So, one of the reasons I decided not to go into psychiatry was that I found the criteria for diagnosing various psychiatric disorders very ambiguous. The criteria for arriving at a specific diagnosis were based on the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM). It was DSM-III when I was medical school, and the current edition is DSM-V. I think every medical student felt that they had characteristics of every psychiatric disorder after they finished their psychiatry clerkship!

The development of MR imaging brought much promise to help provide objective criteria and better clarity to discriminate between different psychiatric diseases that had overlapping DSM criteria. Unfortunately, we were unable to make much progress by the images alone. However, the new era of advanced quantitative techniques, novel image acquisition strategies, and semiautomated quantitative image analysis approaches have identified promising imaging biomarkers to quantitatively identify various mental disorders. These early results form the basis of the US National Institute of Mental Health’s Research Domain Criteria initiative to investigate psychiatric imaging for diagnosis heralded the field of “psychoradiology.”

I wish to thank Dr Qiyong Gong, MD, PhD for agreeing to edit this issue on the clinical aims of “psychoradiology”. As an internationally recognized leader in psychoradiology, Dr Gong has created a wonderful issue based on the contributions of international experts in this emerging field. I thank all the authors for their outstanding contributions. This translational issue will benefit all individuals who care for patients with these challenging and complex disorders.

One of the many “fun” decisions editors make is to determine if their upcoming issue will help “predict the future” or help “create the future” of their specialty. This issue of Neuroimaging Clinics on “psychoradiology” is a veiled attempt to help “create the future” by presenting a thought-provoking issue that highlights the possibilities of advanced MR technique to quantitatively and objectively diagnose a variety of psychiatric disorders. I thank Dr Gong for his willingness and tenacity to tackle such a bold and challenging topic.

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