

Alan Kazdin to Edit Current Directions

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WANTED: Journal editor with broad interests, great contacts, strong professional accomplishments, knowledge and understanding of the many subdisciplines of psychology. Patience and love of the written word a must.

Sound like a hard order to fill? Well, APS found someone who met all of these criteria in Yale University's Alan Kazdin.

Kazdin was recently named the new editor of the APS journal *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, taking over for Emanuel Donchin, whose term as editor ended last December.

"It is really an honor to be named editor and I am delighted to take this on," said Kazdin. "The challenge is to represent all of psychology and that includes, of course, multiple theories and different methodological paradigms. The vision is to make broader connections, not only in substantive areas, but to have this seen internationally as a journal that really does reflect the current directions in the field. My intention is to try and expand, in as many ways as possible, the diversity, visibility, and coverage of the field so that it is a journal that fewer and fewer people can say they are not reading."

Kazdin, an APS Charter Fellow who serves as both a professor in and chair of the Yale University Psychology Department, will assume the full editorial duties of the journal later this year. In the meantime, another Charter Fellow, Milt Hakel, has agreed to step in as interim editor.

"I am elated that Alan agreed to become the editor and so elated that I was willing to become interim editor to make sure that that would happen," said Hakel. "Having been involved with the founding of APS and watching its growth, and that of both journals, to their current prominence in psychological science has been just really exciting so when the need occurred to have an interim editor, it was a no-brainer to say I would help out in the short term."

The Obvious Choice

For the APS Publications Committee, choosing the Yale scholar for the post was also a no-brainer.

"Kazdin was chosen because of his incredible breadth of knowledge and sophistication in psychology as a science. He is widely respected in the field, has unlimited energy, and has exhibited wonderfully creative thought in the many enterprises he has undertaken," said APS Publications Committee Chair Mark Appelbaum. "The Editor of *Current Directions* has an unusual opportunity and set of responsibilities to help the field keep current on the ongoing thoughts and work in the entire domain of scientific psychology. Unlike other journals in which the Editor has to wait until individuals submit their work, the Editor of *Current Directions* is pro-active in soliciting work which represents the 'cutting edge' of the science."

Kazdin says that he will seek input from the psychological science community in order to live up to the *Current Directions* mandate of providing a timely source of information – through scholarly reviews focusing on emerging trends, controversies, and issues of enduring importance – that spans the entire spectrum of scientific psychology and its applications.

“Psychology intersects with so many disciplines and so many basic research, clinical, and social issues that this is clearly a job for someone who seeks a great deal of input and diverse views and so I think that is rather challenging,” said Kazdin. “Most journals only present a slice of the field, but this one really doesn’t. This is not a regular journal. This journal is representing all of psychological science. To really represent current directions, one really has to cover future directions and to do that you have to be on the cutting edge of research, so I intend to seek a lot of input to make sure we are getting that.”

A Little History

“Alan Kazdin is someone who has had the tradition of being both a leader in clinical science and a leader in psychology, broadly written,” said APS Executive Director Alan Kraut. “He was on the first APS publications committee and gave a start to the very journal that he is going to edit. I think what he is going to do is to reach out in a more systematic way to leaders in all our subdisciplines to attract their writing for the journal. I am willing to bet that as it heads into its adolescence, *Current Directions* will hit its stride as the place where you can go for a sampling for the best in current research.”

In addition to serving on the first APS publications committee, Kazdin’s many editorial accomplishments and honors include serving as a reviewer and on the editorial boards of dozens of journals and serving as editor on a number of other journals. He is also editor of the *Encyclopedia of Psychology*, a position that Kazdin says has exposed him to the breadth of the field that he will now try to capture in *Current Directions*.

Kazdin earned a bachelor’s degree in psychology from San Jose State University and went on to earn his master’s and doctorate degrees in clinical psychology from Northwestern University. In addition to his positions of professor and department chair at Yale, he currently serves as director of the Yale Conduct Clinic and in a joint appointment at the Yale University School of Medicine and in the Institute for Social and Policy Studies. In addition to the American Psychological Society, he has been active in the Association for Advancement of Behavior Therapy, the Society of the Experimental Analysis of Behavior and the American Psychological Association. His current research is in developmental psychopathology and focuses on questions related to diagnosis, assessment, and treatment of childhood disorders.

APS President Kay Deaux said she is delighted with the choice of Kazdin as editor and added that he brings, “energy, enthusiasm, ideas, and a broad view of psychology to the editorship. Both as chair of the department at Yale and as the executive editor of the *Encyclopedia of Psychology*, Alan is in a position to see a full range of psychological pursuits and to know the players.”

The Vision

Kazdin said that since *Current Directions* provides a special opportunity to represent the entire field of psychology in ways that present the most exciting, innovative, and relevant information available, he wants to develop several emphases in the journal that include: representing the latest developments in theories and paradigms; representing diversity within the field of psychology; and promoting relevancy

to social and cultural issues.

“Many conceptual views and their implications are lost because there are no outlets for them and the outlets [that exist] are not widely read,” said Kazdin. “Obviously, science involves good theory and soliciting papers that provide theory and that make connections to research would be (for me) one exciting direction.”

Emphasized that the journal should span the entire field of psychology, he has pledged to not only canvass the diverse areas of the field and work towards their representation, but to draw more on the work from other countries. Inviting contributions from multiple countries, said Kazdin, ensures better representation of scientific psychology, and conveys to authors in other countries that *Current Directions* is available, that it is a viable resource, and that it deserves inclusion in libraries.

“I believe it will be important to include some articles that convey how science is directly relevant to social and cultural issues,” added Kazdin. “The thrust and focus of the articles need not change and there is no attempt here to alter what I perceive to be the policy of the journal. At the same time, advances in research on prejudice, stereotyping, and ethnic identity, as only examples, have obvious relevance for society at large. The journal, intended for a more general relevance, can do much to advance the field by ensuring papers convey how theory and research may speak to critical social issues.”

Kazdin also has ideas for the format of *Current Directions* articles that would highlight themes including those identifying: what is really new in the theory, finding, or method discussed; the salient lines of empirical research or new theories to which current research will lead; and the next steps and why they are important. “None of these are intended to change the current format, but rather to make more salient the progress that has been made and the directions toward which it is pointing,” he said.