and doctor. His contribution originally appeared in a volume on the task of medicine [9]. Since this book may not be easily available, I thought that Engel's considerations deserved a wider audience.

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