Welcome to the first issue of the Journal of Organizational Psychodynamics (JOP), a new e-journal. Several associates of the Center for the Study of Organizational Change (CSOC) agreed to participate in an experiment. We decided to launch an electronic journal that met the criteria of other scholarly journals in the social and behavioral sciences. We wanted to offer the journal free of charge, and we were committed to getting manuscripts through the blind review process, through comprehensive copy editing, and into final publication with greater efficiency. We hope you decide to routinely access the JOP for thoughtful and challenging articles on the psychoanalytic study of organizations.

This first issue publishes two papers originally presented at the 2006 CSOC Colloquium. These articles were then reviewed and edited for this first issue. The first article, entitled “Organizational Totalitarianism and the Voices of Dissent,” is written by Howard F. Stein (associate editor for the JOP). As with most of Howard Stein’s writings on the application of psychoanalytic thought to professional and organizational culture, this piece on the ideology and psychology of totalitarianism is a moral plea, if not a warning, to management and executives in the public and private sectors. Corporate and government organizations wreak havoc with their employees, stakeholders, customers, and constituents if their cultures and leaders perpetuate, wittingly and unwittingly, absolutist and totalistic belief systems intended to oppose and dismiss contrary and alternative ideas. Stein’s article is timely and pertinent to the many challenges we face today in government and public affairs as well as corporate social responsibility.

David P. Levine (co-editor-in-chief) has written the second article of our first issue: “Keeping Track of the Self: Empathy, Recognition, and the Problem of Emotional Attunement in Organizations.” Again I would say this paper is a moral plea. Whereas “Organizational Totalitarianism and the Voices of Dissent” illustrates the moral ethic of psychoanalysis on the subject of oppression and totalistic thinking, Levine’s article is about our basic and unrelenting desire for object relatedness and human contact through empathy and recognition. The question of emotional attunement in organizations reinforces the findings of contemporary organizational research to include emotional intelligence as a highly valued competence among management in the workplace. Taking off on the concerns of many contemporary psychoanalytic writers and practitioners, however, Levine is able to make an important distinction between empathy and pseudo-empathy—the latter being all too common in the rational technical and manipulative cultures of contemporary management. As with Stein’s article, Levine’s paper surfaces questions and criteria to consider in our attempts to define humane organization.

I hope you find these articles thought-provoking and stimulating. I also hope they motivate many of you to submit a paper to the JOP and to participate in our ongoing dialogue bridging the schools of thought in psychoanalysis with the study of organizations.

Michael A. Diamond, Ph.D.
Co-Editor-in-Chief, Journal of Organizational Psychodynamics