

## EDITORIAL • RÉDACTION

### Editor • Rédacteur

John Hoey (hoeyj@cma.ca)

### Deputy Editor • Rédactrice adjointe

Anne Marie Todkill (todkia@cma.ca)

### Associate Editors • Rédacteurs associés

Tom Elmslie; Ken Flegel;  
K.S. Joseph; Anita Palepu;  
Peter Singer; Erica Weir;  
James Hanley (Biostatistics • Biostatistique)

### Editorial Fellow • Boursière en rédaction médicale

Alison Sinclair (sincla@cma.ca)

### Managing Editor • Rédactrice administrative

Jennifer Douglas (dougjl@cma.ca)

### News and Features Editor

#### Rédacteur, informations générales

Patrick Sullivan (sullip@cma.ca)

### Editors • Rédacteurs

Patricia Lightfoot (lightp@cma.ca)  
Glenda Proctor (proctg@cma.ca)  
Kate Schissler (schisk@cma.ca)  
Barbara Sibbald (sibbab@cma.ca)  
Steven Wharry (wharrs@cma.ca)

### Assistant Editor • Rédactrice adjointe

Jennifer Raiche (raichj@cma.ca)

### Editorial Administrator • Administratrice de rédaction

Carole Corkery (corcec@cma.ca)

### Editorial Assistants • Assistantes à la rédaction

Erin Archibald (archie@cma.ca)  
Allison Burnie (burnia@cma.ca)  
Wilma Fatica (faticw@cma.ca)  
Joyce Quintal (quintj@cma.ca)

### Translation Coordinator

#### Coordonnatrice de la traduction

Marie Saumure

### Contributing Editors • Rédactrices invitées

Gloria Baker; C.J. Brown; Charlotte Gray;  
Peggy Robinson

### Editorial Board • Conseil de rédaction

Nicholas R. Anthonisen (Winnipeg)  
Paul W. Armstrong (Edmonton)  
Neil R. Cashman (Toronto)  
Hugues Cormier (Montréal)  
Raisa B. Deber (Toronto)  
C.J. de Gara (Edmonton)  
David H. Feeny (Edmonton)  
Antoine M. Hakim (Ottawa)  
Judith G. Hall (Vancouver)  
Carol P. Herbert (London)  
Neill Iscoe (Toronto)  
Jerome P. Kassirer (Boston)  
Harriet L. MacMillan (Hamilton)  
Allison J. McGeer (Toronto)  
Olli S. Miettinen (Montréal)  
C. David Naylor (Toronto)  
Susan Phillips (Kingston)  
Louise Pilote (Montréal)  
Martin T. Schechter (Vancouver)  
Martin F. Shapiro (Los Angeles)  
Richard Smith (*British Medical Journal*,  
London, England)  
C. Peter Warren (Winnipeg)

All editorial matter in *CMAJ* represents the opinions of the authors and not necessarily those of the Canadian Medical Association (CMA). The CMA assumes no responsibility or liability for damages arising from any error or omission or from the use of any information or advice contained in *CMAJ* including editorials, studies, reports, letters and advertisements.

Tous les articles à caractère éditorial dans le *JAMC* représentent les opinions de leurs auteurs et n'engagent pas l'Association médicale canadienne (AMC). L'AMC décline toute responsabilité civile ou autre quant à toute erreur ou omission ou à l'usage de tout conseil ou information figurant dans le *JAMC* et les éditoriaux, études, rapports, lettres et publicités y paraissant.

## Remembrance of things present

With each Remembrance Day the veterans who assemble for the laying of wreaths at war memorials across the country are a little older, and a little fewer. One wonders if the moisture in their eyes is the result of the November wind, or of memories now more than 50 years old. To younger generations of Canadians, these memories seem remote; by yearly increments, our national experience of battle recedes. Baby boomers in the crowd remark to their children how lucky we are to live in a country untouched by war for so long.

This is the national forgetting that occurs on Remembrance Day. Writing in 1995, John Ralston Saul cites the “generally agreed statistics ... that some 1000 soldiers, and 5000 civilians, die per day, every day, for a total of over two million deaths per year, for a total of over 75 million deaths over the past 35 years.” Or, taking another estimate, “50 million people have been killed by war since the peace began in 1945.”<sup>1</sup> The experience of war is not remote for many thousands of people who have arrived in this country in the last 5 decades: 37 500 Hungarians in 1956–57, 11 000 Czechs in 1968–69, 6000 Chileans in 1973, 9000 Indochinese from 1975 to 1978 and 60 000 more in 1979–80.<sup>2</sup> In 1999 the top 10 source countries for refugees in Canada were Bosnia–Herzegovina, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Iran, Somalia, Croatia, Pakistan, Iraq, Algeria and India.<sup>3</sup> For the year 2000 Canada was committed to accept up to 29 300 displaced persons and Geneva Convention refugees (people at risk of persecution in their own state for reasons of race, religion, nationality, or political or social affiliation). In 1998, 22 644 refugees became permanent residents.<sup>4</sup>

Thus the face of Canada is altered as lines of interstate and, increasingly, intrastate conflict are drawn and redrawn

around the globe. And, through immigrants and refugees, the horrifically inventive abuses of modern warfare enter into the collective memory of our society. Or do they? These experiences are painful to convey, difficult to share. Physicians who work with victims of torture, or who have recent refugees in their practice, know how painful for newcomers is the disconnect between brutal memories and the relatively innocent, pleasure-seeking culture where they have found refuge.

It is partly in contemplation of such things that we find ourselves preoccupied by war in this issue. Jennifer Leaning looks at its environmental effects (page 1157), Leslie Shanks and Michael Schull consider the use of rape as one of war's most demoralizing devices (page 1152) and Pauline Alakija recounts her experience as a forensic pathologist investigating war crimes in Kosovo (page 1148). We feel that it not sufficient to confine ourselves as a general medical journal to the “Canadian” concerns of medicine. The world has become a disconcertingly shrunken space, and it is not only appropriate but necessary for Canadian physicians to be aware of international issues and their practical and ethical implications for interactions with individuals patients and for the stance of the profession as a whole. Looking outward, we also look within. — *CMAJ*

### References

1. Saul JR. *The unconscious civilization*. Toronto: Anansi; 1995. p. 11.
2. *Milestones of the 20<sup>th</sup> century*. Ottawa: Citizenship and Immigration Canada; 2000. Available: [www.cic.gc.ca/english/about/milestones/index.html](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/about/milestones/index.html) (accessed 2000 Oct 3).
3. *Facts and figures 1999: immigration overview*. Ottawa: Citizenship and Immigration Canada; 2000. Available: [www.cic.gc.ca/english/pub/facts99e.pdf](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/pub/facts99e.pdf) p.57 (accessed 2000 Oct 3).
4. *The Canadian refugee system*. Ottawa: Citizenship and Immigration Canada; 2000. Available: [www.cic.gc.ca/english/refugee/refl-e.html](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/refugee/refl-e.html) (accessed 2000 Oct 3).