It is fitting that this leading Canadian psychology journal would choose to place the spotlight on the burgeoning discipline of forensic psychology in a Special Issue. Once widely perceived as a field in which psychologists “ended up” working, forensic psychology now is among the most highly respected areas of psychology, in terms of both science and practice. Nowhere is this more apparent than in Canada. Much of the seminal work in major areas of forensic psychology, including risk assessment, psychopathy, eyewitness testimony, victimology, credibility assessment, and criminal behaviour, has been done here. As James Ogloff (this issue) highlights, we ought to be extremely proud of our track record in forensic research. We must strive to continue in this tradition of basic research excellence. Equally important, research in our field is having a great impact in Canadian society. For example, the National Judicial Institute based in Ottawa relies heavily on forensic research in its training activities with Canadian judges. Researchers in forensic psychology have been given the remarkable opportunity to educate the judiciary in several areas, including eyewitness identification and credibility assessment. Judges have cited this type of work in their decisions in criminal cases. Yet, this considerable scientific and applied influence is not due to a multitude of forensic psychology programs or Canadian PhDs being generated with this specialization (see Ogloff, this issue). There are still few formal programs in forensic psychology, despite a huge demand for students entering graduate school, and the often unmet need for our expertise from within the legal system itself. Clearly, there is a fine “new generation” of PhDs coming out of existing programs. However, there are far too few of them. I think that Canadian universities must start to recognize and act upon the need for more formalized programs in this area. Because of the unique challenges of doing research on and working with forensic populations, the argument that students graduating from existing Clinical Psychology PhD programs (in the absence of specialized training) are prepared for research and practice in forensic psychology is unconvincing.

I was very pleased to have been given the opportunity to edit a Special Issue on Forensic Psychology for the Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science. Thank you to Editor Lorne Sulsky for his enthusiasm and encouragement in this undertaking. I also extend appreciation to all contributors and reviewers. Like you, I am excited to be working in a field with such diversity, scientific excellence, and important consequences for the legal system.