Editorial: The First Decade in Review

Stephen Lankton, Editor
Ed Frischholz, Science Editor

This final issue of the 50th anniversary volume reflects the reason for our pride in the accomplishments of the American Society of Clinical Hypnosis (ASCH) and the American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis (AJCH). Two former Journal Editors (Mel Gravitz and Ed Frischholz), two Presidents (Cory Hammond and Dave Wark), and I (Lankton) decided to select some of the most influential articles that have appeared in AJCH and reprint them as our final celebration issue. However, this proved to be a daunting task as many outstanding articles were initially selected by the team.

To address this concern, I asked Dr. Frischholz to develop objective selection criteria to guide our choice of which “classical” articles to reprint. After reviewing the table of contents from Volume 1 through Volume 50, Frischholz recommended that we consider each of the 5 decades of journal volumes separately. Since this is the first of our series of classic articles, these were selected from our first decade of publication from Volume 1, July, 1958 to Volume 10, April 1968.

Our first step in the selection process was to identify articles we believed were of enduring importance to the field of professional hypnosis. The total pool of articles initially identified from this period are presented in Appendix 1. Our next step was to identify those which survived our exclusion criteria:

1. No articles would be selected where one of the members of the selection committee were the primary author. However, articles could be considered if one of the members of the selection committee was an author, but not the primary author;
2. No symposia or papers focused on discussing a particular topic were selected because we did not want to consider reprinting the entire group of articles. However, individual papers which were published as part of a symposium or special topic were considered;
3. No obituaries, interviews, or tributes to the work of some individual were considered;
4. No book reviews or abstracts of the current literature were considered; and
5. With the exception of Dr. Milton Erickson, only one paper by a particular author would be reprinted. We made the exception for Dr. Erickson for several reasons: a) he founded the American Society of Clinical Hypnosis; b) he was the first President of the American Society of
Editorial

Clinical Hypnosis; c) he was the first Editor of the American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis; and perhaps more importantly, d) he published more articles in the American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis than any other author to date.

We wanted ASCH members and subscribers who may not have had the privilege or opportunity to see the final pool of “classic” articles which were ultimately selected. We were limited as to how many articles would appear only by the size constraint of reprinting them in a single journal issue. The articles we have selected are varied, but have one thing in common – they are undeniably landmarks in the field.

The first two articles were authored by Milton Erickson. The first Erickson article, “Naturalistic Techniques of Hypnosis,” was also the first article to appear in the first issue of AJCH. The second Erickson article, “Further Clinical Techniques of Hypnosis: Utilization Techniques,” is considered equally influential. Together these articles give a wonderful overview of Erickson’s unique approach to problem solving.

The first Erickson article describes five cases illustrating that clinical hypnosis and its induction is more rapid and profound (and more readily acceptant of therapy) when tailored to the personalities, understandings, attitudes, and needs of the individual rather than accomplished by a formalized approach. Contrary to his earlier, more authoritarian approach, Erickson stated that there is a “need to avoid a repetition belaboring of the obvious” thus heralding his increasingly permissive and eventually indirect approach to suggestion (Erickson, 1958, p. 8).

In the second article, Erickson presents 16 cases wherein he argues that employing a client’s inflexible presenting behavior is a viable option for induction of hypnosis and therapy. He points out that interrupting some client’s ongoing activity and requesting that he or she be seated, relaxed, and immobile, for hypnosis may often have an adverse effect on subsequent therapy. Thus, these apparently resistant patients have special needs that can be both met and used as powerful facilitators of trance by “an initial acceptance of the patients’ presenting behaviors and a ready cooperation by the operator, however seemingly adverse the presenting behaviors may appear to be…” (Erickson, 1959, pp. 3-4). These articles are timeless in that they present the initial observations that formed the pillars of Erickson’s unique approach to engagement and problem solving in the last half of his career.

Although Theodore X. Barber was not the first theorist/scientist to propose a non-state theory of hypnosis, he was the most prolific writer about the nature of hypnosis to empirically test the validity of his theory. In his article, “The Necessary and Sufficient Conditions for Hypnotic Behavior,” Barber outlines the necessary and sufficient conditions for hypnotic behavior. Barber’s theory, as stated in this paper, went on to stimulate additional work on non-state theories of hypnosis conducted by Theodore Sarbin, William Coe, John Chaves, Nicholas Spanos, Steven Lynn and Irving Kirsch. Barber would later change his views after studying the characteristics of highly hypnotizable subjects. But this “classic” paper always remained the basis of his theory of hypnotic behavior.

The next article by Dr. Kay F. Thompson, “A Rationale for Suggestion in Dentistry,” was the first to identify the uses of hypnosis and suggestion in dentistry. However, Dr. Thompson became one of the most widely known advocates for their use. Dr. Thompson also served ASCH as its President and ultimately obtained a Doctorate in Psychology later in her career.

Dr. Perry London’s article “Child Hypnosis and Personality” appears next. London was not the first clinician to write about the uses of hypnosis with children, but he was the first to develop an empirical methodology for studying this issue. In this regard, Dr. London developed the “Children’s Hypnotic Susceptibility Scale (CHSS)” which was similar to the Stanford Hypnotic Susceptibility Scales developed by Andre Weitzenhoffer and Ernest
Hilgard. By utilizing this scale, Dr. London was able to empirically study the personality correlates of hypnotic susceptibility in children.

Dr. Ralph V. August was best known for his work on uses of hypnosis in obstetrics. This classic article “The Obstetrician and Hypnosis” introduced his methods and would be later followed up with a number of studies and case examples which were later published in the AJCH. In addition, Dr. August’s film demonstrating the use of hypnosis to control pain during childbirth is also a classic and can be found in the archives of films of the American Society of Clinical Hypnosis.

Dr. William Coe’s paper on “Hypnosis as Role Enactment: The Role Demand Variable” is an extension of the earlier work on this topic by Theodore Sarbin. Sarbin’s and Coe’s theory would be later refined and presented in a book published in 1972. Like Theodore X. Barber, Sarbin’s and Coe’s account of hypnosis was also a non-state theory and proposed that hypnotic induction ceremonies placed a demand on the subject to enact a role based on their belief of how a hypnotized person should behave.

Although Dr. David Cheek’s paper “Removal of Subconscious Resistance to Hypnosis Using Ideomotor Questioning Techniques” was not his first article to be published in the AJCH, it became his best known work. Dr. Cheek would later publish additional articles in the Journal refining this technique.

It should go without saying that there are dozens of other important articles that did not appear in this issue. The inclusion of some and the omission of others was a difficult decision. Of course, we mean no disrespect or dishonor to those distinguished authors who have chosen AJCH as the forum for their work for its first decade and were not chosen to be reprinted here.

The heroes of this issue are the many authors who worked tirelessly researching, reporting, writing, and revising the manuscripts you read here as well as those whose work did not appear. In addition, the power of these articles, and the reputation of AJCH, is due to the expertise and hard work of the members of the editorial review boards and the fine guidance of the previous AJCH editors-in-chief.

Our 50th year celebration coincides, sadly, with the death of Mrs. Elizabeth Erickson. With her passing, 28 years after the death of Dr. Milton Erickson, it feels like an era has come to an end. She worked for ten years assisting the editing the first issues of AJCH while Dr. Erickson served as Editor-in-Chief. And, as the obituary in this issue states, she continued with other Journal tasks for even longer. While we will mourn the end of this era, I am proud that AJCH is continuing forward with an era of its own that began 50 years ago. It is been my great privilege to have be the acting editor during this historic period and its continuance into the future.

References


Please Note: The following early articles do not follow the current APA format required for scientific publications, thus, in this reprinting we have not significantly altered the original format of the original publications.
Appendix

Appendix 1

Initial pool of articles that were considered for reprinting in this issue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Volume</th>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Journal</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Appendix


Appendix


Appendix


Appendix


Appendix


325
Appendix


Appendix


Appendix


Appendix


Appendix


