

VARIATION IN FORM: THE AGENCY IN BEHAVIORAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH

(NOTE FROM THE EDITOR)

~ Lorenzo Cherubini

Dear Colleagues,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the 2011 on-line edition of the *AABSS Journal*. Our membership recently enjoyed another successful conference in tantalizing Las Vegas, Nevada, where we met as a collective to discuss, debate, and ponder the multifaceted issues related to the behavioral and social sciences. Once again the conference resonated with conversations related to our scholarship and inquiry, and in the process, created spaces for us to enjoy and explore research in its most broadest sense. While we took advantage of these educative spaces (with apologies to John Dewey) to translate theoretical concepts, provoke thought, and inspire critical considerations, we also took advantage of the opportunity to honor our individual and collective voices as behavioral and social scientists. In doing so, we felt empowered and encouraged by the intimate and invitational tone that this conference is now renowned for.

Moreover, our membership has benefitted from those who have chosen to share their work in this peer-reviewed journal. To these authors we owe our gratitude for the opportunity to use their work as a source to ruminate further our own epistemic, ontological and/or philosophical paradigms. Regardless of our own scholarly inclinations, the manuscripts in this year's edition of the journal not only immerse us in the rich content of the work, but allow each and every one of us to be participants in the critical dialogue in the process of making sense of the respective observations.

As you read the manuscripts, I am sure that you will note how each individual author brings their own rich experiences as scholars, practitioners and/or graduate students to the dialogue that characterizes our membership. In each case, the author's work is determined to create a unique space that at times lends itself to matters of professional development, perhaps embraces controversy, but in all instances, exposes their research to a platform that transitions their work to a larger audience.

For me, if I may, the true merit of our work – at least those strands that bring us together in this membership – is in *the variation of the form* of scholarship that these papers represent. Stated differently, our shared interests manifest a scholarly depth of thinking that explores distinct considerations of criticality. Perhaps you will agree that within this commonality we do not, generally, advantage a certain type of disposition or paradigm; instead, regardless of how we approach scholarship we as a membership interrogate more deeply those issues that surface and resonate in our social, political, economic, intellectual, spiritual and emotional lives. A result, thus, is a climate of

scholarship that creates a sense of cohesion. Such a cohesion, I might add, that is felt as much by the most seasoned and accomplished among us, as it is by the novice and emerging scholars. These articles, and I propose the discussions hosted in the meeting rooms throughout the conference, very much enable scholarship capacity amongst our membership. While the papers clearly represent functional areas of difference in their concentration, conceptual frameworks, and outcomes and implications the issues raised by these authors and our membership in general consequentially shape the behavior and social sciences discourse. I can say in no uncertain terms that this is a feature that draws me and the majority of others to our conference each and every year.

Moreover, the *variation* in the form of scholarship presents the nuances and complexities that often lie beneath the surface of behavior and social sciences. This context may help to explain the fascination with the diverse approaches to learning, social life, and human agency that is characteristic of these papers and the work of our association.

Consider the work of Jason Zimmerman entitled, *Gender Differences in Household Production*, that documents the nature of division between spouses as it relates to household tasks. The article represents a rather unique discussion of the delicate intersection between gender, wages, employment and the number of children in the respective households. The second article, *Effect of Distance Learning on Undergraduate Students' IT Self-Efficacy and Anxiety Levels*, presents a paradigm of applied research that investigates how distance learning impacts undergraduate students' levels of efficacy

and anxiety. Harry Legum, Brian Schmitt, Rolande Murray, Beverly O'Bryant, Mary Owens-Southall, Abby Byrnes, and Rhonda Jeter employ control and experimental groups in a comprehensive mixed-methods analysis to present the relationships between variables and participants. The results are certainly noteworthy. Jessica Moorman and Anne Bowker, in *The University Facebook Experience: The Role of Social Networking on the Quality of Interpersonal Relationships*, present the findings from a large-scale research project that examines the relationship between the use of social networking, social interactions, and participants' psychological adjustments. The article further presents an intriguing context related to self-esteem. Mikiyasu Hakoama and Shotaro Hakoyama's article, *The Impact of Cell Phone Use on Social Networking and Development Among College Students*, recognizes the growing prevalence of cell phone use in modern culture and society. The paper discusses the multiple interpretations of the findings as they relate to various aspects of cell phone use. The next article, with a focus on applied research, is entitled *Predicting Leisure Satisfaction: A Comparative Analysis of the Agency and Communion Model with the Five-Factor Model of Personality*. Dave Korotkov, Heather McLean and Lauren Hamilton explore the predictability of various traits and variables in light of leisure and life satisfaction. Especially distinctive in the paper is the concept of personality and its influence of leisure satisfaction. In *Cognitive Brain Deficits Associated with Alcohol Abuse: Treatment Implications*, Frank Norton and Lavania Halay begin by reviewing the pertinent literature dealing with the brain, alcohol abuse, treatment outcomes and behavioral changes. The paper then

provides a case study and therapeutic interventions to assist clinicians in their practice-treatments. Cubie Bragg's work reviews the health disparities that exist in populations of minority men, the history of the barbershop and matters related to health care screening. *The Black Barbershop: Increasing Health Awareness among Minority Men*, also discusses a specific barbershop screening program in Maryland as an example of addressing the health issues of minority men. Mikiyasu Hakoama and Brian Ready then bring attention to the seldom-studied notion relating specifically to the impact of fathering. Their applied research study, entitled *Father Quality, Father-Child Relationships, and Child's Developmental Outcomes*, examines the impact of fathering on college students' academic and psychosocial development through a survey conducted in a mid-size, Midwestern university. This edition of the 2011 journal closes with Jennifer Allen and Joseph Morgan's excellent paper, *What are Coroners Saying about their Jobs? An Investigation of Coroners in the United States*. The study surveyed coroners from across the United States about their demographics and working relationships with various criminal justice personnel. The study documents the self-perceptions of the participants, and how the education, training and treatment of coroners contributes to a potentially devaluation of their roles.

Again, the richness inherent in these manuscripts and as was evidenced by the conference presentations this past February hold a promise that the variation of our work does not necessarily map onto predetermined theoretical or methodological lenses or patterns. Such a variation does not weaken our ability to speak legitimately to our

areas of expertise; on the contrary, the variation encourages us to more forcefully tease out the responses and representations that frame, explain, and/or challenge our analytical lenses. Herein rests the promise of our work...and herein is the impetus for our annual gathering.

I want to express a genuine thanks to the members of the *AABSS Journal* Editorial Board who volunteer to put their hurried days on hold for a little while every year to read and review the many manuscripts that are submitted for consideration. This year in particular I can attest on their behalf to the difficult decisions that had to be made given the top-notch caliber of scholarship each paper presented. I want to acknowledge each Editorial Board member, including: Dr. Norma Winston (The University of Tampa), Dr. Robert Griffore (Michigan State University), Dr. Joseph Sclafani (University of Tampa), Dr. Paul Terry (University of South Florida (Polytechnic)), Dr. Brian Schmitt (Coppin State University), and Professor Robert Towley (Indiana University). On behalf of the Editorial Board I take this opportunity to recognize Dr. Norma Winston (President of the Association of Behavior and Social Sciences) for her courageous leadership and endless efforts to make our conference experience more enjoyable and stimulating each and every year. I also want to congratulate Dr. David Korotkov who was appointed as the Editor of the *Perspectives Journal* this past year. Dr. Korotkov is an accomplished scholar, esteemed member of the AABSS, and most deserving of this role.

On behalf of the Editorial Board of the *AABSS Journal* and the *Perspectives Journal*, I invite you to consider submitting your scholarship for consideration in the

2012 edition. Just as we applaud the variation of scholarship represented in this collection, so too we anticipate learning from and exploring your work. Although I can relate to the sense of vulnerability and perhaps even resistance in exposing one's research endeavors to the critical appraisal of peers, I assure you that the peer-review process is meant to be an educative one. We exist to serve your scholarship.

Enjoy the journal!!