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Quest for Kinesiology in Higher Education

Diane L. Gill

As I begin my term as Editor of *Quest*, I submit this editorial to outline my vision for *Quest*. First, I must thank the Board of Directors of the National Association for Kinesiology and Physical Education (NAKPEHE) for entrusting me with the editorial role and give a special thank-you to my immediate predecessor, David Wiggins, for his editorial leadership during the last three years. I will continue to call on him and the other members of the Editorial Board through my term. My vision for *Quest* draws from the journal's roots and traditions, and, thus, I begin with a brief review of the history of *Quest*. Then, I will clarify the mission and scope, and present a vision of *Quest* for kinesiology in higher education. And, I invite all professionals who are committed to kinesiology in higher education to join me in our quest.

Brief History

As stated on official documents and on the cover of each issue, *Quest* is the official journal of NAKPEHE. *Quest* was founded in 1963 as a joint publication of the National Association for Physical Education of College Women and the National College Physical Education for Men. In 1979, those two associations merged to form the National Association for Physical Education (NAPEHE), and in 2004 NAPEHE added "Kinesiology" to become NAKPEHE. NAKPEHE continues to "own" *Quest* and is responsible for the editorial office, and Human Kinetics has been contracted to serve as publisher since 1979. *Quest* also has a connection with the American Academy of Kinesiology and Physical Education (AAKPE) as The Academy Papers have been published as an annual issue of *Quest* since 1983.

Scope and Mission

The scope and purpose of *Quest* is well-stated on the NAKPEHE website as follows:

Quest is the leading scholarly journal for professionals in kinesiology and physical education in higher education today. Noted scholars in our field write about challenging issues and concerns facing professionals in higher education crossing disciplinary boundaries. Interdisciplinary perspectives are encouraged.

Quest's primary purpose is to publish manuscripts that address issues and concerns relevant and meaningful to kinesiology & physical education in higher education. The journal does not publish original research reports but welcomes manuscripts that are based on, complement, or review empirical research related to our profession. Both theoretical and practice-based articles are considered.

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That stated purpose and mission is much the same as described in “From the Editors” (Donna Mae Miller & Elwood Craig Davis) in monograph 1, December 1963. In that editorial they answered the question, “Why this type of publication?” by citing the need for a *challenging* professional publication. More specifically, they called for manuscripts that mentally challenge, that effectively address critical issues, that present novel and creative ideas, and that challenge favorite assumptions. Additionally, they cited calls for efforts to improve professional practice and programs, and to embrace long-neglected problems.

That call for manuscripts that challenge and address critical issues remains central to the mission of *Quest*. As past-editor David Wiggins noted in his 2009 annual report, *Quest* is unique and has a market on “think pieces” and broadly conceived works that analyze the kinesiology and physical education profession. Indeed, *Quest* is *the* journal for challenging scholarly papers that address issues in kinesiology. A brief review of past issues will reveal articles that offer theoretical advances, new insights on old issues, innovative research directions, and methodological challenges, with both complementary and contrary views on educational programs and professional practices.

Although *Quest* invites a broad range of articles and approaches, I also want to highlight its boundaries. Specifically, *Quest* is *not* the outlet for original data-based research. *Quest* does not publish data-based research, regardless of the type of research or whether the data are presented as numbers or narrative. Scholars have many outlets for data-based research; indeed nearly all other scholarly journals in kinesiology and related sub-disciplinary fields emphasize original data-based research. By eliminating data-based research articles, *Quest* devotes full attention to other forms of scholarship within kinesiology.

As well as highlighting papers that present challenges, insights, and directions in kinesiology and its sub-disciplinary areas, *Quest* is a place to cross those sub-disciplinary boundaries in presenting kinesiology scholarship. In my view, *Quest* is a particularly appropriate outlet for, and promoter of, integrative scholarship. All four forms of scholarship described by Boyer (1990)—Discovery, Integration, Application and Teaching—are essential in kinesiology and inextricably connected. The scholarship of integration, as defined by Boyer (1990, pp 18–19) involves

. . . scholars who give meaning to isolated facts, putting them in perspective
 . . . making connections across disciplines, placing specialties in larger context, illuminating data in a revealing way, often educating non-specialists, too . . . serious, disciplined work that seeks to interpret, draw together, and bring new insight. . . . It is through connectedness that research ultimately is made authentic.

As I have argued (Gill, 2007), integration is the missing but essential link for kinesiology in higher education. Integration defines our unique scholarly contribution, links discovery to application, and provides the scholarly base that takes practice from technology to a profession. *Quest* is the ideal publication for integrative scholarship as described by Boyer—scholarship that gives meaning, that illuminates, that brings new insight, and most of all, scholarship that makes connections.

Quest for Kinesiology

Connection is a key theme in my vision for *Quest*. I hope that *Quest* will help connect scholars and professionals across kinesiology. NAKPEHE is an organization for professionals across kinesiology and its mission is to foster leadership and professional development in kinesiology. Two other professional organizations share that reach across kinesiology and commitment to advancing kinesiology in higher education: AAKPE and the newer American Kinesiology Association (AKA). See the respective websites for more information on the scope and activities of each (NAKPEHE: <http://www.nakpehe.org>; AAKPE: <http://www.aakpe.org>; AKA: <http://www.americankinesiology.org>). Despite differences in membership and activities, all three organizations share a commitment to advancing kinesiology scholarship and professional development.

As stated on its website, AAKPE is an honorary organization composed of Active, Emeritus, and International Fellows who have made significant contributions to the fields of kinesiology and physical education. Unlike NAKPEHE, which has open membership to anyone with a commitment to kinesiology in higher education, AAKPE is an honorary organization with a limited number of fellows. In addition to honoring fellows, AAKPE's purpose is to "encourage and promote the study and educational applications of the art and science of human movement and physical activity." NAKPEHE and AAKPE share common roots, traditions, and visions for kinesiology. As noted earlier, The Academy Papers from the annual meeting of AAKPE are published in *Quest*. However, in recent years, the two organizations have had little connection. In my vision, *Quest*, which publishes major addresses by leading scholars of both organizations and emphasizes scholarship that addresses issues that are central to kinesiology, will help to reconnect them.

In contrast to NAKPEHE and AAKPE, members of the new AKA are academic departments or institutions rather than individuals. According to the mission statement at the website, AKA promotes and enhances kinesiology as a unified field of study and advances its many applications. AKA is advocating for kinesiology at national and international levels as well as by providing resource materials and leadership and educational opportunities.

In my vision, *Quest* can strengthen connections among these organizations and, in doing so, serve as a forum for all kinesiology professionals. This journal is an obvious forum for communicating about the activities, resources, and programs of these organizations, and reaching out to professionals and future professionals in kinesiology. *Quest* is a NAKPEHE journal, but *Quest* is really a journal for all who share a commitment to kinesiology. As a kinesiology professional, or future professional, you can be part of the *Quest* for kinesiology in higher education. If you are not already a NAKPEHE member, go to the website and join (AAKPE members note that you can join NAKPEHE at a reduced rate). As a NAKPEHE member, you will not only be my "boss" as *Quest* editor, but you will also be taking an active role in shaping leadership and professional development in kinesiology in higher education. Check the websites for resources and go to the NAKPEHE and AAKPE conferences (AAKPE conferences are open to all and not limited to fellows); be sure that your department is an active participant taking advantage of the resources and programs offered by AKA. Most of all, take an active role in *Quest* by submitting your scholarship, reviewing the work of others, and contributing to

the larger conversation on kinesiology in higher education. Send your ideas and suggestions for *Quest* to me anytime; I'll be looking for them.

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