MID-WESTERN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCHER

Official Publication of the Mid-Western Educational Research Association

2011 Conference Retrospective Issue

www.mwera.org

2011 Conference Program Chair's Reflections

Ellen A. Sigler
Western Carolina University

The MWERA 2011 conference in St. Louis, Missouri, is now behind us, but the experiences are certainly ones to be remembered.

Our first keynote speaker, Dr. J. Casey Hurley, gave us more than just food-for-thought at the Fireside Chat Wednesday night. Attendees were asked to define *what it means to be educated* and we discussed what that means to us, who we identify as being educated, and what are the salient characteristics of a person who we see as educated. This discussion afforded us the opportunity to think and relate to one another about a topic that impacts our lives but is rarely thought about quite in that way. Dr. Hurley's superb Socratic style would have kept us all talking for hours. The next day, Dr. Hurley proposed to shift our paradigms a bit more, describing a "six virtue definition" of what it means to be educated. This keynote address was certainly thought provoking for all who attended.

Dr. Mary O'Hair also inspired us with a different conceptualization of being educated. She spoke at great length about the goals of our research process, what we have become accustomed to in terms of our scholarly agendas, and what we might consider in the future. Dr. O'Hair spoke about innovation, and the path that more and more universities are taking in terms of the "products" of our hard work. This gave us more to ponder and digest while we all move to understand the meaning of what we do as educators.

I also thank everyone who participated in the conference, from the Division Chairs, to Session Discussants and Chairs, to those who reviewed papers. We would not have a conference if it were not for the countless hours of voluntary service that faculty and graduate students put forward to keep our organization running smoothly. I also thank those who submitted their manuscripts and presentations, as sharing your work with others is part of what helps us continue to *be educated.* I especially appreciate Sterling Saddler, Dean of the College of Education and Human Services at Western Illinois University, for sponsoring our Cracker Barrel Social. This part of the conference allows us to come together not just as researchers, but as colleagues, catching up with old friends, meeting new members, and making connections across universities.

We may not have won the World Series, but we do have something in common with the St. Louis Cardinals: we are part of a great organization as evidenced by the very successful and inspiring conference this year at the Sheraton Westport Plaza Hotel. It was obvious from what I witnessed during the sessions and meetings, the time I spent mingling during the socials, the informal conversations I had over coffee discussing research, and the anecdotal feedback I have received from conference-goers, that we have a very special organization. Not only was I impressed with the quality of the research presented at the conference, but also moved by the collegiality displayed by all members of the organization. I saw faculty working across disciplines and campuses. There were faculty involved with research and mentoring relationships at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, and there was the air of true scholarship as it was meant to be. MWERA is a fine organization and in the words of Dr. Hurley, "I am not proud, but humbled by the experience."

MID-WESTERN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCHER

Volume 24, Number 4, Fall 2011

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What Does It Mean To Be Educated?

J. Casey Hurley
Western Carolina University
2011 Keynote Address

I am going to talk to you about something you already know, but have never thought about. An example of this is that you already know American life is driven by the buying and selling of goods and services, but you probably never thought about American life that way.

You know this because you don't ask why newspapers and magazines are full of advertisements. You know they provide the revenue that makes expensive publications affordable to subscribers.

Neither do you ask why the Internet has become a huge commercial market place. It used to be a forum for the exchange of text messages among scientists and professors; but now it entices you with multimedia messages at almost every click of the mouse. And you know why.

You also don't ask why football coaches receive higher salaries than professors. Or, if you ask, you feel silly for asking because you know winning football teams bring in donations, raise a university's visibility, and contribute to its "brand." Even America's institutions of higher education are driven by the buying and selling of goods and services.

Similarly, you know that understanding, imagination, strong character, courage, humility and generosity are the six virtues of the educated person. You know this because, if you are a leader, you want these virtues in your followers. And if you are a follower, you want these virtues in your leaders. You know it because you want these virtues in your companions.

Before explaining the significance of this definition, let's look at how we usually define educated--in terms of college degrees. A person with a doctorate has a lot of understanding about one topic. If he/she lacks imagination, strong character, courage, humility and generosity; though, do we want to spend time with that per-son? I don't; and I don't think you do, either. According to the six-virtue definition, a person with a doctorate is "schooled." More information is needed to determine if he/she is "educated."

In an email exchange with Alfie Kohn, I learned that definitions of educated are neither true nor false, neither right nor wrong. He said what it means to be educated is not an empirical question; but, he added, some definitions are more useful than others. I appreciate this insight, so I pose two questions: Is the six-virtue definition useful? Is the definition that drives today's public schools useful?

Today's schools are driven by a definition that says educated people are those who score high on standardized tests. This definition is useful—it can be used to hold teachers accountable. That is why it is universally accepted in today's public schools. Public education policy makers believe it is of the utmost importance to hold teachers accountable for higher test scores.

And, if "educated" is equated with high test scores, it is a matter of course that teachers should be held accountable for student test scores. Do you see that everything depends on the definition of "educated?"

For a different reason, however, this definition is not useful. It completely misses the mark when it comes to why college students choose a teaching career. Never once has one of my undergraduate, teacher education students said, "I want to become a teacher to raise students' test scores"--never once, in twenty years.

Because of this experience, I have added to Kohn's usefulness premise that some definitions are more inspiring than others. Achieving higher test scores is a useful definition, but not an inspiring one, which is why all my students have been silent on improving scores.

Before examining the six-virtue definition

or both its usefulness and inspiration, I want to address what you are probably thinking now. I know what you are thinking because I think the same thing whenever I study a virtue website. I always wonder, "Why these virtues and not others?" Website authors never answer that question, so the whole point of their website is nothing more than "people should develop this arbitrary set of virtues." This is *not* useful because we already know people should develop virtues. It is in the meaning of the word "virtue."

In other words, the significance of any virtue list is in the answer to the question: "Why these virtues and not others?" If I cannot answer that question, the six-virtue definition is just one more arbitrary list of virtues. Let's see if this definition is useful and inspiring.

First, it is useful definition because the six virtues combine to form all other virtues. They are like the ingredients of a cake. You can have milk, salt, eggs, and flour without having a cake, but you cannot have a cake without milk, salt, eggs, and flour. Similarly, for example, you can have understanding, imagination, strong character, courage, humility and generosity without having respect; but you cannot have virtuous respect without these virtues. This pattern holds for all virtues. I keep searching for a virtue that is not a combination of these six, but I have not found one, yet.

Another example is perseverance. You can have understanding, imagination, and strong character without perseverance, but you cannot have virtuous perseverance without understanding, imagination, and strong character.

A third example is patience. You can have understanding, imagination, strong character, humility and generosity without patience, but you cannot have virtuous patience without under-standing, imagination, strong character, humility and generosity.

All virtues are combinations of these six, so by developing them, you develop the ingredients for developing all others; and failure to develop them prevents you from developing the ingredients that make all others. This is important because developing six is simple. Developing hundreds is complicated. By its very nature, virtue development is already difficult. Let's not make it complicated, too.

The six-virtue definition is useful for a second reason. It tells us how to improve every learning situation. In situations fraught with ignorance, teachers know they should model and teach understanding. In situations fraught with intellectual incompetence, they know to model and teach imagination. In situations fraught with weak character, they know to model and teach strength. In situations fraught with fear of truth, they know to model and teach courage. In situations fraught with pride, they know to model and teach humility. And in situations fraught with selfish-ness, they know to model and teach generosity.

If more teachers started with this definition (the best teachers already do), we would not be engaged in fruitless debates over educational methods. The answers for how to teach would be right in front of us–model and teach the virtues that are absent from the learning situation. What is more useful than that?

Finally, the six-virtue definition is inspiring. People often say something is "just human nature" in order to make the point that humans are flawed and imperfect. While that may be true, the six virtue definition suggests a different, more inspiring truth. Although our uneducated human nature may be vicious, we have the potential to develop a virtuous, educated human nature. We are born ignorant, intellectually incompetent, weak, fearful of truth, proud and selfish; but we can become understanding, imaginative, strong, courageous, humble and generous. Nothing is more inspiring than being with people who are "educated" according to this definition. Isn't that why we became educators?

Although you have never thought of "educated" this way; you know that understanding, imagination, strength, courage, humility and generosity are the six virtues of educated person. And this definition is useful and inspiring. So, why isn't this definition the basis for improving K-16 schools?

My graduate students say I need to "connect the dots" for them. I should explain how to use the six-virtue definition in their schools. The following eight ideas from the Introduction of the book form the outline for understanding both our current situation and what we can do to improve it. (Some have already been mentioned.)

(1) A five-element model captures the operation of American public education (see Figure). We believe in the desirability of democratic governance. This is our core belief (Element #1). Therefore,

(2) We govern democratically (Element #2). Elected officials identify the purposes of public education (Element #3). They create a bureaucratic structure to hold teachers and principals accountable (Element #4). And they try to improve schools through a social science paradigm (Element #5).

(3) We come into the world ignorant, intellectually incompetent, weak, fearful of truth, proud and selfish. Our educated nature develops as we overcome these vices and develop the six virtues of the educated person.

(4) The 12 virtues and vices can be separated for discussion, but they are integrated and interrelated in all behavior and situations.

(5) Public schools model and teach three virtues (understanding, strong character, and generosity); and they model and teach three vices (intellectual incompetence, fear of truth and pride).

(6) Our uneducated nature is ugly; our educated nature is beautiful.

(7) Democratic governance is ugly because it models and promotes the vices of our uneducated nature.

(8) Virtue-based education purposes are more useful than knowledge and skill purposes.

(9) Although we can't agree on knowledge and skill purposes, we can agree on virtue purposes. It is built into the meaning of the word "virtue."

Earlier I asked, "Do you see that everything depends on the definition of "educated?" The theme of this conference is so important because it does. Education policy makers have focused public schools on improving standardized test scores. When test scores improve, which has happened in many places, what does that mean? Does it mean young people are becoming better educated, or better "schooled?" It all depends on your definition of educated. Do we have one that is useful and inspiring or not?
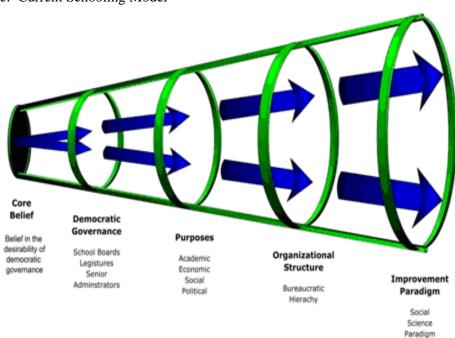
Figure: Current Schooling Model

Collective Genius: Bridging the Gaps

Among Research, Innovation and Practice

Mary John O'Hair
University of Kentucky

2011 Luncheon Keynote Address

I remember presenting at my first regional education research conference in the 1980s and how the convention was larger than life and made good on the promises that were extolled by my mentors and more experienced graduate students. I remember presenting my work and receiving the support and critique that helped build my confidence as a scholar and support my professional goals to become a university faculty member. Some of you in this room here today were at the same conference. We may look a bit older but the same excitement for the creation of knowledge, innovation, and research-based practice are still with us. The promise of the next generation of educational researchers is with us at this conference. I believe we have a 'collective genius' represented here, the wisdom and experience of mature researchers and the excitement and creativity of emerging scholars. Both help us bridge the ever present gaps among research, innovation, and practice.

In the American Educational Research Association's (AERA, 2011) 2012 Annual Meeting Call for Submissions, the conference theme "Non Satis Scire: To Know is Not Enough" is actualized in conference organizers imploring the educational research community to fulfill the entirety of AERA's mission rather than only the first part "to advance knowledge about education, to encourage scholarly inquiry related to education…" (AERA, 2011). AERA leaders concluded that, "Education research will never be what it ought to be until we promote more actively the second part of AERA's mission, "the use of research to improve education and serve the public good."

In my remarks today, I will focus on bridging the gaps among research, innovation, and practice. First, I will reflect on historical perspectives involving the use of research to improve education and serve the public good. Second, I will explore the current climate as reflected by three national reports highlighting future roles of universities, colleges of education, and teacher education. Last, I will suggest implications for educational researchers in this changing climate.

Just before attending my first regional education research conference as a graduate student, a national report, *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform,* was released which highlighted how much our schools were failing the Nation and the urgent need for educational reform if we were to remain a global leader in the 21st century. As a new faculty member, I remember the pioneering work of school reform networks that were created to address *A Nation at Risk*, including the 1984 Coalition of Essential Schools founded by Ted Sizer at Brown University and the 1989 League of Professional Schools founded by Carl Glickman at the University of Georgia. Both were remarkable. They were created to demonstrate what restructured schools would look like based on core principles of democracy and education. Both remain alive and well today but have not significantly transformed public education in the United States. However, many of our transformational education leaders today have roots in these early school reform networks.

After observing this early school reform work from afar, I became very interested in working with local schools and my university to create a school-university network based on the work occurring in Georgia and across the northeast, while at the same time remaining true to local education needs and values of my region. In 1995, the Okla-

homa Networks for Excellence in Education (O.N.E.) that later became the K20 Center for Educational and Community Renewal (K20 Center) at the University of Oklahoma was created. O.N.E. was founded on the democratic IDEALS of inquiry, discourse, equity, authenticity, leadership and service along with ten practices of high achieving schools (O'Hair, McLaughlin, & Reitzug, 2000; O'Hair & Reitzug, 1997). It was established as one of three start-up networks of the newly formed 1993 Annenberg Institute for School Reform. As a result of this collaboration, Oklahoma educators were invited to learn from Annenberg's 50 High Schools Project, designed to demonstrate to the Nation what a 'restructured high school' looked like. O.N.E. began with six schools representing rural, urban and suburban Oklahoma settings, and currently, as the K20 Center, this initiative helps connect cutting-edge university-wide research and innovation to practices in the state's 540 school districts.

Are we better off today after efforts of these early school reform networks? How did this early work fair during the NCLB era with the politics and practice of the accountability movement? Are we preparing *all* students to succeed in an increasingly diverse, globalized, and technology-rich world? We usually assume that we are better off although it is wise to remember a comment from George Orwell (1968), *"*Each generation imagines itself to be more intelligent than the one that went before it, and wiser than the one that comes after it." (p.51) Did we avoid this apparent conundrum?

Researchers and educators strive to understand the underlying issues of past reform initiatives and build on strengths, while addressing challenges. Previous reform efforts have had limited success in wide-scale transformation of teaching and learning to ensure that every student, every day thinks and performs at high levels. As such, radically different and new systems of learning remain needed to ensure all students are prepared for college and careers.

Under the leadership of Gene Wilhoit, The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) has identified a set of critical attributes characterizing new systems for learning. A deepened understanding of the process of learning, greater

knowledge of socio-cultural factors in learning, and recognition that the world has changed, resulted in the development of six attributes: (a) personalized learning, (b) comprehensive systems of learning support, (c) world-class knowledge and skills, (d) performance-based learning, (e) anytime, everywhere learning opportunities, and (f) authentic student voice (CCSSO, 2010).

According to CCSSO, *personalized learning* requires a data-driven framework to set goals, assess progress, and ensure students receive the academic and developmental supports they need. *Comprehensive systems of learning support* must also be in place to address the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development along a continuum of services to ensure the success of all students. New learning systems must also strive for *world-class knowledge and skills* that require achievement goals to sufficiently encompass the content knowledge and skills required for success in a globally-oriented world. *Performance-based learning* is another key component, putting students at the center of the learning process by enabling the demonstration of mastery based on high, clear, and commonly-shared expectations. New systems of learning must embrace *anytime, everywhere learning* opportunities that provide constructive learning experiences in all aspects of a child's life, through both the geographic and Internet-connected community. Lastly, such new systems must provide for *authentic student voice*, deeply engaging students in directing and owning their individual learning and shaping the nature of the education experience among their peers (CCSSO, 2010). However, before new systems of learning can emerge and be sustained wide scale, it is important to examine and understand the current climate of education as reflected by three national reports highlighting the future roles of universities, colleges of education, and teacher education.

The first report, *Collective Genius: Innovation, Entrepreneurship, and the Commercialization of University Research* (O'Hair, 2011) provides an analysis of 205 responses to a Request for Information (RFI) by the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy and the National Economic Council. Findings from this report assert that research faculty at universities do not perceive an incentive to remove their fundamental

research hats and replace them with translational hats that move innovations across the university into commercialization and practice. By their very nature, university researchers are most talented in seeking answers to questions that are not necessarily practical or suitable for the end-user. As such, transforming a university culture from one where basic research products found in refereed journal articles are considered the gold standard will tend to resist change as the gold standard expands to include the impact of research on practice. Furthermore, not all university research is suitable for translational missions or commercialization and not all inventions from research are successful (O'Hair, 2011). Consequently, the commercialization of university research is a persistent challenge often referred to as "the valley of death" and this valley costs the U.S. economy billions of dollars in unrealized economic valuation. Of the 205 responses to the RFI, education research was never mentioned. I suggest bridging the gap between research and practice and traversing "the valley of death" by privileging transformational leadership, cultivating strategic partnerships, fostering entrepreneurial thinking, nourishing innovation ecosystems, and transforming university culture.

A second report released by Eduventures in 2011, *Understanding and Identifying Innovative and Entrepreneurial Business Models for Schools of Education*, outlines various practices and partnerships required for the success of future schools of education. The report articulates the need for future schools of education to obtain a strong, defined brand and position in the marketplace for graduate education. To obtain this foothold in graduate education, schools of education must offer more graduate certificates that seek to develop specialized skill sets for educators and that are directly aligned to school and district priorities. Specifically, involving P-12 leaders in program development for professional development, graduate, and certificate programs is critical to achieve marketplace recognition in graduate education. Furthermore, such programs must integrate technology into the curriculum as well as include online course and program offerings to better meet the scheduling needs of practicing educators. Once established, the model

for such programs is to have smaller enrollment throughout master's programs for teachers, and those master's programs that thrive will enhance targeted skill sets or provide training for upward mobility for a more defined teacher/administrator career ladder.

The Eduventures (2011) report also addresses the need for future colleges of education to provide incentives and opportunities for faculty and staff to contribute differently based on expertise, talents, and strengthens. The recommendation is to clearly differentiate between faculty whose role is research/scholarly activity and faculty who are experienced professionals in the field, and whose role is to teach in graduate programs for educators. Both types of faculty need career ladders including tenure and pro-motion options.

The last report, *Transforming Teacher Education through Clinical Practice: A National Strategy to Prepare Effective Teachers* released by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) in 2010, provides a response to concerns that teacher preparation is disconnected from practice. The report provides NCATE and the field with guidance for teacher education redesign. Implications for this redesign include the integration of clinical preparation throughout every facet of teacher education programs in strategic partnership with schools. Specific efforts for redesign include a 10 state alliance committed to piloting clinically-based approaches to teacher education, developing and refining of such prototypes, supporting decisions with current research, and a plan for scaling such initiatives (NCATE, 2011). Turning teacher education "on its head" as the report recommends will help ensure future educators are prepared to support and lead new systems of learning.

Given the current climate of education many implications exist for the work of educational leaders and researchers and for the future roles of universities, colleges of education, and teacher education. First and foremost, higher education institutions need incentives for faculty to bridge existing gaps to ensure research findings are used to innovate education and serve the public good, just as AERA's mission states. Moreover, when scholars are engaged in research that is truly responsive to communities and is collaborative in

its approach, this yields knowledge that is field-tested and more likely to "work" than traditional research outcomes. Proponents of engaged research believe that it provides a greater "return on research investment" by joining university and community assets which will ultimately provide: (a) better quality and availability of data, (b) better questions, reflecting theory and practice, (c) better methods, applied more effectively to specific populations, and (d) integration of theory and practice, making research more useful and practice more effective (Stanton, 2008).

As Dean of the College of Education at the University of Kentucky, the faculty and I have been committed to addressing the gaps that exist among research, innovation and practice by developing structures to help ensure university innovation reaches Kentucky's schools and communities. What we have found that is most exciting about innovation is that it begins with a problem. The bigger the problem, the more significant the innovation needed (Thorp & Goldstein, 2010). We are discovering that innovation often requires a shift from our disciplinary silos to a multidisciplinary, almost transdisciplinary approach to problem solving. Transforming research into innovation requires us to take a step beyond just publishing a refereed journal article or book chapter; while those remain important, innovation requires us to take the next step and help translate our findings into useful practices through school-university networks. The key components in taking this next step involve: (a) developing a shared vision, (b) building capacity and collaborative partnerships, and (c) establishing a collective responsibility and mindset to implement the vision among our faculty and colleagues in schools and communities.

Part of the missing link we have discovered in moving research to innovation and then to daily practice is entrepreneurial thinking. Entrepreneurship is not a subject or a discipline, but a way of thinking that can increase the impact of innovation (O'Hair, 2011; Thorp & Goldstein, 2010). Producing high-impact innovation requires an entrepreneurial mindset that views big problems as big opportunities. Unfortunately, we in academia often equate entrepreneurship with way. Instead, education scholars should view the con-

temporary educational entrepreneur as a doer, opportunism or commercialization in a negative a person who not only excels in creating new knowledge but also seeks to shift resources and take risks in order to build and support new and creative ways to educate all students for global careers and citizenship.

A new interdisciplinary venture at the University of Kentucky led by the College of Communications and Information Studies is growing rapidly in response to the need for a robust academic entrepreneurial studies program. iNET (Innovation Network for Entrepreneurial Thinking) began in Summer 2011 to connect students and faculty with members in the entrepreneurial community of Kentucky. iNET will serve as a catalyst for ideas and intends to offer transformative educational experiences for its students. One of its key goals is developing innovation and entrepreneurial leaders that create social and economic wealth in Kentucky. iNET intends to offer both formal curriculum in entrepreneurial studies as well as extra-curricular opportunities that places students and faculty into contexts that are rich with connections to the venture creation ecosystem. For example, iNET will partner with other key organizations (academic colleges, including the College of Education, and units on the UK campus; economic development organizations at the local, state and national levels, and practicing entrepreneurs) to promote innovation and entrepreneurial thinking, thus helping us bridge existing gaps among research, innovation and practice.

Perhaps the most perplexing question or challenge of our time is, "How do we transform public education to sustain a culture of innovation?" Similar to the K20 Center in Oklahoma, the Kentucky P20 Innovation Lab (P20 Lab), located in the College of Education at the University of Kentucky, is becoming a state-wide, collaborative space that brings researchers, state personnel, school district leaders, teachers, parents, business leaders, nonprofit organizations and other community members to collectively propel new innovations in Kentucky education. It is an incubator of new and promising educational ideas and our nucleus for bridging existing gaps among research, innovation and practice.

The University of Kentucky P20 Innovation Lab was established with a mission to create, develop, and apply new knowledge to address the most critical education issues of our time, locally and globally. In partnership with our students, colleagues across the university and individuals and institutions around the globe, the P20 Lab links research and innovation to issues faced in P-12 schools and districts by providing tools, feedback and assistance to schools and districts as they redesign and rethink current policies, practices, and programs to support 21st century learners. The P20 Lab serves as an incubator for identifying, implementing and evaluating new learning design prototypes that can be scaled at the district, state and national level through P20 and Next Generation Learning (NxGL) networks.

The need for developing next-generation models for teaching and learning has never been greater. Both secondary and postsecondary graduates will need to master core academic content knowledge and learn new skills for a new era. Students need to think critically and creatively, collaborate globally, utilize technology effectively, solve problems independently and in groups, and perform flexibly and fluidly as situations evolve and change. For students to be ready for the challenges of the 21st century, transformational change throughout the entire educational system is needed - now.

I can think of no organization more important to address the challenges we face in bridging the gaps between research, innovation and practice than regional education research organizations such as the Mid-Western Educational Research Association. Your members are uniquely qualified to not only create new knowledge but to understand regional problems we face better than anyone. Who better to ensure the translation of research to innovation and on to practice than you? As you mentor future graduate students to become educational researchers I hope you also encourage them to place as much emphasis on translating research as creating new knowledge because, "To Know is Not Enough."

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Qualitative Experimentation, Local Generalizability, and Other Oxymoronic Opportunities for Educated Researchers

Gordon P. Brooks
Ohio University

2011 Presidential Address

Abstract

As lines between research paradigms continue to blur with the ever-increasing popularity of mixed methods research, there are useful, and occasionally oxymoronic, opportunities for educational researchers to juxtapose tools from opposing methods. The gold standard is just not possible in so much of what we do with small-scale research, nor is it always desirable. So what can we do? Are there new ways to think about research design, methods, and analyses across commonly understood boundaries that normally guide our favored modes of inquiry? Can we further develop ways to combine methodological principles across paradigms? The idea behind this talk is to look for ways we can use apparently contradictory ideas from quantitative and qualitative methodologies to move research forward.

Before I start, I'd like to acknowledge some colleagues and students who, sometimes unknowingly, helped me formulate and refine some of the ideas presented here. In particular, I would like to thank John Hitchcock, George Johanson, Jerry Johnson, Bob Barcikowski, Pete Mather, Francis Godwyll, Adah Ward Randolph, and Chuck Wilkins. I would also like to acknowledge some limitations to my talk tonight. First, I am not a qualitative researcher or a mixed methodologist. I am not a philosopher of science. My approach is pragmatic. I have thought about these ideas for a while, but there are likely still logical or philosophical flaws in some of the ideas (most of which are not new ideas). I put them out for others to *reject* ...or *fail to reject*.

As a pragmatist, I look for *really useful* ways of thinking about research. (Has anyone ever seen the really useful *Thomas the Tank Engine*?). Most of the methods and issues I will talk about are from an unabashedly exploratory approach to research. I try not to sound too cynical, but I do often try to be purposefully provocative. I admit that I still need to read more in some of these areas so I have probably missed some really useful relevant resources in preparing for this talk.

Oxymoronic Opportunities

Oxymorons abound in research: forward regression, missing-data analysis, and original replication, to name a few. The Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary (2000, computer version 2.5) defines *oxymoronic* as of or relating to "a combination of contradictory or incongruous words" and defines *opportunities* as "good chances for advancement or progress." That is, I am looking for ways to combine and to synthesize concepts from across modes of inquiry into a newly *mixed-up methods* way of looking at research. And as a reminder, Article II, Section 2, of the MWERA Bylaws (2008) states: "The specific purpose of the Association shall be to improve, promote, and disseminate educational research" (p. 1). My aim here is to improve and promote.

Qualitative Experimentation

Interestingly, in terms of potential paradigm shifts, one of the most common references I found during web searches for the concept *qualitative experimentation* was to Thomas Kuhn, but his was a slightly more scientific experimental approach to the term than I desire. Additionally, some mixed methods and qualitative scholars

(e.g., Hunter & Brewer, 2003) talk about qualitative experimentation but with a slightly more qualitative meaning than I intend. By the way, there is an interesting debate about paradigms in the 2011 spring issue of *Mid-Western Educational Researcher*.

My use of the term suggests designing studies using experimental design principles and analyzing experimental threats to validity, yet collecting social science qualitative data without necessarily designing true experiments. I propose calling this social scientific, mixed-method approach *quali-experimental design*. Essentially, it boils down to manipulation without measurement. Although the term of quali-experimental design seems to be new, the idea itself is not new. Indeed, a relatively famous study by Sherif et al (1954/1961) used this very idea of qualitative experimentation (Green, n.d.) In the *Robbers Cave* experiment, Sherif and his colleagues assigned boys at camp to two groups, which they called the Rattlers and the Eagles. The researchers manipulated conditions to observe intergroup relations. Although they did report some quantitative analyses, the bulk of their analysis focused qualitatively on observations they made of the conflict and cooperation that occurred during the experiment.

The benefit of thinking experimentally, even correlationally, is that it helps us think about what variables to include and/or control when addressing causal-like questions. That is, when we have questions that require an answer about whether a particular treatment had an effect on some outcome variable, I believe we may be able to examine outcomes from quali-experimental studies without measurement by obtaining really useful qualitative data.

Research is a Rhetorical Process

Using qualitative data collection methods does not make it qualitative research. In fact, with manipulated variables it is much more like experimental research, regardless of the type of data collected. Recall that causal arguments do not require numerical data. Cause is based on logic, not numbers or *p* values (Shadish, Cook, & Campbell, 2002). Because cause requires argument, I like to say that research is a rhetorical process.

That is, even if we do find a really useful answer or result, we must convince others that it is really useful. Perhaps there may be a way to connect Rogers' (2003) diffusion of innovation theory to research. We might think of the useful research result as the innovation awaiting diffusion into practice or into further research. Persuasion is Rogers' second stage of the innovation-decision process.

I generally use a straightforward but simplistic approach to describe the necessary conditions to argue for cause. That is, causal evidence requires a relationship can be observed empirically, with a clearly defined temporal order, where other explanations have been ruled out, and that can be replicated (i.e., we need repeated experiments). Perhaps quali-experimental research can utilize a different set of criteria, such as those offered by Austin Bradford Hill (1965). These criteria for minimal conditions to provide adequate evidence of a causal relationship include: (a) theoretical plausibility, (b) strength of association, (c) temporality, (d) consistency, (e) coherence, (f) specificity, (g) gradient (dose-response), (h) experimental evidence, and (i) analogy (consider alternate explanations). Even though many of these criteria *can* use numeric data as evidence, neither of these definitions requires numeric data. They are simply ways to think about how we might provide evidence for causal relationships.

Action Research as Qualitative Experimentation

Many talk about action research as a qualitative endeavor, which is fine. It is frustrating to observe, however, how much action research uses qualitative methods but tries to answer experimental questions like: "Does it work?" "Which is better?" "How much different?" Several of our students from Ohio University (Christine Crumbacher, Emily Price, and Lauren Stephenson) presented a workshop at MWERA this year trying to expand our ways of thinking about action research. For example, they presented the potential for using null hypotheses to help focus the research questions. When we have such experimental questions, the idea of null and alternative hypotheses may be a really useful thing even if we're not going to do null hypothesis significance testing. The hypotheses can help us organize our thinking and help us figure out how to protect ourselves from our own poor research designs.

My key point is that action research is not inherently qualitative, although it has certainly become the most predominant mode of inquiry. This Presidential Address actually began months ago as a polemic on action research, but I decided that such a talk would be too negative and I wanted to focus more on solutions. Very few definitions of action research require qualitative approaches to inquiry. Indeed, I remember learning a couple of decades ago that action research was related to studying social movements, not that it was a method for doing small-scale research with little concern for strong methodology. So the question is whether we can use quantitative design and analysis principles, and ideas related to experimental validity, while using qualitative data. Just like all research, it's all about the research questions. That is, our designs need to answer our questions.

Analogous to ways quantitative researchers might think about using quali-experimental designs, action researchers can think about how to include non-measured covariates qualitatively (e.g., making sense of how and why groups are non-equivalent and trying to adjust the analysis based on that knowledge). Action researchers can think about potential mediating and moderating variables, which might result in interaction effects, or perhaps consider these retrospectively using rich field notes they have collected during the study. Action researchers can use pretest-posttest designs but pay qualitative attention to experimental threats to validity (e.g., the impact of maturation or history, the impact of changing instruments). Action researchers can think about alternative explanations by collecting qualitative data to look for those relationships or explanations to help rule out those alternatives.

Some Oxymoronic (and some Less-Moronic) Solutions

My primary question is "Why do the research, no matter what kind of research, if we can't even convince ourselves that we have evidence when we are finished?" I have started by talking about applying experimental principles to qualitative data collection, but it is only fair that we also talk about applying qualitative design principles to quantitative research and data col-

lection.

I will be talking about some more oxymorons as we move forward, such as *quantitative case-study* and *local generalizability*, but I will also talk about some other ways to improve research, especially small-scale research. For example, I'll talk about single-subject/single-case designs, a renewed focus on exploratory research, new ways to think about validity, and ideas like meta-analysis, transferability, and replication.

Quantitative Case-study

If we talk about applying qualitative design and analysis principles to action research or other small-scale quantitative research, we might call it *quantitative case-study*. Like qualitative experimentation, others (e.g., Yin, 2009) have talked about quantitative case studies. Most others, however, focus on using quantitative data *in* a case study. Here, I am talking about quantitative research *as* case-study.

Let's be honest. Much quantitative research is flawed. In much quantitative research, the sampling designs don't allow for useful generalization (e.g., using undergraduates to study a decision-making technique that is then recommended to business leaders). In much quantitative research, the instruments used or measurements taken are not psychometrically strong (e.g., using a newly developed instrument to collect data without so much as a pilot study). In much quantitative research, conclusions over-reach the designs, which usually don't overcome potential researcher bias (e.g., inferring cause from a non-equivalent groups design where the researcher implemented both treatment and control). In much quantitative research, statistics are potentially flawed (e.g., tests of assumptions are rarely reported). In much quantitative research, the theoretical rationale is often inadequate. I usually call this list of problems in quantitative research my *triumvirate of evils*, which now actually numbers five instead of three (ever since I added flawed statistics and theoretical inadequacy). For a few weeks after deciding not to talk about action research, this address was going to be a polemic on quantitative research in general... but I decided that such a talk would be too negative and I wanted to focus more on solutions.

What if we start to think of our quantitative research as quantitative case-study? We could focus

on why this *sample* or convenient population is an interesting case. We could tell the stories of our participants (not samples) through their quantitative data, and perhaps even also their qualitative data. We could value exploratory data analysis again by examining descriptive statistics for really useful variables and collecting really useful quantitative data about our participants.

I like to teach that research questions should contain four elements: (a) variables, (b) relationships among those variables, (c) population of interest, and (d) context of the study. Most quantitative researchers don't talk about the context of a study. I approach it from the perspective of special circumstances that delimit the study in some fashion. For example, if we are studying computer use in elementary schools, the context might describe the age of the computers used, the operating systems and software used, the quality of the Internet connections in the geographic area, the size of the districts, or even the condition of the buildings or structure of the computer labs. None of these factors are necessarily variables or purely population matters, but they could introduce extraneous variation or impact generalization if not accounted for or used to describe the study.

Quantitative case-study would be neither totally qualitative nor totally quantitative in nature. Performing exploratory quantitative case-studies would require thoughtful attention to theory to help us measure the right variables, analyze the right relationships, and focus on internal experimental validity. We can use traditionally qualitative tools, however, like reflexivity, triangulation, journaling, member-checking, saturation, and debriefing to help us understand what our exploratory quantitative data is trying to tell us. For example, is there some inherent reason why quantitative researchers cannot do member-checking with their participants to see how well the results seem to fit into their experiences? Quantitative researchers often come to research problems with personal connections, just like qualitative researchers do. Why should we not also embrace and share these connections? If our research designs truly protect us from ourselves like they should, there should be no reason not to share this anyway. My opinion, however, is that most small-scale research designs do not protect

researchers from potential bias, so knowing the researcher is important. Other qualitative ideas may also be really useful from this quantitative case-study perspective, even though we may be collecting quantitative data.

Still, some quantitative matters matter. For example, just because an instrument has poor psychometric properties doesn't mean it provides no useful information. We could just analyze the data more qualitatively and in a more exploratory mode. How many quantitative researchers already analyze every item in a scale instead of the total scale? Using a quantitative case-study approach, we can think in terms of a more exploratory, model-building approach to research. We could study things we now consider inconveniences, such as why values are missing, why cases are outliers, why data distributions have their shapes, and why assumptions are violated.

What would the research world look like if we took a quantitative case-study approach to small-scale quantitative research? I believe effect sizes will likely be the results of choice. There would be little need to argue over whether to perform NHST or calculate p values, because sampling error is relevant only as a local issue (because we are not trying to generalize) and it does not matter for transferability. Would there be a role for confidence intervals or statistical power or a Neyman-Pearson approach to hypothesis testing? Maybe not. Randomization and permutation tests might prove useful for those who still feel a need for probabilities. Perhaps most importantly, we would probably be living in a mixed-up methods world where lines between modes of inquiry continue to blur.

Local Generalizability

Another quantitative matter that matters is sampling. I teach that there are five levels of generalization in quantitative studies: (a) target population, (b) accessible population (sampling frame), (c) sample, (d) participants or respondents, and (e) cases actually analyzed. If representativeness fails at any one of the four bridges/gaps (e.g., if the sample doesn't represent the accessible population or the actual participants don't represent the sample chosen by the researcher), then generalizability fails. For example, rarely do we defend our choices of accessible populations as good representatives of our de-

sired target population, usually making them nothing more than convenient populations.

What frustrates me the most, however, is that most quantitative studies talk about participants as samples. Very rarely do we achieve the samples we try to obtain through our sampling procedures. We always end up with what one person I met called *damaged samples*, but we rarely know whether these damaged samples represent the accessible populations. Consequently, we have nothing more than participants with no idea what population they actually represent. We inappropriately use the word *sample* for these participants. Worse yet, we often cannot include all our participants in all our analyses, so the number of cases analyzed is often even smaller than the number of participants; therefore, participants may differ across analyses within the same study. We should borrow the idea from qualitative research of telling the stories of our participants rather than trying to figure out what a sample is telling us about a population.

There are a number of good reasons we should focus on the participants and cases we actually analyze rather than a sample, including non-response or volunteer bias, non-random or convenient sampling, and damaged random samples. More heinous, perhaps, than a convenient sample is something I have called a *convenient population*. I believe that more quantitative studies are flawed due to the use of convenient accessible populations than due to the use of convenient samples. Using a local school or a university classroom should not be considered a convenient sample of anything, but rather a convenient population... or perhaps the worst possible case of double-convenience: a convenient sample from a convenient population.

The idea of *local generalizability* is to recognize and acknowledge our use of these convenient populations and to use that awareness to draw truly representative samples from them. We can rarely hope to truly represent a large target population, so let's represent the smaller, accessible, convenient population very well instead of not representing *any* population with poor or damaged sampling. We can then have confidence that our results have small-scale external validity within our local/convenient population. We could bor-

row another term and call it purposeful random sampling (Patton, 2002). Then, after doing much such smaller-scale research with these convenient populations, we can use the ideas of transferability, meta-analysis, and replication to make sense of these multiple local results.

Single Case Designs

In 2009, one of my colleagues from Ohio University, John Hitchcock, presented a model for single case design and analysis at MWERA which was later published in the *Mid-Western Educational Researcher* (Hitchcock, Nastasi, & Summerville, 2010). Although not oxymoronic, this extension to single-subject designs where a group can be considered the subject or case, the case could become the entire convenient population. The mixed methods ideas that they brought to single case designs may be just the ticket we need both to improve action research and to develop quantitative case-study, paying attention to both qualitative and experimental validity issues. This promising single-case approach to small-scale research was another aspect of the Ohio University students' workshop this year.

Confirmatory Exploration

Tukey (1977) said something long ago that may be even truer today:

Once upon a time, statisticians only explored. Then they learned to confirm exactly—to confirm a few things exactly, each under very specific circumstances. As they emphasized exact confirmation, their techniques inevitably became less flexible... Anything to which a confirmatory procedure was not explicitly attached was decried as 'mere descriptive statistics', no matter how much we learned from it... Today, exploratory and confirmatory can—and should—proceed side by side (p. vii).

For fun, here are some useful descriptive statistics.

- Three out of four people make up 75% of population,
- Over half the population is above average (which can be true), and
- 62.381527% of all statistics are made up on the spot (John Allen Paulos, n.d.).
- 51.19663% of all statistics are worthless or

inappropriately precise (made up on the spot).

More seriously, Hans Rosling (2010) has provided a wonderful *YouTube* video that shows how wonderfully useful descriptive statistics can be when analyzed creatively. Tukey (1977) also said, "We can no longer get along without confirmatory data analysis. But we need not start with it" (p. vii). I believe we jump to confirmatory analyses too quickly, without adequate theoretical rationale. Just because we have tools available does not mean we need to use them all the time, and it doesn't mean that they always produce more impressive results.

A cynical perspective on confirmatory analyses.

"Statisticians use data the way a drunken man uses lamp-posts, for support rather than illumination" (author unknown). Here is another one just for fun: "What do statistics professors get when they drink too much? Kurtosis of the liver" (author unknown). Gary C. Ramseyer, has a wonderful website with many statistics jokes and other statistics fun you should check out (Ramseyer, 2011).

I remember learning some time ago that Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was intended for confirmatory analysis or causal analysis. As we've moved forward in time, however, we now use SEM much more frequently than I believe our theoretical support would allow. Then when our SEM models don't fit (as they so often don't), we move to something we call *exploratory mode* to make some new adjusted model fit. If the confirmatory model doesn't fit, why don't we just go back to a *true* exploratory mode? Why do we tinker with the model, and therefore the theory, in ways that often do not make theoretical sense (like correlating errors)? If the modeled theory does not fit, let the data speak. I believe we need a new word for this exploratory model-adjustment process because it is not exploratory research.

Tukey (1977) is also attributed with saying, "Far better an approximate answer to the right question, which is often vague, than an exact answer to the wrong question, which can always be made precise" (p. vii). Exploratory data analysis can help provide these approximate answers,

which may be better than these unnaturally precise confirmatory questions, made even more precise by post hoc tinkering.

Exploratory Confirmation

The nice thing about these more advanced techniques (such as HLM and SEM) that have become so popular is that model-building is back in vogue. The whole process is about developing models and testing the fit, perhaps in comparison to other models. This process is a good way to explore the relationships in our data. Isn't it interesting that we once used EFA to confirm factor structures, but now we use CFA to explore better fitting models? Here's one to purposefully provoke: from a model-building perspective, aren't stepwise, backward, and forward regression reasonable (even if not the best) approaches to compare models? Of course, we need to force our statistical software to build *all* the relevant stepwise models and not just to stop when statistical significance rules suggest. Of course, building all possible relevant models is better still.

One of the biggest problems with confirmatory analyses is that we always have model specification issues. That is, our models are only as good as the variables we have decided to include from our imperfect theories. Further, our variables are only as good as the imperfect psychometric properties they have, whether we are talking about analyzing observed variables or talking about analyzing latent variables through the information provided by manifest variables. "All models are wrong, but some models are useful." (some form of which is usually attributed to G. E. P. Box). I think we should focus more on really useful models than on precise, but contrived, models.

New Validity Scheme

So much of what I've been talking about is leading toward a new way of thinking about validity in research. That is, if lines do indeed continue to blur between modes of inquiry, we need a new vocabulary for validity. Here is a proposal for a new scheme for validity that potentially may apply to quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods research. This new scheme will allow us to talk meaningfully across modes of inquiry using similar language. After all, from a pragmatic perspective, are

qualitative and quantitative methods really that different? That is, in my quantitative mind, I believe I can make a reasonable argument that thematic analysis of qualitative data rely on numerical concepts frequency, magnitude, and range. Now, however, is not the time to talk about epistemeology and ontology. The new validity scheme I propose has five elements:

1. Theoretical Validity
2. Design Validity
3. Representative Validity
4. Data Validity
5. Conclusion Validity

I have been thinking about these ideas for a while, but recently realized that they correspond pretty well to the AERA (2006a) *Standards for Reporting on Empirical Social Science Research*. The standards address seven areas: problem formulation, design and logic, sources of evidence, measurement and classification, analysis and interprettation, generalization, and ethics in reporting.

I would argue that (a) problem formulation requires theoretical validity, (b) design validity encompasses both design and logic and ethics, (c) representative validity captures both sources of evidence and generalization, (d) data validity corresponds to the ideas in measurement and classification, and (e) analysis and interpretation require conclusion validity. This new validity scheme provides the right reasons for doing the research (theoretical validity) using the right methods to collect the data necessary to answer the research questions (design validity), collected from the right sources (representative validity) who/that have and provide the right information (data validity), which ultimately results in the right answers to the research questions in the context of the study (conclusion validity), leading to further theoretical development (theoretical validity again).

Theoretical Validity

Talking about theoretical validity brings front-and-center the key idea that research is all about the theory. Theoretical validity deals with the significance of the study or what we learn from a study in terms of transferable or generalizable or practical knowledge. Before and/or after the study we look for theoretical support for vari-

ables and models specified, relationships found, and conclusions reached. We look for theoretical support for any causal relationships we may be investigating. We discuss what we have learned in ways that generate knowledge and lead to further theoretical development. We connect our results to the literature, both theoretically and empirically. We review how our theories may need to change based on what we have learned. I like to describe generalization from qualitative research as not a generalization to a population but as generalization to theory. There must be something useful and transferable that we are learning from qualitative research, even case studies, or why publish it? Finally, I believe that practical application requires theoretical support. That is, we can't just do some-thing because it worked. We need to understand why it worked.

Design Validity

The key question that design validity addresses is whether we can be confident that evidence we obtain from our design can be used to make the knowledge claims we hope to make by answering our research questions. It is connected to experimental internal validity in terms of the strength of the causal argument possible. As Light, Singer, and Willett (1990) wrote: "You can't fix by analysis what you bungled by design" (p. v). This is true for both quantitative and qualitative research. In terms of qualitative research, it may encompass whether we have used the right design or data collection methods to answer the questions we are asking. For example, do we need to include observation and artifact analysis in appropriate ways, or are interviews enough for our purposes? Have we done a case study when ethnography was really required? Finally, design validity would also address ethical issues related to the protection of human subjects.

Representative Validity

All cases or participants in both qualitative and quantitative studies are chosen for a reason. Often in quantitative research they are chosen randomly, but with that reason. The goal in quantitative research is to have the sample and participants represent some broader population from which they are chosen. This is the quantitative idea of external validity or generalizability. In qualitative research, we typically seek more purposefully to find partici-

pants or cases that have particular information or relevance to the study. For example, we sometimes seek "people with whom we should talk" through snowball sampling. We sometimes are specifically interested in extreme cases or typical cases or negative cases. So the basic question here is how well do the participants (or the artifacts in historical research) represent whom or what we expect them to represent? Are we studying the cases or places that have the information we need? Then, later, we need to be able to describe the participants in both quantitative and qualitative studies sufficiently well that others can determine the utility or transferability of our results.

Data Validity

We have a variety of needs from the data we collect, but most importantly, we need high quality data. From a typical psychometric perspective, we would ask whether the data represent reliably what we purport they represent. Measurement validity and reliability are the critical quantitative concepts relevant here; however, we have a number of similar issues regarding data in qualitative studies that fall into this cross-modal category of data validity. For example, the ideas of credibility, accuracy, and trustworthiness of the data become critical in qualitative and historical research. Do the data represent the appropriate context for the study? We need to provide evidence that the data represent appropriately what we expect them to represent (e.g., perceptions, facts, attitudes, etc.). For example, I believe that both quantitative and qualitative research can be susceptible to response sets or reactivity such as social desirability, acquiescence, and Hawthorne effects. The qualitative methods of triangulation and member-checking may fit well in all types of research to help manage some of these matters.

Additionally, the data collection process itself may be an issue. Data entry, recording, and transcription are issues that cut across modes of inquiry in some fashion. Do we have sufficient information to reach conclusions? Have we truly reached a point of saturation? Are sample sizes for statistical power all that is required from quantitative studies or should we be more worried about the precision of our estimates and the ability for

our results to cross-validate? For that matter, is quantitative cross-validation just a way of saying "triangulation of results"?

Conclusion Validity

The issue with conclusion validity is whether we have evidence to support the claims we want to make, whether we have statistical, analytical thematic, or other types of evidence. What rationale can we provide, based on our own empirical results, to justify any recommendations we make or implications we suggest? Have we used the appropriate analyses to answer our research questions? Do we have evidence from multiple sources to support our claims (e.g., triangulation, replication)? In quantitative research, we would be particularly concerned with issues related to our statistical analyses, like whether assumptions for our statistical tests have been violated or whether the results are influenced too strongly by extreme values that really shouldn't have been part of our study. From an experimental perspective, do we try to reach for conclusions beyond what the design will allow? From a qualitative perspective, we are not suggesting that another researcher would reach the same conclusions, but rather that we need to have appropriate warrants for our claims.

Random Transition

I needed a transition to get from validity to the next topic, but I couldn't figure one out, so this is it. Plus, I couldn't go a whole presentation without a single statistical formula. Here's a fun one: the separate-variances *t* test formula and appropriate degrees of freedom (see Hinkle, Wiersma, & Jurs, 2003, p. 252):

$$t = \frac{\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2}{\sqrt{\frac{s_1^2}{n_1} + \frac{s_2^2}{n_2}}}$$

$$df = \frac{\left(\frac{s_1^2}{n_1} + \frac{s_2^2}{n_2}\right)^2}{\frac{\left(\frac{s_1^2}{n_1}\right)^2}{n_1 - 1} + \frac{\left(\frac{s_2^2}{n_2}\right)^2}{n_2 - 1}}$$

A More Medical Model (from Oxymoron to Alliteration)

The ideas I have discussed certainly would not apply to all quantitative research. I certainly recognize that a great deal of good quality small-scale quantitative research has been done. I also recognize that we will still need larger-scale studies with strong designs and strong sampling methods in order to confirm theory. Many quantitative and action research studies, however, fall into this realm of no realistic hope for generalization. In addition to talking about things like transferability, meta-analysis, synthesis, cross-validation, and replication, perhaps we can also talk about a more medical model to fulfill our broader research agendas.

For example, much medical research uses retrospective designs, such as case control studies. These approaches work in medicine because medical professionals collect such vast amounts of data on patients every hour and every day. They are able to do this because they have identified important variables worth collecting on such a regular and frequent basis, things like temperature, pulse, blood pressure, and even family history. They collect this information as part of their everyday work routine. They record much of it immediately, not six hours later, but there are things they also record at the end of the day.

If we, as teaching professionals, could identify critical variables to record on students on a frequent basis as part of our routine work, we might be able to utilize really useful retrospective designs. Teachers could record information during class and perhaps keep journals at the end of each day. We could hire teaching assistants for the classroom who would be trained to take the metaphorical temperature and pulse of the students on a regular basis throughout the day, month, and school year. I know there may be FERPA issues, but medical researchers are somehow able to manage HIPAA issues. Now we just need to figure out what variables to track.

Another aspect of medical research is that their studies often include methodologists and statisticians on published papers. Perhaps we need to focus more on design and analysis in our own research and intentionally include experts in those areas. Perhaps school districts could hire method-ologists to help with the local research required for the continued improvement of education in the districts, along with the action research teachers and others may want to do. We could have academic journals devoted to the sharing of such method-ologically sound local research.

Clinical Trials

The final aspect of a medical model I would like to mention is to think about applying a clinical trial model to the education research agenda. One important aspect of clinical trials is that they separate internal and external validity. This is a useful oversimplification of how clinical trials handle such validity issues. Efficacy trials investigate the capacity for beneficial change from a perspective of internal validity. That is, can we collect evidence that the treatment works, while also examining side effects and other negative impacts? Perhaps education should also take this "first, do no harm" approach to research. Effectiveness trials study whether the treatment works in the *real world* from an external validity perspective. Another element of clinical trials that we would do well to emulate is related to the very specific and explicit inclusion and/or exclusion criteria they tend to use to delimit their populations for study. Finally, clinical trials at all levels also do much better with randomization, blinding, and double-blinding in the research.

The United States Food and Drug Administration (2011) described clinical trials in drug studies with four phases (again, a useful oversimplification):

- Phase I, with sample sizes roughly from 20 to 80, where they (a) try to determine appropriate dosing, (b) begin to identify side effects, and (c) examine safety;
- Phase II, with sample sizes roughly from 100 to 300, where they (a) collect more safety data, (b) investigate evidence of beneficial effects (efficacy), and (c) identify acceptable risks;
- Phase III, with sample sizes from 1000 to 3000, where they (a) study more safety and side effects, (b) study effectiveness more broadly, (c) study new populations, (d) compare to other treatments rather than placebo, and (e) look for interactions and

appropriate dosage issues; and

- Phase IV, after a product is approved, where they continue to study (a) long-term risks, (b) benefits, (c) optimal use, and (d) the results in different populations.

My belief is that we in education do Phase I and Phase II research in education as if it were also Phase III research, trying to test efficacy and effectiveness (i.e., generalizability) in the same studies, often using false claims (or no real claims) of external validity with the simultaneous disadvantage of inadequate attention to internal validity. Perhaps we should focus more on internal validity even with our smaller-scale research and less on generalizability. Additionally, instead of focusing on how many benefited from our treatments in our Phase I and Phase II by how much on average, we could focus further on how many did not benefit, or were harmed, and why. We absolutely need large-scale, grant-funded research (e.g., RCTs) as our Phase III, but we also need to value much more our Phases I and II, especially by providing more grant funding for such research.

Phase IV could be in education what Mary O'Hair talked about during her keynote address: Moving research out of the lab (or beyond the study) to create innovations for practice and to continue to monitor how well it works. This may also be similar to the American Educational Research Association's mission "to promote the use of research to improve education and serve the public good" (American Educational Research Association, 2006b). Notice also how important safety and risk are in the medical model. Why do we not worry about such matters as much in educational research?

Summary

We need better methods to tell the stories of our participants in small-scale quantitative research and action research. Perhaps some oxymoronic opportunities like quali-experimental design and quantitative case-study will give us additional mixed-method options we need. We need to acknowledge our convenient populations and look for local generalizability. I think we need to use *good* mixed-methods designs in this small-

scale research, but we need to expand the way we think about mixing our methods. We need to triangulate better and in every way we can think to triangulate (e.g., data, methods, observers, instruments, settings, populations, and results).

I believe we need a better way to communicate across modes of inquiry. The new scheme for validity I have presented may help us communicate across modes of inquiry in really useful ways. The scheme does not require that we abandon our current ways of thinking about validity. These current ways of thinking are just subsumed within the new scheme. We still need existing tools for providing evidence of validity, but no matter which mode of inquiry we use, I believe we need to focus more on design validity, data validity, representative validity, conclusion validity, and theoretical validity. The new scheme does not require us sometimes to sacrifice one type of validity for another. All forms are critical. That is, sometimes now we talk about the trade-off between internal and external validity, but we will always need both design and representative validity. We need to pay attention to validity, and what counts as evidence, in all research: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed; small, medium, and large; basic, applied, action, and evaluation. We need *good* small-scale research that feeds into *good* larger-scale research, perhaps using a clinical trials model. NCATE talks about a clinical model of teacher preparation, so why not a clinical model for educational research?

It's all about the evidence. We need to feel convinced by the results, and then we need to convince ourselves again and again through strong replication of all kinds. In many ways, replication and extension are just other ways of thinking about triangulation... *of knowledge*.

See you next year in Evanston. Thank you.

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Notes from the Editors' Roundtable

We are delighted to share with you that this will be our final print issue of the *Mid-Western Educational Researcher*. We have been working with the Executive Board, Administrative Council, and *MWER* Editorial Board for over a year to make the transition to an online, open access publication. The first online issue will be the Winter 2012 issue and will be available in early March.

In this issue, we focus on the Fall 2011 conference held in St. Louis, MO. Our Program Chair Ellen Sigler, President Gordon Brooks, and each of the Keynote Speakers, Mary John O'Hair and Casey Hurley, have offered their thoughts and comments for this issue. For those who attended the conference, we hope that this issue will reinforce the energy and wisdom gained while you were in St. Louis. For those who were unable to attend, we offer these pages as a reflection of the 34th Annual Meeting of the Mid-Western Educational Research Association. We hope to see you next year in Evanston, IL – just outside of Chicago!

We extend a special invitation to each of you to serve as a reviewer for the journal and to consider submitting your work for publication. As we move online, there will be more space to accommodate outstanding work and a more timely review and publication process. As we have shared previously, we also have a few new sections for your consideration and contribution as well. The Point/Counterpoint section considers issues of educational, pedagogical, or methodological significance will be explored from different viewpoints from two divergent and thoughtful perspectives. The Book and Media Review section offers critical reviews of newly released or forthcoming books or other media (e.g., film, documentary, blog, software programs) of interest to the *MWER* readership. Finally, we are very interested in supporting the work of emergent scholarship and research by graduate students. If you are interested in submitting a manuscript, serving as a reviewer, or know of a graduate student searching for a journal for their work, we hope you will consider the *Mid-Western Educational Researcher*.

As always, should you have questions, comments, or feedback, please contact us at MWER@uakron.edu. We look forward to working with you and continuing to serve MWERA!

Warmly,
Editorial Team
Jennifer L. Milam, Ph.D., Managing Editor
Kristin L. K. Koskey, Ph.D.
Susan N. Kushner Benson, Ph.D.
Xin Liang, Ph.D.
Sandra Spickard Prettyman, Ph.D.

Mid-Western Educational Research Association

35th Annual Meeting
Call For Proposals
Proposal Deadline: *May 1, 2012*

November 7-10, 2012   David Walker, Program Chair

Hilton Orrington Hotel, Evanston, Illinois

mwera2012@niu.edu

The 2012 Annual Meeting of the Mid-Western Educational Research Association (MWERA) will be held in Evanston, Illinois, with an exciting program of invited speakers, workshops, and peer-reviewed papers presented in a variety of session formats. The 2012 program will center on this year's theme: *Integrating Evidence-Based Practices in Education*, and will feature dynamic speakers of interest to both researchers and practitioners. Teachers, administrators, and other school personnel are especially invited to come and share their school-based research and experiences at the 2012 MWERA conference.

We will be meeting at the Hilton Orrington Hotel in Evanston (www.hotelorrington.com). The hotel offers charming guest rooms, excellent meeting facilities, wireless Internet access, and readily available access from both O'Hare and Midway airports.

Nestled within the heart of the Northwestern University campus and the shores of beautiful Lake Michigan, the Hilton Orrington Hotel is located in the center of Evanston among an international assortment of quality restaurants, lively night spots, and unique specialty shops. Downtown Chicago is only minutes away, via public transportation or other means of travel, and is home to world-class theaters, concert halls, great restaurants, shopping, tourist attractions, and fun nightlife!

If you are looking for a place to sit down and chat with colleagues from schools and universities about your ideas and perspectives, the Mid-Western Educational Research Association provides that opportunity with its supportive and collaborative environment. Both new and veteran educational researchers, practitioners, and students from across North America return annually to MWERA to renew acquaintances, make new contacts, and engage in exciting conversation in a collegial atmosphere.

General Information

The 2012 MWERA Annual Meeting will be held **Wednesday, November 7 through Saturday, November 10** at the Hilton Orrington Hotel in Evanston, Illinois. This year's theme is *Integrating Evidence-Based Practices in Education*. Expanding on last year's MWERA theme of "What Does it Mean to be Educated?" the 2012 MWERA conference will bring together various entities within the field of education, such as personnel from P-12; higher education; students; communities; and educational organizations, to discuss and reflect upon the concept of integrating evidence-based practices. Understanding how evidence–based practices are conceptualized, studied, and used in education is a timely and consequential endeavor. This may help researchers, practitioners, and those outside of the field begin a dialogue and possible relationship related to promising practices, predicated on evidence, that may be worth exploring and/or applying in a setting.

Attendance at the Annual Meeting

The 2012 Conference Program will consist primarily of presentations selected through a blind peer-review process. In addition, there will be invited speakers and symposia; panel discussions; special sessions for graduate students, new faculty, and new members; as well as a luncheon and other social events open to all attendees.

All sessions listed in the Conference Program will be open to anyone who has registered for the Annual Meeting; however, enrollment may be limited for some workshop sessions and business meetings that are intended for members. Tickets for the Friday luncheon and speaker are available to all pre-registrants *but ticket availability is not guaranteed for late or on-site registrants*.

Membership and Conference Registration materials for the November 2012 Annual Meeting are available on the MWERA website and can be obtained by contacting the Program Chair.

Ways to Participate

Any education professional may submit a proposal for the MWERA 2012 Annual Meeting, whether or not that person is currently a member of MWERA. However, before the Annual Meeting, all presenters must be members in good standing with MWERA. Non-members must join MWERA

when they are notified that their proposal is accepted. To promote broad participation in the program, no one person should be a presenter on more than three proposals.

Division Chairs are also seeking MWERA members to serve as Proposal Reviewers, Session Chairs, and Session Discussants. Please contact a Division Chair or the Program Chair if you are willing to serve. Finally, you can participate simply by attending the conference and encouraging colleagues and students to participate. All forms of participation are necessary to ensure a successful Annual Meeting!

Questions about proposals, the electronic submission process, or the meeting in general should be directed to the Program Chair:

> **David Walker**
> **MWERA—2012 Program Chair**
> **Northern Illinois University**
> **College of Education, 204 Gabel**
> **DeKalb, IL 60115**
> **Phone: 815-753-7886**
> **Fax: 815-753-9388**
> **Email:** *mwera2012@niu.edu*

Guidelines for Submitting a Proposal

Although it is desirable for proposals to address the theme of the Annual Meeting, it is not required. Proposals must be submitted electronically using the submission process available through the Meeting website (proposals may not be mailed or emailed to the Program Chair or to Division Chairs). Specific instructions for submission can be found at http://www.mwera.org.

Deadline for Proposal Submission

All proposals must be submitted no later than **midnight EST on May 1, 2012**. Submissions will then be forwarded to Division Chairs, who will coordinate a number of volunteers in a system of blind review of proposals.

Criteria for Proposal Review

Appropriate criteria, depending on the format and type of scholarly work being presented, have been developed and are used for the blind review process. These criteria include: (a) topic (originality, choice of problem, importance), (b) relevance of the topic to the Division and to MWERA membership, (c) contribution to research

and education, (d) framework (theoretical/ conceptual/practical rationale, literature review, grounding), (e) analyses and interpretations (significance, implications, relationship of conclusions to findings, generalizability, or usefulness), and (f) overall written proposal quality (clarity of writing, logic, and organization).

Papers presented at MWERA are expected to present original scholarship conducted by the author(s) that has not previously been presented at any other meeting or published in any journal. Further, it is a violation of MWERA policy to promote commercially available products or services (except as exhibits) that go beyond the limits of appropriate scholarly or scientific communication. Individuals who wish to display educationally-related products or services should contact the Program Chair.

Expectations of Presenters

All persons, including graduate students, presenting at the 2012 Annual Meeting are expected to be members in good standing and to register for the full meeting.

Presenters whose papers have been accepted to a session with a Session Chair and/or Session Discussant are expected to upload a completed version of their conference paper through the MWERA website no later than October 7, 2012. Papers not uploaded to the website by this date may be dropped from the program. Presenters should provide copies of their papers in either paper or electronic form at their sessions.

LCD projectors and screens will be provided by MWERA in presentation rooms. Presenters needing additional computer or audio-visual equipment must make their own arrangements for such equipment.

MWERA reserves the right to reproduce and distribute summaries and abstracts of all accepted proposals, including making such works available in a printed program abstract or disk, through the MWERA website, and in press releases promoting the Annual Meeting and the organization. *As a condition of acceptance, all authors of papers accepted to the 2012 Annual Meeting explicitly grant MWERA the right to reproduce their work's summary and/or abstract in these ways*. Such limited distribution does not preclude any subsequent publication of the work by the author(s).

Authors of accepted proposals assume the ethical and professional responsibility to appear at the Annual Meeting and to participate in their presentation or assigned session. When circumstances preclude the author(s) from doing so, it is the responsibility of the author(s) to arrange a suitable substitute and to notify the Program Chair in advance.

Content Required for Proposals

Summary

Summaries for paper and poster proposals should explicitly address as many of the following as appropriate, preferably in this order, (a) objectives, goals, or purposes, (b) perspectives and/or theoretical framework, (c) methods and/or techniques (data source, instruments, procedures), (d) results and conclusions, and (e) educational and/or scientific importance of the work.

Summaries for Symposium, Workshop, Alternative Session, Best Practices Forum, and Research in Progress proposals should explicitly address as many of the following as appropriate, preferably in this order: (a) descriptive title, (b) objectives, goals, and purposes, (c) importance of the topic, issue, or problem, (d) explanation of the basic format or structure of the session, with a brief rationale for the format, (e) listing of the presenter(s), by number not name for blind review (e.g., "Presenter 1"), with an explanation of each person's relevant background and role in the session, and (f) anticipated audience and kind of audience involvement. Limited program space may be available for these types of sessions.

Important Dates

Proposal Submission Deadline	May 1
Notification of Acceptance	July 31
Hotel Reservations	October 7
Join MWERA	October 7
Annual Meeting Registration	October 7
Papers to Session Chairs/Discussants	October 7
MWERA 2012 Annual Meeting	Nov. 7-10

Abstract

The abstract should be 100-150 words. The abstracts of accepted papers will be published in the *MWERA 2012 Annual Meeting Abstracts*, and may be available on the MWERA website. Use

clear, precise language that can be understood by readers outside of your discipline.

Session Format Descriptions

Paper Presentation

Paper sessions are intended to allow presenters the opportunity to make short, relatively formal presentations in which they summarize their papers to an audience. Three to five individual papers dealing with related topics are grouped into a single session running 1 hour 20 minutes. Each paper presentation is allowed approximately 15 minutes (depending on the number of presentations in a given session) to present the highlights of the paper. A Session Discussant is also allowed 10-15 minutes, following all papers, for comments, synthesis, and/or constructive feedback. A Session Chair moderates the entire session. Ideally, presenters should provide complete copies of their papers to all interested audience members or, if not feasible, should bring a one-page summary of the study highlights along with their contact information.

Poster

Poster sessions are intended to provide opportunities for interested individuals to participate in a dialogue with the presenter(s). Presenters are provided an area in which to display a table-top poster, ancillary handouts, or other A/V materials. Ideally, presenters should provide complete copies of their papers to all interested audience members or, if not feasible, should bring a one-page summary of the study highlights along with their contact information.

Symposium

A symposium is intended to provide an opportunity for examination of specific problems from a variety of perspectives. Symposium organizers are expected to identify the topic or issue, identify and ensure the participation of individual speakers who will participate in the session, prepare any necessary materials, and facilitate the session. It is suggested, that the speakers or symposium organizer will provide interested individuals with one (or more) papers relevant to and/or drawn from the symposium.

Workshop

Workshops are intended to provide an extended period of time during which the workshop leader helps participants develop or improve their ability to perform some process (e.g., how to provide clinical supervision, using the latest features of the Internet, or conduct an advanced statistical analysis). Organizers may request from 1½ to 3 hours, and are responsible for providing all necessary materials for participants. Most workshops are scheduled for Wednesday afternoon, although others may be scheduled throughout the conference.

Alternative Session

The form, topics, and format of alternative sessions are limited only by the imagination and creativity of the organizer. These options are intended to afford the most effective method or approach to disseminating scholarly work of a variety of types. Proposals for alternative sessions must include a brief rationale for the alternative being proposed and will be evaluated on their appropriateness to the topic and audience, their ability to meet the limitations of time, space, and expense for MWERA, and the basic quality or value of the topic. The organizer of alternative sessions is responsible for all major participants or speakers, developing and providing materials, and chairing the session.

Best Practices Forum

The Best Practices sessions provide opportunities for individuals or groups to present "best" or "promising" practices impacting both K-12 and higher education. These sessions highlight unique and innovative programs that have demonstrated promise for improving and enhancing educational practice. Presenters will be grouped by similar topics to facilitate discussion among the groups and audience.

Research in Progress

Research in Progress is a new session format this year that affords individual researchers, particularly graduate students and early-career scholars, the opportunity to submit evidence-based works that are not fully realized and/or completed, but have enough progression and fidelity to warrant dissemination and discussion among peers.

Division Chair Contact Information

A- Administration, Organization, & Leadership
This division is concerned with research, theory, development, and the improvement of practice in the organization and administration of education. *Division Chair:* **Dustin Derby**, Palmer College of Chiropractic, 1000 Brady Street, Davenport, IA 52803, *dustin.derby@palmer.edu*

B- Curriculum Studies
This division is concerned with curriculum and instructional practice, theory, and research. *Division Chair:* **Karen Brown**, Nazareth Academy, 6500 West 33rd Street, Berwyn, IL 60402, *kbrown@nazarethacademy.com*

C- Learning & Instruction
This division is concerned with theory and research on human abilities, learning styles, individual differences, problem solving, and other cognitive factors. *Division Chair:* **Marilyn Petty Glick**, Indiana University Kokomo, 2300 South Washington, Kokomo, IN 46904, *mpglick@iuk.edu*

D- Measurement & Research Methodology
This division is concerned with measurement, statistical methods, as well as both quantitative and qualitative research methods, as applied to educational research. *Division Chair:* **Kate Akers**, Kentucky Department of Education, 500 Metro St. 1st Floor, Frankfort, KY 40601, *kate.akers@education.ky.gov*

E- Counseling & Human Development
This division is concerned with the understanding of human development, special education, and the application and improvement of counseling theories, techniques, and training strategies. *Division Chair:* **Tracey Stuckey-Mickell**, The Ohio State University, 145B Ramseyer Hall, 29 W. Woodruff Ave., Columbus, OH 43120, *stuckey-mickell.1@osu.edu*

F- History & Historiography
This division is concerned with the findings and methodologies of historical research in education. *Division Chair:* **Casey Hurley**, Western Carolina University, 238 Killian Building, Cullowhee, NC 28723, *churley@wcu.edu*

G- Social Context of Education
This division is concerned with theory, practice, and research on social, moral, affective, and motivational characteristics and development, especially multicultural perspectives. *Division Chair:* **Xi Zhao**, Miami University, 819 S. College Ave., Oxford, OH, 45056, *zhaox3@muohio.edu*

H- Research, Evaluation, and Assessment in Schools
This division is concerned with research and evaluation to improve school practice, including program planning and implementation. *Division Chair:* **Janet Holt**, Northern Illinois University, 204 Gabel Hall, DeKalb, IL 60115, *jholt@niu.edu*

I- Education in the Professions
This division is concerned with educational practice, research, and evaluation in the professions (e.g., medicine, nursing, public health, business, law, and engineering). *Division Chair:* **Penny Soboleski**, Bowling Green State Univer-sity, 533 Education, Bowling Green, OH 43403, *pennys@bgsu.edu*

J- Postsecondary Education
This division is concerned with a broad range of issues related to two-year, four-year, and graduate education. *Division Chair:* **Katrina Daytner**, Western Illinois University, 115q Horrabin Hall, Macomb, IL 61455, *KM-Daytner@wiu.edu*

K- Teaching & Teacher Education
This division is concerned with theory, practice, and research related to teaching at all levels and in-service and pre-service teacher education, including field experience supervision and mentoring. *Division Chair:* **Sharon Valente**, Savannah College of Art and Design, 126 East Gaston Street, Savannah, GA, 31402, *drsvalente@gmail.com*

L- Educational Policy & Politics
This division is concerned with educational policy as well as political, legal, and fiscal matters related to education. *Division Chair:* **Lynda Leavitt**, Lindenwood University, 209 South Kingshighway, St. Charles, MO, *lleavitt@lindenwood.edu*

Mid-Western Educational Researcher
Call for Manuscripts

Mid-Western Educational Researcher is a peer-reviewed scholarly journal that publishes book reviews, point-counterpoints, and articles related to educational issues, practice, and research. Although the journal considers work based on action research, this work must be relevant to MWER readership and demonstrate rigor according to standard research conventions and practices. Membership in MWERA is not required to submit a manuscript for review. If your manuscript is accepted for publication, membership in MWERA is required. *MWER* (ISSN 1056-3887) is published quarterly by Mid-Western Educational Research Association through The Ohio State University. Additional special issues are published as needed.

The journal is inviting manuscripts for review not submitted for consideration or published elsewhere in the following four sections:

Book Reviews

Reviews of newly released or forthcoming books or other media (e.g., film, documentary, blog, software program) are of interest to *MWER* readership. Reviews should include: a complete citation in APA format, a rationale for why a review of the book or media is warranted, a summary of the book or media, an analysis of strengths and weaknesses, and a statement about the significance of the book or media for educational researchers and/or practitioners. A brief summary of the reviewer's background and reasons for interest in the book or media should be included in a separate paragraph. Reviews should be between 5-10 pages. Questions regarding this section should be directed to Susan Kushner Benson at snk@uakron.edu.

Point-Counterpoint

In this section issues of educational, pedagogical, or methodological significance will be explored from different viewpoints. Submissions should include two related manuscripts. The author(s) of the first manuscript presents a point of view on an issue and the author(s) of the second manuscript provides a different point of view on the same issue. To submit an idea for the Point-Counterpoint section, please submit a short proposal outlining the topic to be discussed, its significance, and who will be writing the point and counterpoint. Once the proposal is accepted, the point and counterpoint must be submitted as one document to the Editors within 60 days for peer review. Each manuscript should be no more than 15 pages in length including the title page and references. Questions regarding this section should be directed to Sandra Spickard Prettyman at ssandra@uakron.edu.

Research

This section seeks research-based manuscripts addressing diverse issues in education. The journal does not subscribe to any particular methodology, and publishes quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, and meta-analysis studies. Manuscripts should include an abstract of 150 words or less and be no more than 30 pages in length including title page, abstract, references, tables, and figures. All tables and figures must be in a workable text format. Questions regarding this section should be directed to Xin Liang at liang@uakron.edu or Jennifer Milam at jenn.milam@uakron.edu.

This section is devoted to publishing graduate student research, literature reviews, and theoretical and methodological discussions. The journal does not subscribe to any particular methodology, and publishes quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods and meta-analysis studies. To submit a work to this section, the graduate student must be the sole or primary author of the work and must be a graduate student at the time of submission. Verification of graduate student status will be required if the manuscript is accepted for publication. Manuscripts should include an abstract of 150 words or less and be no more than 30 pages in length including title page, abstract, references, tables, and figures. All tables and figures must be in a workable text format. Questions regarding this section should be directed to Kristin Koskey at koskey@uakron.edu.

General Formatting Guidelines

All submissions must follow the following set of guidelines:

- All submissions must be a WORD document
- Inclusion of a title page consisting of the author's name, affiliation, address, e-mail, phone, and fax. This information should ONLY be provided on the title page.
- Headings, citations, tables, digital object identifier names (doi; see ch. 7.01), and figures should conform to the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.)
- All text should be double spaced in 12-point Times New Roman font. Tables can be in no less than 10-point font.
- 1.5" margins on all sides
- 3-5 suggested keywords
- If human subjects were used, provide a statement indicating IRB approval

Submit all materials via e-mail to:

MWER@uakron.edu

The subject line must include MWER followed by the section submitting to (e.g., MWER Book Review). Submissions will be subjected to a peer review process.

All manuscripts will be acknowledged electronically upon receipt. Please note that authors are responsible to submit manuscripts that are free of grammatical and mechanical errors. Manuscripts will be initially screened for format and fit. Appropriate manuscripts will be subjected to blind peer review. Reviews take approximately 4-8 weeks from the time of submission. The editors reserve the right to make minor modifications to produce a more concise and clear article. Authors acknowledge by virtue of their submission to the journal that they will consent to have their work available internationally through the EBSCO portal, as per agreement with MWERA.