

The Second Year for IJoDR

Daniel Erlacher¹ & Michael Schredl²

¹University of Heidelberg, Germany

²Central Institute of Mental Health, Mannheim, Germany

The INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF DREAM RESEARCH is going to its second year. We are proud to announce that we reached our goal last year and were able to publish two issues in 2008. Together eight original articles were covered by the first two issues with a wide variety of topics in dream research. Topics included effects of waking-life experiences on dream content (continuity hypothesis), gender differences in dream content, body-mind interaction during sleep, circadian rhythms and dreaming, dream recall, nightmares, and cultural aspects of lucid dreaming. In addition to the wide range of areas covered, we were especially pleased that there has also been a substantial increase in submitted manuscripts from all over the world. For this issue six original articles are included and there are already manuscripts in the review process for the next issue in October.

Manuscript submission and publication is, however, only one part which makes a good journal; the other part is the voluntary work of researchers to guarantee a peer review process. In the mean time we have an impressive list of colleagues from different fields of dream research who participate on the editorial board. With their help it has been possible to enable a short and efficient review process which improved the quality of the papers and provided us with valuable input about the editorial decision of acceptance or rejection.

Another milestone in our endeavor to establish the INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF DREAM RESEARCH within the scientific community was the support received from the University of Heidelberg. In October 2008 the Journal moved from a private web server to a server of the library of the University of Heidelberg. This new “home” guarantees that the articles are permanently stored and easily accessible in the future.

Since we proposed in our first issue that there is a need for a new Journal in Dream Research we were curious if we would see an increasing interest in this journal over time. To monitor the interest in the INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF DREAM RESEARCH we have installed “Google Analytics” (a sophisticated web counter) and recorded the visits to the homepage over the last few months. In October 2008 we started our counter and recorded 228 visits on the site for that month. The rate increased to 379 in March 2009. This accumulates to a total of 1,348 visits since October 2008 with 1047 new and 301 returning visitors. The number of returning visits is most interesting since it says something about loyalty and interest of the readership. The most interest comes from the United States of America (435 visits) followed by Germany (352 visits) and the United Kingdom (146 visits). The rest of the visitors have been distributed from all over the world. Furthermore, we took a look at the rate of downloads of the articles from the first two issues. The eight articles were downloaded from 167 to 322 times. The most interest –

322 downloads – was for Michael Schredl’s review about “Freud’s Interpretation of His Own Dreams in ‘The Interpretation of Dreams’: A Continuity Hypothesis Perspective” (Vol. 1, Issue 2, p. 44-47).

This development in increasing numbers of submissions of manuscripts, growing number of reviewers, rising interest in the readership and increases in downloads supports the need for a peer reviewed journal in the area of dream research. Furthermore, those results encouraged us to set new goals for the future. Our main goal will be to keep up the open access philosophy of the INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF DREAM RESEARCH for reader and for authors, and, therefore, no fees for publication or for the access to the articles will be charged. In addition to this main goal, we set three further aims for the next five years. The first goal is to establish a stable publication frequency with two issues per year, one issue published in April and one issue published in October – with at least three original papers per issue. The second goal is to extend the editorial board by inviting colleagues who are willing to support the journal. The third goal is to increase the impact of our Journal and reach a wider audience by applying to different databases to be listed (i.e., google scholar, PubMed, PsycINFO, PSYINDEXplus). We expect that shortly the articles in our journal will be indexed in these databases.

Part of our goal is reached by the publication of this issue in 2009. This issue includes six original papers with the following topics video game play and dreaming, a new Boundary Personality Questionnaire, the impact of early-life maltreatment on dreams, dream content in an Islamic society, work-related dreams in hairdressers and recall of words in lucid dreams.

The first article from Jayne Gackenbach reports upon the results of an online-questionnaire study about video game play, dreaming, consciousness and flow. The impact of video game play specifically and more broadly exposure to online life on dream content is a very interesting topic and is receiving growing interest in the last few years. Since there are only a few studies on this topic, the work of Gackenbach is especially insightful for this area.

Michael Schredl and his colleagues developed a new tool to measure the boundary concept originally formulated by Hartmann. Although there have been many studies using the original boundary questionnaire, the new Boundary Personality Questionnaire (BPQ) seems to be a good tool for investigating the relationship between the boundary concept and dreams and nightmares. The new instrument differentiates between pathological aspects of boundary thinness and boundary aspects that are not correlated to neuroticism.

In the article from Valérie Schäfer and Klaus Bader the impact of early-life maltreatment on dreams of patients with

insomnia is investigated. The relationship between childhood trauma and dream nightmares is of great interest, since the common sense would suggest a high impact of early-life maltreatment. Therefore continued investigation on this topic is needed

The paper by Mohamed Omar Salem and his colleges focuses on dream experiences within a student sample from the United Arab Emirates University. Since dreams are highly valued in Islamic societies because of religious factors the results of this study offer a better understanding of dream content in different cultures.

The so called continuity hypothesis predicts that waking-life events have an impact on dream contents. Although empirical research largely supports the continuity between waking and dreams, very few studies looked at the direct effect of professional life on dream content. Since the job reflects a major part of the waking life in employed persons, one would expect a considerable amount of work-related dreams. In a German-Swiss cooperation, Michael Schredl, Arthur Funkhouser and Nicole Arn investigated work-related dreams association to job and life satisfaction in hairdressers.

The phenomenon of lucid dreaming is an interesting topic within dream research. Investigating lucid dreamers opens the possibility to scrutinize questions about dream content from inside the dream. The last article from Daniel Erlacher focuses on the abilities of lucid dreamers to recall words which were memorized before sleep. That lucid dreamers are able to recall waking memories has been shown in numerous sleep laboratory studies, with dream diary studies, retrospective studies and anecdotal reports, however, no study so far did examine this issue in greater detail. The article by Erlacher tries to tackle some of the research question so far.

We want to further encourage dreams researchers from all areas to submit their findings to the INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF DREAM RESEARCH. The last year has shown that the open access philosophy of the journal without publication fee finds resonance within the scientific community. Therefore we hope that the readers will enjoy this presentation of the latest findings in dream research.