our specialty a truly holistic ethos and as much as anything else defines psychiatry as unique in medicine, contains the word “social”. We need to be acutely sensitive to the social aspects of not just our patient’s existence but also our own, both as individuals and as a specialty. Political developments whether they represent threats or challenges always afford opportunity to engage both on behalf of psychiatry and ultimately our patients. The point to be made is that whilst such political factors are relatively easy targets, they are in fact to some extent obvious and accordingly “soft targets”. What of how we as South African psychiatrists co-exist? The private-state divide has been mentioned, but what of the regionalism? Aside from industry initiated and sponsored clinical trials, which one might argue do not truly represent collaborative work, how much collaboration is there? Certainly we get together in various forums. Meetings mainly, but opportunities to interface nonetheless. In addition, one should not ignore the publication of numerous texts that have brought colleagues together as well as the local journals that currently exist which have national representation both at an editorial board level and in terms of published material. Yet how much do we otherwise know about what our colleagues are doing in centres other than our own? In fact how much do we know about what colleagues within our own centres, divisions and departments are doing? From a research perspective, my personal observation is that such output in South Africa has tended to be about individuals more than groups. And yet we are “resource constrained”, so how do we existing in a culture of individualism where it is everyone for themselves? Is a collective agenda desirable, beyond our capacity or maybe it does exist and such concerns are unwarranted? Is it not time for an Imbizo of sorts, to explore this issue? Maybe the forthcoming SASOP congress in Swaziland is such a gathering that would allow for such engagement.

The intention of the editorial (and initially the lecture) was simply to challenge. This has clearly been an opportunity to do so which loosely corresponds to the title and proposed content of the original lecture: “South African psychiatry: challenges and opportunities”. It would appear that a significant challenge facing South African psychiatry is to decide, through an inclusive process, what it aims are and how they are to be achieved. A quote from Warren Buffet, the US investor, [cited in The Weekender (Business Day) editorial of the 6-7 May 2006 edition] seems pertinent: “It’s when the tide goes out that you learn who’s been swimming naked”. Let’s have our costumes on, because as surely as you are reading this editorial the tide is on it’s way out.

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Award of sanofi-aventis educational grant

At the previous South African Society of Psychiatrists (SASOP) conference, held in the Drakensburg in September 2004, a series of discussions between the then Sanofi-Synthelabo CNS product manager Althea Fordyce and the Journal took place. The discussions centered on how Sanofi Synthelabo might contribute to South African psychiatry. These discussions were initiated by Prof. David Castle (University of Melbourne), who was one of the international guest speakers at that conference, and culminated in the decision to fund an educational grant using South African Psychiatry Review as the vehicle. The aim was to promote research endeavor. The merger with Sanofi-Synthelabo and Aventis was concluded in November 2004 and despite the subsequent change in company structure, the commitment to this cause remained and the process of awarding a R50 000 grant annually, over the 5 years following commencement, was initiated in 2005. The process of selecting a recipient involved a review; by the editorial board of the Journal, of all eligible articles published in the Journal as of the May 2005 edition, up to and including the February 2006 edition. Eligibility related to the first author needing to be resident and working in the field of psychiatry in South Africa. The winner of the award was adjudicated by a panel comprising of members of the editorial board of South African Psychiatry Review. Sanofi-Aventis was not involved in this selection process which was completed at the end of June 2006. We are proud to announce that the recipients of the inaugural Sanofi-Aventis Educational Grant of R50 000 are: Martin C Scholtz, Melissa S Janse van Rensburg, J. Louw Roos, Herman W Pretorius, Maria Karayiorgou and Jonathan B Levin for their paper titled “Early non-psychotic deviant behaviour as an endophenotypic marker in bipolar disorder, schizo-affective disorder and schizophrenia” published in the November 2005 edition of the Journal. The award will be made at the gala dinner of the forthcoming SASOP conference to be held in Swaziland (10-14 September 2006). A sincere word of thanks to Prof. Werdie Van Staden, the conference Convener, who saw to it that the award would be made at this event as well as a word of thanks to those editorial board members who contributed their time as well as to Sanofi-Aventis for their vision and commitment to South African psychiatry.

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