

Editorial:

Volume 11 of AJMT is published at a time when the world is undergoing a transition from one century to another and one millennium to another. As we embark on this unique transition in time, it poses a question about what changes might occur in the field of music therapy in the years ahead? What new challenges will be posed by the 21st century for music therapy? And how will the field meet these new challenges?

As electronic communication becomes the norm and people spend increasing periods of time at computer keyboards, what effect will this have on a therapeutic field that prides itself on an interactive process, and on non-verbal communication? Will music therapy have to adapt, or will music therapy provide the needed balance to a technologically driven society?

In reading the three articles presented in this volume we can see some of the traditional values alongside new developments. McFerran-Skewes for example describes a music therapy program for teenagers who have been bereaved. She adopts a qualitative approach to her study, highlighting that the research method must resonate with the nature of the study. Forrest presents a case study of a woman trying to resolve memories of long ago, through a language of music that bridges the gap between her mother tongue and an adopted language. She uses an ethnological basis for her music therapy approach, highlighting the need for music therapy to be practised within a meaningful cultural framework. And Tamplin provides case vignettes of her work with clients who have acquired brain injury as a result of road trauma, and she explores improvisation as a valuable technique to use with these people.

In each article the traditional use of music therapy is evident - the clients have special needs as a result of some physical or emotional issue that impacts on their lives. The music therapy approach is also traditional, in the use of songs and improvisation where communication, socialisation and self-expression offer opportunities for engagement and quality of experience.

As the 21st century unfolds the music therapy profession will be challenged more and more to show evidence of outcomes. The profession must meet the challenge, both in gathering data that indicates efficacy for music therapy, but also in the qualitative descriptions that underpin our practice. Such descriptions are evident in this edition of AJMT.

A new introduction to AJMT volume 11 is a section on book reviews, and two books published recently are reviewed.

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