

Editorial

Survival of the fittest?

Two hundred years ago, in 1809, Charles Robert Darwin was born in a small English county town called Shrewsbury. Fifty years later, having traveled widely, he published his seminal and highly controversial text *'On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life'* (1). In this important book, he outlined his theory of evolution by natural selection and though his views were initially criticised the scientific community soon came to fully appreciate the significance of his work. Indeed, Herbert Spencer having read Darwin's thesis compared it to his own economic theories and coined the phrase 'survival of the fittest'. The latter does not accurately capture 'natural selection' as determined by Darwin but does arguably convey its essence far more succinctly.

In relation to *Acta Neuropsychiatrica*, 'we', as a journal, cannot yet consider ourselves as having survived though clearly we have managed to publish (reproduce), and in so doing have successfully increased our 'fitness'. Over the past 3 years we have adapted considerably and continue to evolve into a meaningful modern-day scientific journal that addresses the whole spectrum of neuropsychiatry. This is reflected to some extent by the contents of

this issue of the journal, the last in 2009 in which, along with our regular research articles, we have a number of interesting pieces in our special sections that address topics as far reaching as perfusion magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and the confluence of psychiatry, ethics, politics and culture.

With the expansion of online publishing it is difficult to anticipate the future influences that will govern the selection and survival of journals. However, I hope that by continuing to serve as a useful resource for quality science and through the provision of articles that are interesting and educational *Acta Neuropsychiatrica* will naturally persevere.

Professor Gin S. Malhi

CADE Clinic,

Discipline of Psychological Medicine,

University of Sydney,

Sydney, Australia

Reference

1. DARWIN C. *On the origin of species by means of natural selection or the preservation of favoured races in the struggle for life*. London: John Murray.