



On Qualitative Research, Outcome Measures, and the Fostering of Professional Dialogue

KEYWORDS: Qualitative research, outcome measures, massage research, massage education, massage practice, reductionism, affective massage therapy, author–reader dialogue

Welcome to the IJTMB's first full year, with a quarterly publication schedule planned for the months of March, June, September, and December. We continue to encourage researchers, educators, and practitioners in the massage, bodywork, and related health science communities to consider this journal as a possible venue for sharing their professional experiences and insights.

Included among the several entries in this issue of the IJTMB is an article by Paul Finch that reports on a qualitative investigation regarding motivational changes seen in massage therapy students over the course of their professional education. Although not originally intended as a sequel, it certainly does serve to illustrate the qualitative genre of research addressed in an article that appeared in the journal's December 2008 issue⁽¹⁾.

A second article appearing in this issue speaks to a recently-launched database resource that addresses a dire need among researchers and practitioners in their perennial quest to document, in valid and reliable ways, client-specific outcomes of interventions in the field of complementary and alternative medicine (CAM). Ania Kania, Marja Verhoef, Trish Dryden, and Mark Ware provide an overview of the IN-CAM Outcomes Database, with an emphasis on its underlying domain-specific framework, possible search options, and interactive nature.

Part of the rationale behind the Commentaries section of the IJTMB is to afford colleagues an opportunity to respond to entries appearing in the journal and to any other features of this publication. This type of venue for encouraging dialogue among researchers, educators, and practitioners is an intended catalyst for “point-counterpoint” or “thesis-antithesis-synthesis” exchanges potentially beneficial to all concerned. In that context, this issue provides—via the Letters to the Editor—two instances of reader reactions to previously-published editorials with, of course, the opportunity for the originating author to reply.

In the first case, Dylan Lott responds to Christopher Moyer's Research section editorial⁽²⁾ that appeared in the August 2008 inaugural issue. This lively exchange between Lott and Moyer focuses on the construct of “reductionism” and its role and value in massage therapy research. In the second Letter to the Editor, Pamela Fitch reflects on Moyer's editorial on “affect-

ive massage therapy”⁽³⁾ published in the December 2008 issue. The result of this dialogue actually attests to perhaps more areas of agreement than may be apparent at first glance.

This March 2009 issue expands the News/Announcements section of the journal via additional entries in the calendar of recent and forthcoming conferences, the NCCAM/NIH (National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine/National Institutes of Health) news and grant application announcements, and additional announcements and reminders. Of particular note regarding upcoming conferences are the [CAHCIM North American Research Conference on Complementary and Integrative Medicine](#) (May 12 – 15, 2009), the [Second International Fascia Research Conference](#) (October 27 – 30, 2009), and the [Highlighting Massage Therapy in CIM Research Conference](#) (May 13 – 15, 2010). The particularly relevant issues of [translational research](#) and [tools for assessing manual therapies](#) represent the focal points of two of the several NCCAM/NIH grant application announcements. Also included in the same section of the journal is a congratulatory acknowledgment of the recent launch of the multifaceted [Science of Massage](#) website by Ross Turchaninov, MD, and colleagues.

This brief editorial has simply highlighted certain features of the March 2009 issue, the details of which we trust you will find engaging and beneficial to your professional efforts. Please know that your continued participation as an interested reader of, and potential contributor to, the IJTMB are both appreciated and encouraged.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST NOTIFICATION

The author declares that there are no conflicts of interest.

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