

MSJ 2019 – Editorial Comment

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The start of a new year always brings a certain amount of change and MSJ is no different. The annual editorial comment always looks back across the previous volumes, reporting on highlights but also, this year, reflecting on forthcoming changes to the Editorial Team.

After 12 years Jack Antel has decided to step down from the journal and in January 2019 we are welcoming Jeff Cohen as Co-Editor for the Americas. Jeff is joining MSJ from MSJ-ETC where he was a founding Editor for the journal handling papers from the Americas. Jeff is also the President-Elect for ACTRIMS 2016-2019, where he will again succeed Jack. Jack has been co-Editor for the Americas

since 2006 and as four global editors we have worked together to shape the journal into what it is today, the most established MS journal with an Impact Factor over 5.

In 2006 I wrote my first editorial

<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1191/135248506ms1285ed>) and discussed how Jack's energy and enthusiasm would help drive the journal forward. It was my hope that Jack would most importantly promote translational research both in the form of basic research studies that can guide clinical development and studies that apply basic research methods to relevant clinical material. Over the last 12 years Jack has handled papers from America with that same enthusiasm and unwavering dedication. Within the last year he put together the MSJ [basic science collection](#) to continue pushing the journal towards basic science research that is directly relevant to MS. On behalf of SAGE, reviewers, the other editors and all the authors attended to by Jack, we would like sincerely thank him for all his work.

In addition to Jack's stepping down there will be considerable movement within the team of Editors working on MSJ and MSJ-ETC. We have put together a dedicated page detailing who is who to ensure you, our readers, are kept up to date

<http://journals.sagepub.com/msj/multiplesclerosisjournaleditorialteam>. For 2019 MSJ thanks Ruth Ann Marrie for all her work on the Controversies as she is moving MSJ-ETC to become Editor for the Americas succeeding Jeff. As a result we welcome Jaume Sastre-Garriga as Co-Editor for the Controversies replacing Ruth Ann Marrie. Collectively the Editors are keen to ensure there is diversity and inclusion within the Editorial Board to reflect those working in the field of MS. Concern has recently been voiced that women are underrepresented in leadership roles in MS research and clinical trials. Currently 31% of the MSJ Editorial Board are women and we will continue to develop a board that reflects the range of subject expertise in the MS field, has equal gender participation and is geographically and ethnically diverse.

In 2018 MSJ published the [ECTRIMS/EAN guideline on the pharmacological treatment of people with multiple sclerosis](#) and an Editorial entitled [2017 McDonald MS diagnostic criteria: Evidence-based revisions](#) by Co-Editor William (Bill) Carroll. Both papers have helped to move the field forward and provide clear insights to all our readers.

The themed issue on [Environmental factors, genetics and epigenetics in MS susceptibility and clinical course](#) put together from the ACTRIMS Forum 2017 was a highlight for 2018. Jeff Cohen and Ben Segal guest edited the issue and it was made open access thanks to ACTRIMS generosity which has helped to increase its availability.

In 2018 the journal was also fortunate to benefit from publishing two sets of 'Insights into'. Philip De Jager put together an enlightening series on the complex area of Epigenetics (insert collection link) and Sergio Baranzini is currently publishing a series on Microbiome Research (http://journals.sagepub.com/topic/collections-msj/msj-1-microbiome_research/msj).

The journal continues to benefit from fascinating original contributions, which are at the heart of the journal. We are always grateful to the willingness of our reviewers and editorial board members to put in the time and effort to make sure that the best possible papers are published in MSJ. Over the last year we have been increasingly rigorous with our decisions to ensure MSJ is publishing the very best. As Editors we recognise the frustration and disappointment when papers are rejected and we welcome feedback on how to improve the process; a topic frequently discussed at the Editorial Board meeting. Finally we wish to acknowledge the special relationship existing between the journal

and the “TRIMS” organisations and to congratulate the awardees of the MSJ prizes given at their meetings this year.

Together with the MSJ staff at Sage Publishing we wish everyone a joyful and safe end of year break and continuing success for the journal to mirror our further understanding of multiple sclerosis and the development of improved treatments for people with multiple sclerosis.