

Inside this issue:

Board of Directors	2
Message from the Editors	2
Communications Committee Report	7
42nd Annual Conference	8
Call for Leo D. Doherty Award	14
Call for 2011 Woollatt Distinguished Paper Award	15
NERA Mentoring Program	16
Call for Thomas F. Donlon Award	17
Member News	18
The Graduate Lounge	21
Exploring Organizational Culture through Metaphor Analysis	22

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The NERA Researcher

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The President's Message



Thanos Patelis

Dear NERA Members and Friends:

By this time, you should have all recovered from attending the annual AERA and NCME conference in New Orleans and with the academic year nicely behind you, I'm sure that you're all looking forward to the summer months. As we all get rejuvenated by the spring conferences, the spring weather, new baseball season, NBA finals, NFL draft, spring rugby and the submission of NERA conference proposals, we also become nostalgic in thinking about graduation, impending school reunions, and the overflowing bucket list of research projects and activities. So, feeling both rejuvenated and nostalgic, I want to first thank the NERA Board of Directors, all the committee members and our membership for the passion, hard work and commitment in making NERA a great organization. Since the 2010 conference, our Board of Directors set a very aggressive agenda of action to respond to our membership's requests and to improve our organization. We have accomplished quite a bit of the action items already as a result of the exceptional efforts of many of you. **THANK YOU!**

Each of us should also thank our sponsors and those affiliated with each of our sponsors. Because of their commitment to our shared vision of scholarship excellence and collegial interactions, they have contributed to NERA in both spirit and financial support. The 2010 sponsors are as follows:

Platinum sponsors (contributing \$1,000 plus) are the College Board, Educational Testing Service, University of Connecticut's Neag School of Education, and Westfield State University.

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Historically in this issue, NERA presidents provide scholarly information, philosophical commentary about science, education, policies etc. or reflect on relevant aspects of education or our organization. I may not do justice to the thoughtfulness, insight, and eloquence of past presidents, but I will try to offer some comments that hopefully inspire us somehow. In case I lose you in my commentary, I want to make three points:

1. We, as educational research and measurement experts, should not only be aware of the impact of our work, but take a role in ensuring that we actively participate in how the results are used. To do this, we must disseminate our research to both our community of researchers and to the public that includes policy makers.

(Continued on page 3)

Message from the Editors

Hello NERA Members! This issue of the *NERA Researcher* is packed with important information about the 2011 Conference. For example, our conference program co-chairs have been working hard to plan exciting pre-conference and in-conference training sessions. You won't want to miss out on the opportunity to attend a free training session at the upcoming annual conference! You will also find a listing of key dates related to the conference and information about conference registration and hotel accommodations. Finally, if you are a graduate student who would like to receive mentoring during the annual conference, be sure to read more about this wonderful opportunity and the deadline for applying.

This issue also includes a special article by Dr. Felice Billups entitled "Exploring Organizational Culture Through Metaphor Analysis." In this article, Dr. Billups describes how a qualitative research strategy, metaphor analysis, can be used to assess, for example, the culture of your work environment, campus life, or school environment. The method is growing in popularity and holds promise for improving upon traditional approaches.

We hope you enjoy this issue of the *NERA Researcher* and that you have a safe and enjoyable summer!

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The President's Message
(Continued from page 1)

2. Quality research and sound educational and psychological testing involve standards that must be considered and adhered to in undertaking this work. These include ethical principles. We, as members of this professional community, must work hard to contribute to and adhere to these standards.
3. One major step in the research process involves peer review. Conferences and journals offer the vehicles for this step. Therefore, participation in conferences (and in particular NERA) is not a luxury, but part of our professional practice to produce and ensure quality research. NERA offers the forum to present and receive the feedback needed during each phase of the life cycle of the research process. Our sponsors recognize this through their support.

Having stated my points, I will now elaborate on each below. I hope that this stimulates some conversations (probably some debates) and inspires us to act. However, before elaborating on these three points, I want to remind us of what the American Educational Research Association (AERA) has defined as scientifically based research:

- I. The term "principles of scientific research" means the use of rigorous, systematic, and objective methodologies to obtain reliable and valid knowledge. Specifically, such research requires:
 - A. development of a logical, evidence-based chain of reasoning;
 - B. methods appropriate to the questions posed;
 - C. observational or experimental designs and instruments that provide reliable and generalizable findings;
 - D. data and analysis adequate to support findings;
 - E. explication of procedures and results clearly and in detail, including specification of the population to which the findings can be generalized;
 - F. adherence to professional norms of peer review;
 - G. dissemination of findings to contribute to scientific knowledge; and
 - H. access to data for reanalysis, replication, and the opportunity to build on findings.

- II. The examination of causal questions requires experimental designs using random assignment or quasi-experimental or other designs that substantially reduce plausible competing explanations for the obtained results. These include, but are not limited to, longitudinal designs, case control methods, statistical matching, or time series analyses. This standard applies especially to studies evaluating the impacts of policies and programs on educational outcomes.
- III. The term "scientifically based research" includes basic research, applied research, and evaluation research in which the rationale, design, and interpretation are developed in accordance with the scientific principles laid out above. The term applies to all mechanisms of federal research support, whether field-initiated or directed.

The reason that I remind us of this definition is that it highlights the three points that I am trying to make. First, this definition was provided to Congress for their use in legislation by AERA. So, this represents a very fundamental way in which we, as educational research and measurement experts, can influence policy. Some may not agree with this definition and perhaps this will motivate folks to become involved.

Additionally, the three points that I'm trying to make in this article are embedded in this definition. That is, our work must be disseminated, we must adhere to quality standards, and there must be peer review to ensure quality. I will elaborate on each of the three points below and hopefully share some useful information, stimulate some conversations, and/or create some debate.

The Impact of Our Work

Having worked in applied settings all my life, I've had the opportunity to observe directly the impact that our work as educational research and measurement experts has on society. I believe that only by seeing or realizing this impact can we as scientists appreciate the value of our work. While some would argue (and I have little philosophical training) that true science should not be concerned about or be influenced by the outcomes, I have never heard of a researcher – particularly in applied settings – who didn't care about the impact of his/her work. Additionally, from my experience working in school sys-

(Continued on page 4)

The President's Message
(Continued from page 3)

tems, universities, consulting firms, and testing and educational organizations that most (if not all) research is geared at discovering the truth and providing information about things in order to serve people (parents, students, educators). So, I believe that not only should we, as researchers, be concerned about the impact of our work on education (including educational policy), but we should actively advocate on how it should have an impact. To do this, we as a community of researchers, scholars, and measurement experts should not only engage in the quality research that we do, but disseminate the results of this research to both our community of scholars and to the public – particularly policy makers.

The 2011 Conference Co-Chairs, Carol Barry from the College Board and Abby Lau from the College of the Holy Cross, and I deliberated on the theme of our conference long and hard. We agreed that what we do as educational research and measurement experts should make a positive contribution to the world. So, our theme of “Educational Research for the Good of Society” represented our hopes to emphasize the impact of our work. In this article, I want to take it a step further, having been influenced by Wayne Camara’s article in his newsletter column as president of the National Council on Measurement in Education (March, 2011) that as educational research and measurement experts, we should not only consider the impact of our work, but become actively involved in its dissemination to multiple audiences.

So when we develop our research agenda and design our studies, in addition to disseminating our research as conference presentations, journal articles, and books, we should think about developing and disseminating summaries and briefs that go to the public (parents, educators, policy makers). All fields and professional organizations have grappled with this effort to disseminate results to a non-technical audience. Psychologists have called for transparent, clear descriptions of quantitative research, particularly in the method and results section, in order to help in the proper communication of the results and to ensure the studies can be replicated (Bell, DiStefano & Morgan, 2010). However, the recommendations offered target the dissemination of research to other researchers and possibly to practitioners, but the recommendations offered may not assist us in

effectively disseminating the results to policymakers.

Healthcare scientists and practitioners have also provided recommendations for dissemination strategies. These strategies were based on the premise of how the research can be used by the practitioner. An examination of these strategies was done by scanning the literature to see what kind of conceptual frameworks the researchers used in disseminating their results (Wilson, Petticrew, Calnan & Nazareth, 2010). In their search of twelve electronic databases producing 6,813 articles, 33 dissemination frameworks were found. Dissemination frameworks represented explicit or implicit strategies for communicating the results of the study. These researchers found the following frameworks related to knowledge translation strategies used by researchers in healthcare in guiding their dissemination activities:

Persuasive Communication Framework

(McGuire, 2001). This framework is represented by two dimensions of input and output variables that are involved in the process of making a persuasive argument. Utilizing or, at the very least, considering this framework by researchers is expected to increase the likelihood that the information provided can be utilized. There are five components of the input factors that should be considered by researchers in the hopes of increasing the effectiveness of the information disseminated. These include the source, message, channel, receiver and context. The source represents the perceived credibility of the researcher. The message is the style of the delivery that includes the organization, complexity, length, appeal, emotion vs. cognitive, strength of the arguments, etc. The channel is the venue or vehicle involved in the transmission of the information. The receiver involves the person or persons who will get this information and includes understanding the prior beliefs, attitudes, knowledge, etc. The context involves conditions that influence the group or individual including the immediate environmental conditions associated with the delivery of the information.

Diffusion of Innovations Theory (Rogers, 2003).

This is a theory of how, why, and at what rate practices or innovations spread through defined populations and social systems. This theory suggests that the utilization of information goes through five phases that include knowledge (i.e., there is an

awareness of the information), persuasion (i.e., an interest has developed to get more information), decision (i.e., the information is evaluated whether its worthy to consider), implementation (i.e., the information provided is tried-out in varying degrees), and confirmation (i.e., a decision is made to adopt the information or innovation into practice). According to this theory the rate by which information is utilized is based on how effective a researcher can go through these five phases.

Social Marketing (Kotler & Zaltman, 1971). Social marketing uses tools from corporate marketing to influence the behavior of target audiences. The principles associated with social marketing have been used in health promotion, injury prevention, environmental protection, and community mobilization (Kotler & Lee, 2008).

Knowledge Translation (Jacobson, Butterill & Goering, 2003). Knowledge translation is a term used in the healthcare industry to deal with the underutilization of evidence-based research in systems of care. One of these frameworks proposed by Jacobson et al. involves an inquiry-based approach designed to increase the researchers' awareness of the type of context information that is needed in order to make the information more useful.

Two-Communities Theory Approach (Friese & Bogenschneider, 2009). This approach attributes the underutilization of research in policymaking to misperceptions and miscommunication between researchers and policymakers who operate in different cultures. Using two-communities theory (Caplan, 1979), this approach treats researchers and policymakers as coming from two cultures and provides ten strategies for communicating across these conflicting cultures to promote greater use of research.

So, from the healthcare literature, we find some well articulated frameworks to assist researchers in their quest of disseminating research in the hopes of increasing the utility and impact of the information provided. I hope these frameworks offer strategies to you as you consider your dissemination strategy.

Quality Standards

Most of us, if not all, have been trained in research methodology. We all reference Shadish, Cook and Campbell (2002) or Creswell (2009) or other methods texts as we strive to undertake quality research regardless of approach. Dissemination strategies are

irrelevant, if the quality of the research is lacking. Ethical principles for undertaking research go hand-in-hand with quality. AERA released the new AERA Code of Ethics (AERA, 2011). Five fundamental principles are addressed that include (a) professional competence, (b) integrity, (c) professional, scientific, and scholarly responsibility, (d) respect for people's rights, dignity, and diversity, and (e) social responsibility.

Additionally, we see various professional organizations develop different types of standards, including what is suggested by the definition of scientifically-based research as endorsed by the AERA Council (see above). The National Institutes of Health (2009) provides standards for clinical research. They categorized the standards into seven areas involving (a) clinical informatics, data management, and protocol tracking, (b) biostatistics support, (c) quality assurance and quality improvement, (d) protocol review, (e) human resources and physical plant, (f) training and education, and (g) research participants.

Currently, the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* are being revised. In their current form, they offer a comprehensive set of guidelines and expectations of what makes a quality instrument. This is important to both the measurement and educational research communities as they focus on developing instruments and using instruments in research, respectively.

Program evaluation standards (Yarbrough, Shulha, Hopson & Caruthers, 2011) offer researchers a set of guidelines and principles to ensure both the quality and appropriateness of the work. These standards were revised in 2011 with 30 standards that are organized into five groups corresponding to five key attributes of evaluation quality: utility, feasibility, propriety, accuracy, and accountability. The driving force behind these standards is the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation (JCSEE) sponsored by 17 professional organizations (that include AERA, American Evaluation Association, American Psychological Association, NCME, among others) and is a member of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). JCSEE has also published Personnel Evaluation Standards and Student Evaluation Standards.

So, as a community of researchers, we should consider these standards and include them in all facets

(Continued on page 6)

The President's Message
(Continued from page 5)

of our work. We should also become involved as these standards are being revised and updated. There are occasions when we may not agree with some aspect of these standards. So, I encourage you to become involved and play a role in the direction of the discipline as represented by these standards of quality.

Peer Review

As all of you know, the research process that we have been trained and involved in goes through a number of phases. When we have completed our research and are ready to share the results, we undergo a peer review process to get feedback and improve the quality of the research.

The peer review process was seen in the early days of the development of the scientific method. With the formation of the famous library at Alexandria in 200 BC, the introduction of library cataloguing emerged and set the occasion for the peer review. Al-Rahwi (851 – 934) was the first scholar to use a recognizable peer review process. He developed a peer review process to ensure that physicians documented their procedures and laid them open for scrutiny. Other physicians would review the processes and decide on the quality (Shuttleworth, 2009).

We have learned that as part of the research process, our research is to be shared with the research community to get feedback. We hope and expect that the reviewers will use the appropriate standards in proving this feedback. Thus, understanding of quality standards is essential. We expect that in addition to receiving feedback to improve the quality, the reviewers, as members of a community, will provide the feedback with interpersonal skill that maintains the harmony of the community and moves the work forward in a constructive way. So, it is not enough for the peer reviewer to provide feedback to improve quality, but it's equally important for the peer reviewer to provide the feedback in an appropriate, professional, and caring manner. Encouraging, supportive statements will increase the motivation of the researcher to implement the feedback provided. So, substantive feedback offered in an encouraging manner blend together to potentiate quality research.

It is this balance of good, substantive feedback in a

caring, constructive manner that makes NERA such a great experience. The 32 years of continued growth, vitality and scholarship is a testament to this blend. So, as you consider your venue for peer review, NERA is a great place for it.

Recapitulation

As you undertake your research this summer and transition into a new academic year in the fall, I encourage you to (a) take action to disseminate your research to the public (particularly policymakers) in addition to the research and scientific community, (b) contribute to the utilization and refinement of our standards including ethical principles, and (c) join the peer review process both to get feedback and to provide feedback in a constructive manner focused on high quality standards. NERA offers an exceptional place to participate in this peer review process. Peer review is not a luxury, but part of the research process to produce quality research.

As I end this column, I want to extend everyone best wishes for a wonderful summer season and thank everyone for their contributions to NERA. I look forward to seeing you at our annual meeting in Rocky Hill, CT on October 19 through 21.

With appreciation and all the best,

Thanos

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Communications Committee Report

by Steven Holtzman

The NERA Communications Committee would like to welcome four new members: Keith Barker, University of Connecticut; Dolapo Adeniji-Neill, Adelphi University; Tracy Johnson, Buffalo State College; and Heng Luo, Syracuse University. We look forward to the valuable contributions that they will make to our work.

Along with creating social networking websites for NERA and developing the NERA Style Guide, the NERA Communications Committee is working to establish consistent branding for all printed and online communications. During the January Board meeting, the NERA Board of Directors and the Communications Committee reviewed various logos used over the past few years and agreed on one that best fits the organization:



Over the next few months, the committee will facilitate the usage of this logo on all communications. We will be looking into creating a vectorized version of the current logo as well as a version with the colors inverted to make the logo easy to use for all purposes. The pillars that are often seen adjacent to the logo will continue to be used when appropriate and we will look into creating a vectorized version of that as well. The Programming Committee has already used this logo on magnets that were distributed at AERA in an effort to advertise for the 2011 NERA conference, and a version of the logo will be added to the NERA website as well as editions of the *NERA Researcher* in the future. This will lead to a more consistent image for the NERA organization.

As a reminder, if you have not done so already, please join our LinkedIn group at <http://www.linkedin.com/groupRegistration?gid=881287> and our Facebook fan page at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/NERA-Northeastern-Educational-Research-Association/173051016042611>.

Northeastern Educational Research Association 42nd Annual Conference, October 19-21, 2011

Hello NERA members! The time to start planning to attend the 2011 NERA conference is approaching. Elsewhere in this issue of the NERA researcher you will find the information you need to register for the conference, reserve your hotel room, and sign-up for a professional development workshop. Read on to learn more about this year's conference program themed "Educational Research for the Good of Society." After reading about the exciting opportunities we've planned, you'll have more reasons to look forward to the October meeting and additional information to pass along to colleagues that might enjoy the sessions. Let us start by highlighting our two esteemed keynote speakers.

Our opening keynote speaker, Dr. Diana Pullin will address NERA members after sessions have ended on Wednesday. Dr. Pullin is a Professor of Education Law and Public Policy in the Lynch School of Education and the School of Law at Boston College. The focus of her work is the impact of law on education practice and she is associate editor of the interdisciplinary journal *Educational Policy*. Her talk entitled, "*Research and the Common Good: Big Business, Consumerism, and Law's Metrics for Educational Change*," is sure to get NERA members thinking about the conference theme. We encourage everyone to plan to attend Dr. Pullin's session as we believe her interdisciplinary perspective will be thought-provoking and enriching for all.

Following Dr. Pullin's opening keynote will be a second keynote address on Thursday morning. We feel extremely fortunate to be able to give NERA members the opportunity to hear Roy Romer speak during this time. The Honorable Roy Romer has been a leader in government and education for over 50 years. He was Governor of Colorado for three terms. Afterwards, he served as Superintendent of Schools for the Los Angeles Unified School District for a number of years, before joining the College Board as a senior advisor in 2009. Governor Romer has been Chair of the Educational Commission of the States and the National Education Goals Panel. Most recently, he was Chair of Strong American Schools. His keynote address, "*The Impact of Standards-based Reform: Lasting or Fleeting*," will undoubtedly engage NERA members. Be sure to plan to attend this session on Thursday, October 20th at 11:30 a.m.

Keynote Sessions

Diana Pullin	Wednesday Oct. 19 th 5:45p.m.	<i>Research and the Common Good: Big Business, Consumerism, and Law's Metrics for Educational Change</i>
Roy Romer	Thursday Oct. 20 th 11:30 a.m.	<i>The Impact of Standards-based Reform: Lasting or Fleeting</i>

In addition to outstanding keynote speakers, the 2011 program boasts five free professional development workshops. Our goal was to bring NERA members pre-conference and in-conference training sessions led by experts in a broad range of research methods topics. We believe these free training opportunities will make this NERA another high-value conference.

We have two unique pre-conference workshops planned. J. Patrick Meyer, an Assistant Professor in the Curry School of Education at the University of Virginia, will be providing a workshop on Wednesday morning about how to analyze test data using his free and user-friendly software, jMetrik. At the same time, Kelly Godfrey, an Associate Research Scientist at the College Board, is offering a workshop on how to efficiently conduct literature reviews electronically. If you are interested in participating in either of these workshops, be sure to sign-up for the session when you register for the conference. Space is limited so register early to reserve your spot.

Additional professional development workshops are available on Wednesday afternoon and Thursday morning. These in-conference workshops offer the same caliber of training at convenient times during the

Northeastern Educational Research Association 42nd Annual Conference, October 19-21, 2011

conference. The two Wednesday afternoon workshops provide methodological training on two hot topics. Scott Herschberger will be leading the workshop, “*Best Practices for Survey Design*.” At the same time, Dena Pastor and Sara Finney will be leading a workshop, “*Longitudinal Modeling from Two Perspectives: SEM & HLM*.” Thursday morning, Robin Grenier’s workshop entitled, “*Finding a needle in the haystack: Using inductive analysis in qualitative inquiry*” provides an opportunity to develop qualitative research methods skills. All of these in-conference workshops are included in the cost of registration. However, space is limited in each session so plan accordingly.

Pre-Conference and In-Conference Workshops

Pre-Conference Workshops

- *Electronic literature reviews: Time savers, tree savers, life savers* with **Kelly Godfrey**
- *An Introduction to jMetrik: A Free and Open-source Software Program for Comprehensive Psychometric Analysis* with **J. Patrick Meyer**

In-Conference Workshops

- *Best Practices for Survey Design* with **Scott Herschberger**
- *Longitudinal Modeling from Two Perspectives: SEM & HLM* with **Sara J. Finney** and **Dena A. Pastor**
- *Finding a needle in the haystack: Using inductive analysis in qualitative inquiry* with **Robin S. Grenier**

The keynote speakers and professional development workshops we’ve described here are only two aspects of the NERA program we have planned. Also in the works are two Graduate Student Issues sessions, several invited panels, and a few fun surprises. We will provide information about other special sessions in the September issue of the *NERA Researcher* and on the website. In the meantime, we hope you will plan to attend and spread the word about the conference. After all, what really makes NERA a success is the NERA members who each give a bit of themselves to the conference.

Key Dates for the 2011 Conference:

June 5th

Proposals due

June 15th

Reviewing of proposals begins

July 15th

Proposal reviews due

Early August

Decisions about submitted proposals delivered by email
Notification of session assignment for volunteer chairs and discussants

Mid- to Late-August

2011 Conference Program finalized

September 30th

Last day to reserve a room at the Rocky Hilly Marriott under the specially negotiated NERA room rate

October 1st

Regular registration closes (after this date, additional “late registration” fee \$25 will apply)
Session chairs contact presenters to coordinate session

October 19th-21st

NERA Conference!

Early November

Submit papers to NERA conference proceedings
Deadline for Submissions to Awards Competition

Northeastern Educational Research Association 42nd Annual Conference, October 19-21, 2011

2011 Professional Development Workshops

NERA is committed to facilitating the professional development of its members. In line with this mission, NERA offers members free training workshops as part of the annual meeting program. As in recent years, NERA is sponsoring two pre-conference workshops and three in-conference workshops. Both types of sessions are free to NERA members and provide the same high-quality training on an important methodological issue from experts in the field. However, registration is required for pre-conference workshops only. In-conference workshops are open to all conference attendees as space in the session allows. Please browse the 2011 workshop descriptions below and find the session that is right for you. We are delighted to be able to provide workshops from such esteemed researchers! Please note: You will have the opportunity to register for the pre-conference workshops when you register for the conference.

Pre-Conference Workshops

Electronic literature reviews: Time savers, tree savers, life savers

Instructor: Kelly Godfrey, The College Board

Schedule: Wednesday Oct 19th, 10:00 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.

Is printer ink eating into your already shrinking budget? Is your university trying to limit you to 75 printouts per year? You need NVivo to conduct your literature reviews! In one software program, you can merge, annotate, synthesize, text search, model and more all from the convenience of your computer screen. That's right, now you can keep your notes, quotes, and highlights in one convenient and secure location. This presentation is an interactive demonstration of how to use qualitative software tools like NVivo to conduct literature reviews, emphasizing the synthesis of ideas and sources to better reveal patterns, helping you organize your thoughts and formulate arguments and claims. So stop carrying around those heavy stacks of paper, and stop giving yourself headaches remembering where you read what. Save time, brain power, and some trees and conduct those literature reviews electronically!

Kelly Godfrey is an Associate Research Scientist at the College Board. She received her doctoral degree from the Educational Research Methodology department at UNC Greensboro, and has been a trainer for QSR's qualitative analysis software for over seven years. Her research focuses primarily in psychometrics, including IRT and test equating, and program evaluation, including mixed methods and responsive evaluation approaches.



An Introduction to jMetrik: A Free and Open-source Software Program for Comprehensive Psychometric Analysis

Instructor: J. Patrick Meyer, University of Virginia

Schedule: Wednesday Oct. 19th, 10:00 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.

Participants will receive a fully licensed and free copy of jMetrik, a software program that can be used to conduct a variety of basic and advanced psychometric procedures with a user-friendly point-and-click interface. Participants will learn to conduct a comprehensive psychometric analysis on test data using jMetrik. In the process, all psychometric procedures will be reviewed. Participants will receive practice data files, a copy of the presentation slides, and a software user manual draft. Participants should bring

Northeastern Educational Research Association 42nd Annual Conference, October 19-21, 2011

a laptop computer and are encouraged to bring their own test data to analyze as well. jMetrik software can be downloaded and installed prior to the session from www.ItemAnalysis.com.

J. Patrick Meyer III, is an Assistant Professor of Research, Statistics and Evaluation in the Department of Leadership, Foundations and Policy of the Curry School of Education at the University of Virginia. He teaches courses in statistics and educational measurement. His research focuses on technical and applied aspects of test equating, reliability estimation, and item response time modeling. In 2009, he received the Bradley Hanson Award from the National Council on Measurement in Education for creating and developing a sophisticated yet user-friendly psychometric software application for practitioners called jMetrik.



In-Conference Workshops

Best Practices for Survey Design

Instructor: Scott Herschberger

Schedule: Wednesday Oct. 19th, 1:30 – 3:45 p.m.

This workshop will focus on currently accepted best practices for designing surveys in four different areas. The first area concerns question wording. Although question wording is in part an art, there are various rules, guidelines, and strategies that should generally be followed. The second area concerns the organization of the survey as a whole—which parts of the survey should come first, which last? The third area concerns transitioning the survey from one mode of administration to another. In the past, most surveys were of the pencil and paper variety, or were delivered by telephone. Now, many surveys are administered online, and the most current trend is to deliver surveys through mobile phones. If in the past one has administered a survey through one medium and now wishes to do so in another, or if one has a study in which several media are being used, how can one be assured of the comparability of the surveys? The fourth area concerns obtaining as much efficiency in survey construction as possible: What are some strategies for constructing a survey of minimal length while still obtaining all the information one wants to obtain?

Scott Herschberger is a recognized expert in psychometrics, statistics and advanced analysis. He serves on the editorial boards of several journals. He was the Associate Editor of *Structural Equation Modeling* from 1998 to 2002. He has co-authored five books on research and measurement topics, as well as numerous articles for academic journals, books and conferences. He has held faculty positions as Professor of Psychology at St. Louis University, Madrid, Spain, and California State University, Long Beach, Associate Professor at University of Kansas, and Assistant Professor at University of Minnesota.

Longitudinal Modeling from Two Perspectives: SEM & HLM

Instructor: Sara J. Finney and Dena A. Pastor, James Madison University

Schedule: Wednesday Oct. 19th, 1:30 – 3:45 p.m.

Because analysis of variance techniques are very limited in their ability to model change over time, it is important for educational researchers to be aware of other, more sophisticated statistical models that can be used for this purpose. This three-hour workshop will highlight the advantages of using two such models, Structural Equation Models (SEM) and Hierarchical Linear Models (HLM), over analysis of variance techniques, paying particular attention to how the more modern methods can be used to capture variability among individuals in change over time and how such variability is related to other vari-

(Continued on page 12)

Northeastern Educational Research Association 42nd Annual Conference, October 19-21, 2011

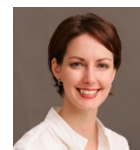
Professional Development Workshops (Continued from page 11)

ables. The workshop will begin by describing research design considerations and preliminary data analyses common to all longitudinal studies and will continue by providing an overview of the use of SEM and HLM to model linear and nonlinear change over time. Throughout the workshop there will be an emphasis on distinguishing between longitudinal modeling situations in which either approach is suitable and those situations in which one approach has clear advantages over the other.

Sara J. Finney has a dual appointment at James Madison University (JMU) as an Associate Professor in the Department of Graduate Psychology and as an Associate Assessment Specialist in the Center for Assessment and Research Studies, where she teaches courses in structural equation modeling (SEM), advanced SEM, and multivariate statistics. In addition to serving as a faculty member for the Assessment and Measurement Ph. D. program, Dr. Finney coordinates the Quantitative Psychology Concentration within the Psychological Sciences M. A. program at JMU.



Dena A. Pastor has a dual appointment at James Madison University (JMU) as an Associate Professor in the Department of Graduate Psychology and as an Associate Assessment Specialist in the Center for Assessment and Research Studies. She received her doctoral degree in quantitative methods from the University of Texas in Austin in 2001 and has been teaching courses in measurement and statistics at JMU for over nine years. Her research typically involves the application of latent variable modeling to the study of college student learning and development.



Finding a needle in the haystack: Using inductive analysis in qualitative inquiry

Instructor: Robin S. Grenier, University of Connecticut

Schedule: Thursday October 20th, 8:30 a.m. – 11:00

Finding themes in hundreds of pages of transcripts, hours of observational field notes, or among innumerable artifacts is often like finding the elusive needle in a haystack. It's not impossible, but it requires time, skill, and resources. This workshop is designed to take on the challenge of qualitative inquiry by introducing basic, inductive methods of qualitative analysis to emerging scholars. Through examples, modeling, group discussion, and application participants will leave the workshop with new resources and knowledge about how to design and implement a qualitative study using inductive analysis.

Robin S. Grenier is an Assistant Professor of Adult Learning in the Department of Educational Leadership. Dr. Grenier holds a Certificate in Qualitative Inquiry from the University of Georgia and teaches qualitative research courses at the University of Connecticut. She serves as a qualitative methodologist for a number of journals and has presented at the International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry. Her research interests include expertise development, informal and experiential learning, and museums as places of learning.



We look forward to seeing you at NERA 2011!

Northeastern Educational Research Association 42nd Annual Conference, October 19-21, 2011

Conference Registration

Registering for the Conference

Registration for the conference will occur online and will be accessible via the NERA website. Rest assured, it's a quick and easy process!

Registration includes:

- Free professional development workshops
- Evening entertainment
- Opportunity to hear two wonderful keynote speakers
- Graduate students can receive free mentoring, space permitting
- GSIC sponsored events

Fees

The registration fees for this year's conference are presented below. These fees are slightly higher than last year's registration costs due to significant upgrades in the conference administration process. Even with these increases, NERA remains a very affordable local conference that provides an outstanding value to its attendees.

Regular registration rates for the 2011 conference^a:

- Professional members - \$75.00
- Student members - \$30.00
- Retired members - \$20.00
- Special Session (Friday Morning)^b - \$25.00

Late registration (onsite or online after October 1st)

- Professional members - \$100.00
- Student members - \$55.00
- Retired members - \$45.00
- Special Session (Friday Morning)^b - \$25.00

^aTo receive the regular registration rates, you *must* register by October 1st.

^bThe Special Session rate is for individuals only attending the Special Session for District and State Consumers of Educational Research. This registration fee is not subject to the late registration fee.

Hotel Accommodations

Reserving Your Room at the Hartford Marriott Rocky Hill

NERA has negotiated affordable room rates for conference attendees. To receive these special conference rates, reservations must be made by Friday, September 30, 2011 either through NERA's webpage or by calling 1-800-228-9290 and mentioning NERA.

Rates

As with previous years, each night's stay at the hotel during the conference includes three full meals. Specifically, each NERA hotel guest receives dinner on the night of their stay and breakfast and lunch on the following day. That means if you reserve a hotel room for Wednesday and Thursday night all of your meals will be covered from Wednesday dinner to Friday Lunch. What a deal!

(Continued on page 14)

Conference Registration
(Continued from page 13)

Conference stay (Wed. Oct 19th and Thurs. Oct 20th)

- Single occupancy room: \$220 per night plus tax
- Double occupancy room: \$325 per night plus tax (\$162.50 per person includes meals)
- Triple occupancy room: \$430 per night plus tax (\$143.30 per person includes meals)

Pre-conference stay (Tues. Oct 18th)

NERA attendees can stay at the hotel the night before the conference for a reduced rate as well. The "Tuesday night special rate" is \$129.00 per room. Note: This does not include any meals, so the rate is the same for all occupancy levels.

Graduate student "Quad room"

NERA continues to be an affordable choice for students. The Hartford Marriott Rocky Hill is offering a special Graduate Student quad rate of \$535, which includes meals and accommodations for four students per night, and comes to about \$134 per student per night. This special rate is available for students ONLY. The graduate students are responsible for finding their roommates. One student will have to use a credit card to reserve the room for the quad. Each graduate student must also register for the conference individually. (Conference registration requires a separate online form available through the [NERA website](#).)

Call for Nominations for the 2011 Recipient of the Leo D. Doherty Memorial Award

Annually, one of the NERA Board of Director's major delights is to award the Leo D. Doherty Memorial Award for Outstanding Leadership and Service. This is given to a member of long standing who has generously given of self to NERA, to advance its mission and to enable it to thrive. As you will read below, the original statement which was a preface to the nomination statement about the Award's first recipient, Lorne Woollatt, highlights the intention of the award.

In 1981, just prior to our annual convocation, NERA lost a long-time member and supporter, Leo Doherty. He was one of the earlier members of ERANYs, was instrumental in its rejuvenation and growth, and was a guiding and steadying hand behind its expansion to NERA as the 300-member regional association it is today.

In addition to his association with NERA, Leo exhibited professional managerial leadership in his relationships with his staff and superiors. He was well-informed, provoked growth in his staff and associates, promoted qualified personnel, provided service to others needing his expertise, and translated the policy of his superiors into operations and products.

Leo was an ethical person. He personally demonstrated how staff should work honestly; he dealt fairly and equitably with his contacts; and he credits those who implemented activities with the achievement results. He was also humane. He encouraged people to commit themselves to goals that were personally meaningful to them, and he defended the individual's right to form appropriate relationships.

In his memory, NERA's Board of Directors, in response to members' requests, voted unanimously to institute the Leo D. Doherty Memorial Award. The 2011 NERA Board and the Awards Committee (and recipients of the Doherty Award) encourage creative thinking in seeking the 2011 Leo D. Doherty Memorial Award recipient. Please nominate someone you know in NERA who exemplifies the qualities of Leo Doherty. **Nominations are due by July 15th.** Send nominations and any questions you may have to Darlene Perner, Chair of the Doherty Award Committee at dperner@bloomu.edu. Also please check the NERA web-site (www.nera-education.org) for information on the NERA Awards.

2011 Lorne H. Woollatt Distinguished Paper Competition

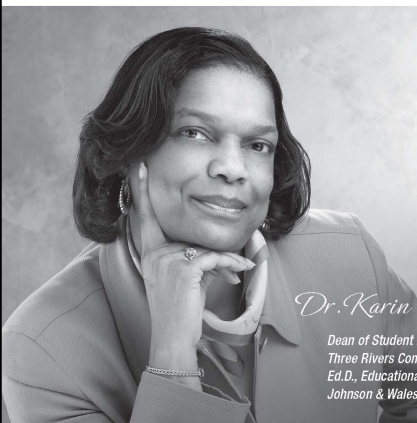
The outstanding paper will be selected for automatic acceptance at AERA and will include a monetary stipend!

In 1990, NERA renamed its distinguished paper award to honor Lorne H. Woollatt, a distinguished New York State educator and an active member of NERA. The award, now known as the Lorne H. Woollatt Distinguished Paper Award, is presented annually to a NERA member whose paper is deemed exemplary by the Award Committee.

Any paper reviewed and accepted by the Program Committee and presented at the 2011 NERA Conference may be submitted for the competition. Only one paper can be selected, so the Committee is looking for an outstanding paper. We encourage submissions from those who receive high marks or positive feedback from the Program Committee reviewers, your session's discussant, or others. The winning paper will automatically be accepted for the 2012 AERA Annual Meeting as part of a session sponsored by the AERA/SIG: Consortium of State and Regional Educational Research Associations (SRERA). The award also includes a monetary stipend to help defray the recipient's travel expenses to AERA.

If you wish to enter your paper into the competition, please email two copies of your paper to the 2011 Committee Chair, Julie Rosenthal (rosenthalj@wpunj.edu) no later than **October 30, 2011**. Please send one BLIND copy of your paper and one copy with your name and the following information: affiliation, address, email address and phone number.

Please note that the paper is to be based on your NERA presentation and should not include information that differs substantially from that which you actually presented at the NERA conference. Papers in the Research-in-Progress sessions are not appropriate for submission. In addition, papers should be limited to no more than a total of 20 double-spaced pages (not including Tables/Figures or References).



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Invitation to Graduate Students: Work with a NERA Mentor at our 2011 Conference

By Brian R. Evans, Christine Clayton, and Tom Levine

NERA continues to be a place where regional educational researchers learn from each other, and where researchers-in-training find opportunities and resources to compliment those at their home institutions. During the past several years, at our annual conference, we have created a forum for mentoring graduate students that compliments the informal contacts and conversations available at our gathering.

If you are a graduate student who might be interested in having a half-hour conversation with a NERA mentor about your work, please keep reading. If you advise graduate students and think they might benefit from extra mentoring, please keep reading as well. Below, you will find short biographies of NERA Mentors who have volunteered to read work by three mentees and to meet with them at our annual conference.

What is expected of NERA Mentees and Mentors:

- 1) We will inform mentees in August about whether we were able to pair them to a mentor.
- 2) Four weeks before our conference, individual mentees will send their mentor up to 20 pages (double spaced, 12 point font size) of their own work in progress. They could send a dissertation chapter, a portion of a dissertation proposal, a journal manuscript, a grant application, or any similar artifact of research.
- 3) A NERA mentee will spend 30 minutes in individual meetings with a NERA Mentor. NERA Mentors will come ready to offer whatever suggestions, constructive criticism, or questions they think might help a graduate student given the current stage of their work and ongoing growth.
- 4) We'll ask all involved to make suggestions regarding the format of the mentorship program as we decide whether to continue it and how we might support and improve this program.

How to apply: Graduate students interested in participating should send an email titled "NERA Mentoring application" to thomas.levine@uconn.edu by **9 p.m., July 15, 2011**. In the text of the email itself, please include the following:

- Your name, position/role, and home institution or organization, [i.e., Joe Jones, Ph.D. candidate (Multicultural Education), University of Delaware.]
- The topic of your research, described in a phrase or sentence.
- The name of the mentee—from the group below—whom you think would be the best fit for your work. We occasionally seek out additional mentors if we know of an experienced scholar and NERA mentor who would be a particularly good match for a graduate student.
- A 150 to 300-word introduction to yourself, your research and/or methodological interests, and the work-in-progress you would like send to a mentor four weeks before our conference. Please include something about the feedback you might request from your mentor.

Where we have more requests for mentoring than one of our mentors can handle, we will choose randomly from those requests we judge to be a very good match for our mentors, and then will choose randomly from those mentees whose work we judge to be a reasonably good match. Our apologies in advance if we are unable to match all who are interested in working with a mentor.

Scott Brown, Professor of Educational Psychology, University of Connecticut

Over the course of his career, Dr. Brown has conducted research, and supported doctoral students' research, regarding cognition and instruction, learning in problem-based learning environments, instructional design, and assessment and evaluation. He has experience with using—and advising others in

the use of—both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. He has been awarded over \$9M in grants and contracts and currently directs The GlobalEd 2 Project (www.globaled.uconn.edu). Based on his experiences as an author and journal editor, he can also help graduate students prepare journal manuscripts in areas beyond his own research interests.

Craig S. Wells, Associate Professor, Research and Evaluation Methods, University of Massachusetts Dr. Wells has expertise in several statistical methods such as structural equation modeling, nonparametric statistics, and item response theory. His research interests include the study of non-parametric item response models, detection of differential item functioning or item bias, and assessment of model fit. He also has a keen interest in the philosophy of science and its applications to hypothesis testing. Dr. Wells would be happy to help students using quantitative methods with any aspect of their work from the initial design, proposal of studies through the process of conducting and reporting results, and power analyses.

Robin Grenier, Assistant Professor, Educational Leadership, University of Connecticut Robin S. Grenier, Ph.D. is an Assistant Professor of Adult Learning in the Department of Educational Leadership. Her research interests include expertise development, informal and experiential learning, museums as places of learning, and qualitative inquiry. Dr. Grenier holds a Certificate in Qualitative Inquiry from the University of Georgia and teaches qualitative research courses at the University of Connecticut. She has much experience mentoring doctoral students in the design, application, and analysis of qualitative data. Dr. Grenier would be happy to assist with methodology, methods of data collection and analysis, and representation of data and work with students interested in qualitative research.

Call for Nominations for the Thomas F. Donlon Memorial Award for Distinguished Mentoring

The Thomas F. Donlon Award for Distinguished Mentoring was established in 2000 in recognition of Tom's long and valued contributions to NERA, particularly as a mentor to so many colleagues. Since then the award has been presented annually to other NERA members who have demonstrated distinction as mentors of colleagues by guiding them and helping them find productive paths toward developing their careers as educational researchers.

The practice of mentoring in education has been going on for centuries and most of us can name a person who helped us move our careers along by being more than just a friend or colleague. That person may have been an advisor in developing your research agenda or perhaps brought you to NERA for the first time after suggesting that you might be ready for a conference presentation.

At this time nominations are again being sought for this annual award. Nominees must be NERA members and may be nominated by any member(s) of NERA to whom they served as mentors.

If you would like to see a member of NERA who was your mentor be recognized for his/her contributions to your success, send your nomination to **James Carifo, University of Massachusetts Lowell**, at James_Carifo@uml.edu by **August 1, 2011**. All nominations must be accompanied by documentation indicating the ways in which the nominee distinguished him/herself as a mentor. The award will be presented at the annual NERA conference. Please contact James if you have any questions about the Donlon Award or the nomination process.

Member News

Katharyn Nottis, NERA past-president, has been promoted to Full Professor in Education at Bucknell University, Lewisburg, PA. She is the first female promoted to that level in the history of her department. Katharyn and her colleagues in Bucknell's Chemical Engineering department, Michael Prince and Margot Vigeant, will also be receiving an award for the Best Educational Research and Methods (ERM) paper at the annual American Society of Engineering Education conference in June in Vancouver, British Columbia. Their paper examines the use of inquiry learning activities to address persistent misconceptions in heat transfer and thermodynamics.

NERA members from James Madison University also have several exciting updates to provide:

Sara Finney was awarded the "Provost's Award for Excellence in Graduate Advising." This award is presented to a person who has made significant contributions and superlative achievement in quality

advising and mentoring. For more information about the award, visit: <http://www.psyc.jmu.edu/assessment/features/finneyaward.html>
Sara also received "The Outstanding Scholarship Award" from the Department of Graduate Psychology.

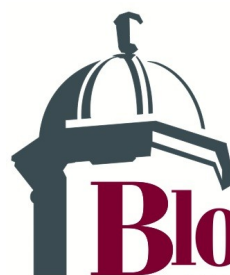
Robin Anderson, faculty member for the Assessment & Measurement Ph.D. program, accepted the position of Department Head of Graduate Psychology (to begin July 2011).

Jason Kopp defended his thesis on April 4th: "Gathering Validity Evidence for the Academic Entitlement Questionnaire: Examining the Relationship between Noncompliance and Academic Entitlement." Jason was awarded the "Outstanding Research Award" (M.A. level) from the Department of Graduate Psychology. Jason also accepted admission into the Assessment & Measurement Ph.D. program at JMU.

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Daniel Jurich defended his thesis on April 4th: “The Impact of Cheating on IRT Equating under the Non-equivalent Anchor Test Design.” Dan was awarded the “Outstanding Research Award” (M.A. level) from the Department of Graduate Psychology. Dan accepted admission into the Assessment & Measurement Ph.D. program at JMU.

Megan Rodgers received the “Outstanding Service Award” (M.A. level) from the Department of Graduate Psychology.

Chris Coleman received the “Outstanding Service Award” (Ph.D. level) from the Department of Graduate Psychology.

James Koepfler received the “Outstanding Service Award” (Ph.D. level) from the Department of Graduate Psychology. James was also awarded the Pearson Summer Internship in Tulsa, OK.

Becca Marsh received the “Overall (research, service, teaching) Outstanding Student Award” from the Department of Graduate Psychology.

Anna Zilberberg received the “Outstanding Research Award” (Ph.D. level) from the Department of Graduate Psychology. Anna was also awarded the Pearson Summer Internship in Austin, TX.

Finally, recent publications by NERA members include:

Hartlep, N. D., & Ellis, A. L. (2012). Rethinking speech and language impairments within fluency dominated cultures. In S. Pinder (Ed.), *American multicultural studies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE. [FORTHCOMING]

Hartlep, N. D., & Ellis, A. L. (2012). Just What is Response to Intervention and What’s It Doing in a Nice Field Like Education?: A Critical Race Theory Examination of RTI. In J. Gorlewski, B. Porfilio, & D. Gorlewski (Eds.), *Using standards and high-stakes testing for students: Exploiting power with critical pedagogy*. New York, NY: Peter Lang. [FORTHCOMING]



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The Graduate Lounge

Katrina Crotts, University of Massachusetts Amherst

The Graduate Student Issues Committee (GSIC) would like to congratulate **Jason P. Kopp** from James Madison University and his co-authors for winning the 2010 Best Paper by a Graduate Student Award. Jason presented his paper at NERA last October. The paper abstract appears below, and a copy of the full paper is available on the NERA website.

The GSIC would like to thank all 14 graduate students who submitted papers to the Best Paper by a Graduate Student Award competition. All of the papers were well written and of high quality. We encourage those who submitted this year and all graduate students to submit their papers for this year's 2011 Best Paper by a Graduate Student Award competition. The deadline for submission will be within one week of the end of the 2011 NERA Conference, so start preparing those papers now!

The GSIC would also like to take the time to thank our six raters who volunteered their time to select our winner: Craig Wells, University of Massachusetts Amherst; Carol Barry, The College Board; Whitney Zimmerman, Pennsylvania State University; Christine DeMars, James Madison University; Josh Goodman, Pearson; and Becca Marsh, James Madison University.

In other news, we have some exciting events planned for the 2011 NERA Conference! The GSIC will be hosting the Graduate Student Social, and two in-conference sessions entitled: "Early Careers in Educational Research," and "Promoting the Integration of Educational Research and Policy." Check out the GSIC section of the NERA website for more details.

We also encourage graduate students to get involved and work with a NERA mentor at the 2011 Conference (see the article on page 16 of this issue of the NERA Researcher). Meeting with a NERA mentor gives graduate students the opportunity to get suggestions and constructive criticism regarding their research and work. Please contact neragraduatestudents@gmail.com for more information!

2010 Best Paper by a Graduate Student Award Winner

Title: "I Can't Believe She Gave Me a C!": Measuring Entitlement in Higher Education

Author: Jason P. Kopp, James Madison University

Co-Authors: Tracy E. Zinn, Sara J. Finney, & Daniel P. Jurich, James Madison University

Abstract:

Researchers have increasingly focused on entitlement related to education, but a measure with adequate construct validity evidence has yet to be created. Construct validity evidence was gathered for a newly created measure of academic entitlement, the Academic Entitlement Questionnaire (AEQ). After a review of the entitlement literature, focusing on the various facets of entitlement, items were written to cover the breadth of the academic entitlement construct. Responses from two samples of college students resulted in an eight-item, unidimensional measure. Theoretically-based a priori hypotheses were empirically supported, which included a positive relationship with external locus of control and a negative relationship with mastery achievement goal orientation. Thus, the AEQ shows promise as a useful measure of academic entitlement.

Exploring Organizational Culture through Metaphor Analysis

Felice D. Billups

How would you describe your campus culture or your school environment? Would you carefully outline the details of the working conditions, the way people interact in meetings, or the unique communication style of your organization? Or would you rather use a descriptive phrase, or even a metaphor, to summarily reveal your organization's culture?

Metaphor analysis, as a means to uncover organizational culture, is an increasingly popular strategy for qualitative researchers. In interpretative qualitative studies, metaphors comprise a form of linguistic analysis which assists researchers who are interested in an intensive but short-term evaluation of organizational culture (Patton, 2002; Schmitt, 2005). Since language serves as a pivotal cultural artifact, metaphors emerge from that sphere as a particularly expressive language form.

Metaphors behave as powerful forms of organizational language because they communicate symbolic meaning beyond the obvious content of the words. They help people make sense of their environment, organize information, and resolve apparent conflicts and contradictions. Schmitt (2005) and Wittink (2011) identify metaphor analysis as means of securing imagery that mirrors organizational culture at many levels. As a linguistic cultural artifact, metaphors facilitate an individual's disclosure of his or her surroundings, allowing for imaginative and emotional descriptions while serving as a safeguard that avoids more direct or confrontational language. For example, if an individual uses the metaphor "like a zoo" or "it is a sinking ship" to describe their working environment, those words provide specific clues as to the emotional and cultural context of the organization, without compromising the vulnerability of the respondent.

Language remains an absolutely integral and complex element of organizational culture. Every culture, discipline, organization, profession, and educational institution possesses its own unique set of conceptual components and elements from which its language or jargon originates. Consequently, language represents the concepts, beliefs, norms, values and practices of the culture, and affects the

way people think about things (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Hofstede, Bond, & Chung-leung, 1993; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Smircich, 1985).

Numerous qualitative studies employ interviewing as a means to assess cultural artifacts and conditions. Metaphor analysis, as part of the interview process, is one device that elicits individual perceptions, thereby providing a more appropriate perspective for the study of the dimensions of culture (Smircich, 1983; Tierney, 1988; Trice & Morand, 1991). Traditional studies of organizations and cultural artifacts, oriented toward quantification of rationally conceived patterns, cannot adequately capture the dynamics of culture (Gibson, 2006; Tierney, 2008). This innovative qualitative research method provides an effective means of identifying the perceptions of cultural participants, the characteristics of their cultural surroundings, and the degree of experience and social integration in that culture (Cameron & Quinn, 2006).

This type of research, therefore, relies primarily on people's words and impressions as the primary source of data. Through an interviewee's self-disclosures and the use of descriptive phrases, cultural values, beliefs and issues emerge. Respondents suggest how an organization perceives itself, how its members view themselves, how others view them, and how the organization accomplishes goals, hence implying organizational direction and distinction. Two specific strategies support the process of eliciting metaphors: (a) the use of key words or phrases in a free association exercise (i.e., suggesting the words "student" or "campus community" and asking interviewees to respond with the first word or phrase that comes to mind), and (b) the use of guiding phrases to prompt metaphors (e.g., "this institution operates like...").

Thomas (1949) proposes that the study of people demands to know just how people define the situation in which they find themselves. Schein (2010) contends that "we simply cannot understand organizational phenomena without considering culture both as a cause and as a way of explaining such phenomena" (p. 311). In other words, to understand the issue of culture, it seems appropriate simply to question participants on how they view

their worlds, with subsequent analysis of the resulting data.

For these reasons, a connection develops between a choice of methods and the major research questions. A qualitative study values participant perspectives on their worlds, seeks to discover those perspectives, and views inquiry as an interactive process between the researcher and the participant. Each qualitative method approach assumes that systematic inquiry must occur in a natural setting (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 2002), while Moustakas (1994) and Rubin and Rubin (2005) describe how data unite through depth interviewing and how they associate with identified domains of understanding. As Thomas (1949) states, "If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences" (p. 301).

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