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What a great conference! Branson is a beautiful and rainy area of Missouri. The hotel's conference area allowed room to move, meet with friends, network, and easy access to conference activities. Kudos to the 2015 Conference Committee (the Research Committee (RC) representative was Mary Enzman Hines) for their work.

Research was very much a part of this year's conference with research activities each day. Research presentations addressed holistic curriculum outcomes, a simulation intervention for self-care, instrument testing, the use of integral theory, reflection in praxis, caring in nursing administration, faith-based caring, men in nursing, and creative expression. One research session focused on Reiki: the effects of interventions for patients with HIV and knee replacement, and teaching Reiki for self-care. There were many good discussions following presentations; we face unique challenges as holistic nurses. For example, one excellent discussion centered on the tension between mainstream science ideas of "good" research and holistic research, and how that plays out in concept selection, methodology, institutional research support, and research funding. New this year was the repetition of two research paper presentation sessions. This offered those of us that don't want to miss a research presentation the opportunity to attend a non-research offering.
Research posters showcased the work of AHNA members, students engaged in holistic nursing research, and one student-faculty research project (we need more of these!). Posters were strategically located in the hallway outside the meeting rooms providing ample opportunity for viewing. Based on the number of individuals I saw reading the research posters throughout the conference, there is great interest in holistic research and implications for practice. This was also evident at the RC meeting which was well attended.

Those attending the RC meeting discussed their research topics, and the range was inspiring! Members welcomed several students working on their dissertation. One doctoral researcher discussed her committee's lack of knowledge of holistic nursing research, an ongoing issue for some students. The RC also approved two research studies that solicited participants at the conference. We look forward to learning the outcomes of these studies.

After learning of the many research projects at the conference, it was apparent the RC must renew its endeavors to learn of and showcase members' research on the RC website pages. We may have a lot of evidence for practice we are not disseminating or utilizing.

None of the pre-conference sessions focused solely on research (although research was listed as a track for several). This gives the RC renewed determination to ensure there is at least one research-focused pre-conference at future conferences. It also highlights the need for more AHNA researchers, including DNP students, and DNP-prepared nurses, to submit abstracts in order to disseminate findings.

Congratulations to Mary Enzman Hines who received the Holistic Nurse of the Year award! Mary has a strong history of research and publications, and with Rorry Zahourek, developed a model for holistic nursing research. As part of the award ceremony, past winners of the award, including several RC members, were also honored. It was inspiring to see so many researchers who have so greatly influenced AHNA and laid the research ground we stand on today.

The two keynote addresses had Implications for research. Marilyn "Dee" Ray presented Rootedness in Holistic Nursing: The Ontological Mystery and Structure of Caring. This keynote had implications for the philosophical and conceptual underpinnings of our practice and research. Karen Kendall-Tackett
presented the end note *Rooted in our Biology: Psychoneuroimmunology and the Frontiers of Mind-Body Medicine*. In this presentation Kendall-Tackett reviewed her research on the relationships between trauma, stress, the inflammatory response and depression. She related her theories to her work with breast feeding mothers and the role that activity plays in combating stress and inflammation. Both presentations were stimulating and left participants with much to think about.

The plenary, *A Call to Action: Validation of the NANDA Diagnosis: Imbalanced Energy Field*, presented by Noreen Frisch, Dickon Weir-Hughes, and Howard Butcher, was also related to research. They discussed their research project to develop the diagnosis in the NANDA nomenclature. Their research project is one of two that the RC approved for the conference. Summaries of these presentations can be found in related articles in the *Beginnings* April, 2015 issue.

One last thought... Attending the conference is nourishing and invigorating. I (Sue) always have a strong sense of "coming home" when I arrive at the conference hotel. Other conferences I attend are interesting and promote networking and professional growth, but the underlying energy is one of "hurry." Attendees are always moving; on their way to another presentation or activity. Even the lunches are "working" lunches. There is no sense of "being" or "dwelling." The AHNA conference has an underlying energy of calmness and wholeness. The schedule provides time to think about what we've just learned, meet with friends, or connect with colleagues between sessions. And I leave feeling I've grown as much or more than after attending other conferences, but am much more relaxed. A very nice ending!

**Research Profile: Susan MacLeod Dyess, PhD, RN, AHN-BC, NE-BC**

*For this issue we interviewed Susan MacLeod Dyess, PhD, RN, AHN-BC, NE-BC*  
*Associate Professor at Florida Atlantic University.*

**What is your current area of research?**

I have studied faith in health and healing and leading community nursing practice in faith based settings for a number of years. Currently, I am working with a nonprofit healthcare organization with a commitment to outreach through faith communities. We are trying to capture the outcomes associated with this approach to population health. Additionally, I am finishing a study that is a mixed methods repeated measures examination of mediation practice with nurse leaders in an acute care practice setting.

**Could you tell us how you got started in research and how it evolved over the years?**

My desire to become involved in research began as I believed outcomes associated with holistic nursing practice needed to be made known to providers, payers and patients. I also wanted to contribute to developing this body of knowledge. Opportunities to participate with research actively and become the Principal Investigator for research studies expanded with my continued education as a Master's student and a doctoral student. As an academician, I am fortunate that my
employment role not only highly values research and knowledge dissemination, but also requires it.

**What were some of your biggest challenges, surprises and joys in doing holistic nursing research?**

I am a bit impatient with the long-term process of research and contributing to nursing knowledge. At the same time, I do enjoy fully the engaged thinking and collaboration with colleagues that supports developing ideas and maintaining research rigor in studies over time. The analysis of data for me as a researcher is usually surprisingly thrilling as I am a witness to the emergence of knowledge. I strive for balance in my life each day but at times that is a challenge.

**What excites you about the future of Holistic Nursing Research?**

People desire holistic and effective health care services. I believe Holistic Nursing, practiced at its fullest, can positively address the Institute for Healthcare Improvement's triple aim of cost effective and satisfying quality health outcomes for populations (and individuals). It is through holistic nursing research that the health outcomes associated with holistic practices can be revealed, recognized, readily shared through education and integrated as best practice in varied healthcare settings. I believe it is holistic nurses' obligation to contribute to interdisciplinary solutions for the many health challenges facing our society including but not limited to the increasing numbers of older adults living with chronic illness. It is an exciting time to be part of the AHNA as a member, educator and researcher.

*Find some of Dr. Dyess' publications [here](#).*

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**Research Poster Solicitation for the 2015 AIHM Annual Conference**

Research Poster Solicitation for the 2015 AIHM Annual Conference: *People, Planet, Purpose*, October 25-29, 2015 in San Diego, CA at the Paradise Point Resort and Spa. Poster Abstract Submission deadline is **September 15, 2015**. The Academy of Integrative Health & Medicine and the Scripps Research Institute are pleased to receive abstracts of original research dealing with integrative holistic health & medicine. In keeping with the mission of the Academy, research abstracts resulting from Inter-Professional Collaboration will have an advantage in judging. [Learn more](#).

**AHNA 2016 Conference Request for Proposals**

The 2016 Conference Proposal Solicitation has begun. [Click here](#).

- Pre-Conference Workshop Proposal Deadline is **Thursday, October 15, 2015**
- Workshop Proposal Deadline is **Thursday, October 15, 2015**
August Research Committee Journal Club

The August Research Committee Journal Club is scheduled for **Friday, August 28th, 1-2 pm EST**
The August Journal Club will feature Ann Recine, RN, DNP, APNP-BC, who will discuss her article, *Designing Forgiveness Interventions: Guidance from Five Meta-Analyses*. The article is in the June 2015 JHN (pp. 161-167).

**To participate:** Shortly before the time above, call into *(760) 569-9000* and use passcode 864970#. Telephone rates may apply.
To confirm that you will be participating in the Journal Club, please send an email to *membership@ahna.org* indicating that you will be on the call.

Please [read the article](#) before joining the discussion.

Ann C. Recine, RN, DNP, APNP-BC is a Nurse Practitioner with a holistic private practice in Eau Claire, WI. She teaches in the BSN and Doctorate of Nursing Practice programs at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. Her primary research interest is forgiveness.

The purpose of the Journal Club is to read, evaluate, and discuss research related to holistic practice. We will discuss research articles from the *Journal of Holistic Nursing*, so all members will have online access to the articles. Although there will be a presentation, the richness of a Journal Club comes from participants sharing experiences and strategies for providing holistic care.

**Learning with AHNA**

"Preparing a Holistic Research Abstract: Think Success!"
**Wednesday, August 19, 2015 at 1:00 pm EST (NOON CST, 11:00 am MST and 10:00 am PST)**
Presenter: Mary Enzman Hines, APRN, PhD, CNS, CPNP, APHN-BC

This webinar provides an overview of the preparation and submission of a holistic research abstract. Key components of the abstract will be discussed and exemplars of a successful and unsuccessful abstract submission will be provided. The focus of this webinar is to emerge with the skill set that will result in successful abstract submissions for participants.
Register for the 1.0 hour CNE for only $8 for members or sign up for the "Just Listening" webinar for free.

"Validation of the NANDA Diagnosis Disturbed Energy Field: A Call for Action"
Wednesday, September 16, 2015 at 1:00 pm EST (Noon CST, 11:00 am MST and 10:00 am PST)
Presenter: Noreen Frisch, RN, MSN, PhD, AHN-BC
This webinar is to garner support for clinically validating this vital diagnosis within the field of holistic nursing and discuss the most appropriate research methods and ways forward to advance this initiative.

Links for this webinar will soon appear in the AHNA Online Store for the 1.0 hour CNE for only $8 or to sign up for the "Just Listening" webinar.

AHNA is accredited as a provider of continuing nursing education by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Committee On Accreditation. Provider approved by the California Board of Registered Nursing, Provider # 10442

Research Participants Needed

Student Corner
Masters and Doctoral students are invited and encouraged to send abstracts of their thesis/dissertations/quality improvement projects and submit to Connections in Holistic Nursing Research for possible publication in the Student Corner. This gives students an opportunity to publish and allow others to gain interest in their work. If you are a mentor or advisor for a graduate student, please encourage them to share with us. Please send your submissions to Dr. Michalene A. King at kingm@rmu.edu or michalene1@comcast.net We look forward to reading about your scholarly work.

A Call to Action for Research
In our April 2015 research e-newsletter, we launched a new feature, "A Call to Action for Research." The inaugural presentation by Wendy Stivers discussed the ghettoization of health care.

Do you have a topic that you believe needs to be researched? Would you like to discover that other holistic nurses are also interested in your topic and would like to collaborate? Submit your ideas to Michalene King at kingm@rmu.edu or michalene1@comcast.net for possible inclusion in a future e-newsletter.

Michalene King

AHNA Researchers in Action


AHNA members names in bold. We would love to hear about your research. Have you started your dissertation, had a paper published, presented, etc. Send your “Researcher in Action” to research@ahna.org. For publications, click on the article title for link to abstract (if available).

Promoting Research and Quality Improvement in Holistic Nursing through Consultation Service

AHNA Research Consultation Service
The AHNA Research Committee is now offering a program for those nurses who want to conduct research or are working on a quality improvement project, but need some guidance. If you are a new researcher who would like some assistance, the AHNA Research Consultation Program is for you.

For AHNA members, this service is provided for $20 for one research consultation and $50 for three, and can be purchased online at www.ahna.org/shop. Consultations are expected to be less than one hour, and will be most productive when the Consultation Request Form is thoughtfully completed. For example, providing your area of research interest and other descriptors will enable the program manager to better match you with a consultant. After purchasing your consultation service, you will receive an email receipt that guides you in the process for your consultation. This program is managed by Cindy Barrere, who can be contacted at cynthia.barrere@quinnipiac.edu.

The AHNA Research Committee is very excited to make this service available to the members, continuing their focus to promote and support future researchers in holistic nursing.
Research Term: Randomization
(or 'Randomisation' as it is spelled in the United Kingdom,
Canada and Australia)
Dr. Kristin Wicking, RN, BSN, MSN, PhD

There are two main kinds of randomization: random sampling and random assignment to treatment groups. In this issue we will only focus on random assignment, also called random allocation.

**Randomization**: "The random assignment of subjects to treatment conditions."

**Random assignment**: "A strategy used to assign subjects to experimental or comparison/attention control groups by probability (i.e. in a manner determined by chance alone). Each subject has an equal chance of being placed in to any one of the study groups." (Melnyk & Morrison-Beedy, 2012, page 462.)

Random assignment is concerned with how we as the researcher decide which subject or participant ends up in which one of two (or more) treatment groups, or treatment conditions. Who gets the experimental cancer drug and who gets the sugar pill? Who gets the special 1:1 tutoring session with the math expert and who gets nothing? Let’s look at a lighthearted example to see why random assignment into groups is so important in research.

Imagine that you had 10 high school boys lining up to play a game of basketball. You need 2 teams of 5 boys each. You decide to let them sort themselves into the two teams. So what might happen? They would self-select according to what mattered most to them. Perhaps the boys who always shoot hoops together on Thursday afternoons after school would clump themselves into a team, and leave all the others behind. You might end up with one really strong team and one really weak team. Or perhaps all the boys who were happy to be on the 'skins' team were the ones with more athletic bodies, while those who chose to be on the 'shirts' team would be the ones who were less confident about showing their bodies. Maybe all the tall boys would end up on one team, or all the blonde boys. Anytime you leave it up to the 'participants' or 'subjects' in a study to 'self select' which group they will belong to, then you are introducing numerous possibilities for 'confounding variables' such as body types, hair color, body image, etc.

Let’s say that you’re not going to play an ordinary game, but instead you are going to run a little experiment. One team is going to get a special basketball lesson from a visiting basketball celebrity, while the other team is not. Then they will all 10 be given a chance to shoot 10 free throws and rated on how many baskets they scored out of ten attempts. Once you tell the boys about the celebrity coming, let’s say Michael Jordan, then many of them would be very eager to meet and learn from Michael, so they might...
jostle to be on that "dream team." You could end up with the most assertive or confident boys all on the same 'experimental condition' team, because they pushed to be in the group that would meet/learn from Jordan; while the 'control' team has all the boys who are less enthusiastic about basketball or about Michael Jordan, or who are less assertive about putting themselves forward.

Randomly allocating your 10 boys in to the two teams solves a host of problems. By using randomization, you are far more likely that the blondes, the athletic bodies, the assertive boys, the tall ones, will be evenly distributed across both teams. Then when you run your experiment, you can say with more confidence that it was the lesson from Michael Jordan that made the difference between the scores of the two teams, NOT the height, assertiveness, body type or hair color that accounted for the difference between the two teams. Your dependent variable is the free throw score, and your independent variable, or the experimental condition you are varying or manipulating, would be the lesson (or not) from Jordan.

But randomization is even more powerful. Because things like athletic bodies, hair color, even personality types, you might realize could affect your experiment as confounding variables, and so you could make a point of "splitting up" all the blonde, buffed, assertive boys and spreading them equally between the two teams.

But what randomization does for you, its hidden and even more potent power, is to ALSO help ensure that your two teams are equal on a host of other variables or features that you might not ever even think about as you are designing the experiment. Perhaps the fact that they have a dad who is a mad keen basketballer and practices with them every weekend could also be a confounding variable, but you can't tell that just from looking at the boys. Or perhaps some other physical trait like joint mobility or skeletal strength or peripheral vision could also confound your experiment. It's impossible to ask about or assess for every possible confounding variable, or even to know (guess) enough to think to ask about it.

But if you use randomization to decide which boys end up in which group (random assignment), then you sidestep all these problems, and greatly increase your chances that any feature or trait that might affect your experiment will be equally represented in both teams. If you have randomly allocated, then there will be just as many flexible, strong boys with excellent peripheral vision in the 'dream team' as in the non-celebrity team.

Randomization is easy to do and well worth the effort. You can generate random numbers in a simple computer program like Excel or even on a website like this one: https://www.randomizer.org

So always consider if you can randomly allocate your participants into groups, and do so whenever possible. And as any high school boy would tell you, leaving it to chance, or random assignment, means every boy has an equal chance of meeting and learning from the famous Michael Jordan. For a stronger research design, and to be
as fair and ethical as possible, and to give everyone an equal chance of scoring a few moments with Michael, then use random assignment into treatment groups. And let's play ball! :) 


View AHNA’s growing research glossary. To contribute a definition or suggest a term, please contact research@ahna.org.