



GUEST EDITORIAL

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THE PHENOMENON OF CHANGE: A MOUNTAIN OR A RIVER?

A new look for the AANA Journal

The quintessential business of the *AANA Journal* is the generation and dissemination of ideas. This means that clinicians, faculty, and students are essential participants in determining the resultant intellectual rigor of the enterprise. Because of the ever-increasing demands of the specialty, the informational blitzkrieg associated with coming to know what one needs to know, and the evidence-based practices that underscore our interventions, the role of the *Journal* continues to escalate in importance.

Recently I read a national, representative study of American adults performed by the National Science Board, assessing public attitudes and understanding of fundamentals of science. Depending on your point of view, the results are either very good or very bad. For example, 40% of the population describes itself as very interested in scientific discovery and new technologies (look at the popularity of Public Broadcasting Service's NOVA programming and cable television's Discovery Channel). Interest in healthcare discoveries ranked highest. However, the same study revealed chasms between interest and understanding. Fewer than 1 in 10 could define a molecule nor could tell which was smaller, a molecule or a cell. Less than half knew that the Earth

revolved around the sun once a year; a similar percentage thought that humans and dinosaurs coexisted at one time. Twenty-five percent believe that sound travels faster than light and that the sun orbits the Earth. One wonders where adults out of school get their information. But let's focus on nurse anesthetists for the moment by employing a favorite metaphor of mine.

Knowledge: A mountain or a river?

Our theoretical and practical knowledge base for the practice of nurse anesthesia can either be viewed as a mountain of information for the user to climb, or as an ever-changing river of theories, notions, and conceptions through which one must constantly navigate. In contemporary biomedical science education (and we are firmly amidst that domain), we often fall short in confronting imbalances inherent in each of these perspectives.

No matter what educational theory you embrace, most recognize that we learn most easily when the learning experience is applied toward solving real world problems using methods that measure the effectiveness of a given intervention. Clearly there is a mountain of information that requires dissemination, integration, and implementation for a practitioner to be successful. Equally as clear is the notion that there is a continuously flowing river of new ideas resulting in a positive evolution of care.

The *AANA Journal* makes every effort to contribute to the stream of knowledge that you must negotiate and incorporate into mainline practice. Criticisms abound that we publish not enough (or too much) research, that time from acceptance of a manuscript to publication is too long, that the review process is too

critical and proves too daunting a prospect. But ensuring that the mountain is ascended and that the stream is negotiated is at times akin to the Sisyphean labor where a large stone is repeatedly pushed up a steep mountain, only to roll back each time the summit is approached.

Why redesign the Journal?

The *AANA Journal* has made changes in response to the needs of its consumers. In this new issue you will note a cover redesign felt to bring it up to date and more attractive to the reader. A number of changes will result in a better economy of space to accommodate an increasing number of manuscripts. This is primarily the result in a change of type font, decreasing the length of featured columns, and publishing research abstracts from the AANA Annual Meeting in alternative media. To bridge the research-practice gap and respond to criticisms that we have become too research oriented, we plan to emphasize publishing highly relevant clinical reports. In addition, we are moving forth with our plan to put the *Journal* on the AANA Web site, a goal achievable in this calendar year.

Enhancing our scholarship

Most importantly, we depend upon and urge you, the consumers of the *AANA Journal*, to send us manuscripts whose intent is to substantiate and expand our theoretical knowledge base, and to inform and critique our practice. That is our responsibility as citizens of a professional community intimately wedded to knowing science. It is our responsibility to work a bit harder at enhancing our scholarship. To that end the *AANA Journal*, and the profession at large, will benefit.