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Editor's Column

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Editor's Column

As a senior medical student applying to residency programs, I became acquainted with the term "eclecticism." Many programs described themselves as "eclectic"; it appealed to the progressive, pluralistic spirit in all of us. Yet it implied, erroneously I believe, that limiting the foci of psychiatric resident education was neither necessary nor desirable. The regressive appeal of eclecticism lies in the denial that all true commitments entail some relinquishment of other possibilities; the pleasures of socialization are bought through the renunciation of defecating or urinating at the slightest urge. The hypothetical eclectic psychiatrist has given up none of his or her grandiose aspirations to master the entire biopsychosocial universe. The end result is breadth without depth, a caricature of versatility.

At the risk of appearing regressive, I am particularly struck by the eclectic scope of this issue of the *Jefferson Journal*. Biological and dynamic psychiatry are well-represented and based on a wide variety of clinical and academic experiences: the military, consultation-liaison, panel discussion. We have the benefit of expert commentary on two articles which appeared in the last issue of the *Journal* addressing what may be considered "exotic" topics: multiple personality disorder and transcultural psychiatric syndromes. Finally, three books discussing adult sequelae of childhood sexual abuse are reviewed in this issue.

Given the breadth and depth of the material in the *Jefferson Journal*, one might conclude that the mature, progressive ideals of eclecticism are only attainable through an open, complementary, dialectic process in an extended scholarly community; no residency or resident is an island. We welcome the continued diversity of contributions from our readers.

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Chief Editor
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