

# Editorial Introduction

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## A New Face, a New Name

Welcome to our first issue of 2008. As you likely noticed we have a new look for the journal. First, we have a new color—ultraviolet—to signify the new volume. (Recall that each year we use the next color along the spectrum of the rainbow to mark the year’s issues). Second, we have a revised cover that showcases our new logo (the four quadrants surrounded by circles) and a new title: *Journal of Integral Theory and Practice*. This is less a new title and more a clarification of our previous title, *AQAL: Journal of Integral Theory and Practice*. Over the last two years we have found that this full title has lent itself to a variety of labels: *AQAL*, *AQAL Journal*, and *Journal of Integral Theory and Practice*. Thus, by dropping *AQAL* and making our subtitle our full title we aim to provide a name that is less ambiguous and more academic in tone. Not to mention that “AQAL” already serves as a signifier for the Integral framework. No doubt many will continue to refer to our journal as “AQAL Journal” as these kinds of short hand phrases are both catchy and efficient. We are fine with this but will officially refer to the journal as *Journal of Integral Theory and Practice* or JITP for short.

Another exciting change we have made to make JITP more professional and academic is to make available a hard copy subscription to individuals and institutions. So not only can an individual access the journal online they can have it delivered to their home, office, or university library. We already have had many people and a handful of institutions subscribe. We plan on building our subscription base over the coming year to further establish JITP as the premier source of academic content, discourse, and debate related to Integral Theory.

## Integral Theory as Academic Contender

The move to making JITP available in both soft and hard copies signifies a larger trend: Integral Theory’s emergence as a viable academic contender. For me this is one of the most exciting developments in the Integral movement. I have dedicated my professional career to establishing Integral Theory as a legitimate academic field. I have focused on four main projects to accomplish this: a journal, an online master’s program, an international conference, and a research center. In reviewing these projects and their affiliated efforts we can gain a sense of how far Integral Theory has come as an academic discipline in just the last five years and obtain a sense of the trajectory this exciting new approach is on. Celebrating these accomplishments here, as you will see, will set the stage for highlighting the significance of this issue.

### **Academic Journal**

First, I established this academic peer-reviewed and theoretically vetted journal in 2003 and began developing the first two issues, which appeared in 2006. Over the last two years we have published 80 articles and 2 resources (for a total of 1,852 pages of applied Integral content). And for the year ahead we already have enough articles to fill our remaining three issues. Not to mention, we have already begun to fill two special issues in the works for 2009 on the Integral Psychograph and Integral Coaching. So clearly there is a lot of academic material being generated by Integral scholar-practitioners from around the world. Also, our friends over at *Integral Review* created their academic journal in 2005, which has emerged as an important source of content on Integral Studies in general and has valuable articles that focus on Integral Theory. In short, over the last few years an enormous amount of academic material has been published on Integral Theory.

### **Academic Programs**

Second, in the summer of 2005 I began putting a proposal together at John F. Kennedy University to create an online Master of Arts degree solely devoted to Integral Theory. In 2006 we got approval to begin a one-year certificate (10 courses/25 units) in Integral Theory. This certificate doubles as the first year of the Masters. The following fall (August 2007) we received full accreditation. We are now moving into our third year of the program. Each year since its inception we have received more applications for admissions than the previous year. Beginning this fall we will have around 65 students enrolled in the program.

Also in the summer of 2005, at the same time that I was working with JFKU to create the Integral Theory program, Randy Martin and I began developing an Integral certificate and an Integral track in Organization Management and Development at Fielding Graduate University. These two offerings began fall 2006 and as with the JFKU program have enjoyed steady growth and interest since their launch.

In fall of 2006 I approached Allan Combs, who had recently been hired by California Institute of Integral Studies, about setting up an Integral track in their online Ph.D. program in Transformative Studies. Recently, Allan Combs announced that this track will begin fall 2008 and will contain a course on Integral Methodological Pluralism and require students to use Integral Theory as the basis for their dissertation research (e.g., honoring first-, second-, and third-person perspectives; and recognizing the developmental dimension of individuals). In summary, since 2006 a number of academic programs at the graduate school level (certificates, tracks, and a full master's program) based on Integral Theory have been launched and are enjoying success. Thus, prospective integral students have an increasing number of choices for their integral education.

### **Academic Conference**

Third, for many years I have envisioned the existence of a regular academic conference devoted to Integral Theory: a conference that would serve as a global gathering of Integral scholar-practitioners. In fact, I recall the early meetings of Integral Institute, in 2000 and 2001, where this was a common suggestion made by participants: "Let's have a major conference!" While such suggestions were always greeted with head nodding and enthusiasm no one stepped forward to organize such a major event. So for over 8 years this idea has been floating in the Integral air.

In 2007 I submitted to JFKU, as part of the five-year vision for the Integral Theory program, the idea of JFKU hosting an international Integral conference by 2010. Thus, when my colleague and friend Mark Forman approached me last summer about doing a major conference on Integral Theory at JFKU I jumped at the chance.

When Mark and I sent out the call for papers this last September we hoped to get 50-60 submissions. We were amazed at the overwhelming response! In total we received over 120 great submissions. As a result we restructured the conference to be able to showcase the top 100 individual presentations. In addition, we have set up 12 panels on important topics relevant to the future of Integral Theory (e.g., “Does Integral = Ken Wilber?” “Integral Theory in Academia,” “The Integral Body,” and “Integral Education”). There will also be around 20 poster presentations. Thus, there will be over 120 academics from all over the world presenting at the conference either in individual presentations, poster sessions, or on panels. At this point the conference is almost sold out at 450 attendees. So clearly, the academic world was ready for such a conference and arguably it was several years overdue. JFKU and Integral Institute will host this conference every other year. Now there will be an ongoing venue for academics to showcase their Integral applications, theoretical musings, and IMP research. For more details see our website: [www.integraltheoryconference.org](http://www.integraltheoryconference.org).

### **Academic Research**

Lastly, for years I have imagined supporting graduate students the world over who want to use the Integral model in their studies and use Integral Methodological Pluralism in their research. As noted below, I recall all too painfully what it was like trying to incorporate the AQAL model in my graduate studies, going against the cultural grain of my alma mater. Consequently, when I developed the online program at JFKU I built into it funding for establishing an Integral Research Center. I am happy to announce that in conjunction with this special issue on Integral Research I am launching the Integral Research Center at JFKU in partnership with Integral Institute.

The Integral Research Center (IRC) is committed to the development and promotion of informal and formal multimethod research that utilizes first-, second- and third-person practices informed by the AQAL model. As a result the IRC is a pioneer of developing and applying Integral Methodological Pluralism. The center accomplishes this through a variety of activities including: providing \$20,000 annually for research grants for graduate students in the online M.A. in Integral Theory; doing original research using six methodologies on the transformative effects of Integral Education; providing a discussion forum for graduate students interested in or doing Integral Research in their thesis or dissertation; promoting Integral Field Studies courses that provide individuals the opportunity to practice real time applications of Integral principles and methods and an opportunity to bear witness to grassroots organizations utilizing “folk” Integral approaches in the global south; publishing academic articles and original research through special issues of JITP; supporting scholar-practitioners through the providing of various resources (e.g., articles, charts, examples, case studies, lists of methods, ways to synthesize and integrate data); and sponsoring an Integral Research track at the biennial conference on Integral Theory, which provides researchers a chance to present their findings, methods, and ideas around Integral Research. Thus, the IRC is committed to supporting the global community of Integral scholar-practitioners. Be sure to visit our website: [www.integralresearchcenter.org](http://www.integralresearchcenter.org).

This most recent academic development, combined with the other three outlined above, signals a whole new phase of the Integral movement: the development of a global community of the adequate grounded in the tradition of academic discourse. This emerging academic community now has the Lower-Right support of traditional academic institutions such as journals, programs, conferences, and a research center. Consequently, Integral Theory can now more than ever begin to increase its status as a legitimate academic approach to the complex problems we face in our community and across the globe. Finally, there is an emergent network of academics and practitioners whom are working together to share their Integral insights and bring forward their critical observations. The establishment of Integral Research as a new approach to mixed methods is one of the most important contributions towards legitimizing Integral Theory. It accomplishes this by providing Integral Theory with the methodological means by which to critically and empirically explore its claims, refine its theoretical distinctions, and effectively apply itself to more disciplinary contexts.

## **The Emergence of Integral Research**

My interest in Integral approaches to research began as a doctoral student working on my dissertation. I was using the AQAL model as the basis for my dissertation on Integral Ecology. Whenever a fellow student asked me, “What methodology are you using for your dissertation?” I was always perplexed. My confusion stemmed from the fact that I was doing a theoretical dissertation using Integral Methodological Pluralism as a heuristic for organizing the dozens of schools of ecology, environmental studies, and ecological thought. So I was not using a single methodology (e.g., phenomenology, narrative analysis, intuitive inquiry) to conduct original subject-based research through methods such as surveys, interviews, or participant observation. Instead I was analyzing the many methodologies and practices that different approaches to nature used. In effect, I did a meta-method analysis and then used this analysis to present a way of integrating hundreds of different schools of thought and practice. However, I always felt odd when explaining my methodology to individuals, sensing that what I was doing was not considered real research since ostensibly I never had to leave the library. Never mind the fact that my program did not even require I take a methods course to get a Ph.D. As I studied the informal and formal methods of dozens of ecological approaches I became intensely interested in what I have now come to call Integral Research. Thus, working on my own dissertation set me on a path of developing a clear approach to using AQAL in general and IMP in particular as a meta-methodology for conducting original research, especially for masters and doctoral students.

Since 1987 over fifty-five master thesis and dissertations have been done drawing heavily or exclusively on Ken Wilber’s writings or Integral Theory (for a downloadable list of each of these and their abstracts visit [www.integralresearchcenter.org](http://www.integralresearchcenter.org)). Not surprisingly the primary areas of focus have included (in order of prevalence): religion and spirituality; psychology, psychiatry, and psychotherapy; environmental studies; education; and health and medicine. Yet none of these efforts have had the benefit of being able to use an established Integral methodology. In most cases these efforts use Integral Theory or some aspect of it (e.g., the four quadrants) as an interpretive framework within which they make sense of positions, worldviews, and data from various approaches. In some cases, scholars have used Integral Theory to help them organize and augment their own original research efforts. In spite of these pioneering efforts, I have often heard graduate students exclaim some version of, “I want to use Integral Theory but my

committee doesn't know what it is and I don't know how to actually use it for research!" With this distress call echoing in my mind and resonating in my heart I set about establishing a new field of research.

In the fall of 2004 I began teaching a six-month qualitative research course based primarily on Clark Moustakas' approach to phenomenology. While I enjoyed this deep exploration of phenomenology, my Integral commitments wanted to do something more interesting with a research course. Also, since this was a core course for master students in a non-clinical Integral Psychology program, I wanted students to have wider methodological exposure. Thus I set about to create a six-month course entitled Integral Research, which I began teaching the next year (fall 2005) and have taught successively for the last three years. I now teach a version of it in two online programs.

It would be fair to say that upon teaching that first course I had no idea what I was doing or how to do what I wanted to: teach students how to use six methods (two methods each from first-person, second-person, and third-person methodologies) in a single research project on a topic of their choice. At the end of the first year I wrote an article ("Integral Research: A Multi-Method Approach to Investigating Phenomena") based on my experience teaching the course, for *Constructivism in the Human Sciences* (2006, vol. 11 nos. 1-2, pp. 79-107). In fact, many sections of this article have been revised and serve as the basis for my article in this issue. In many respects that first article marks the conception of Integral Research as a distinct approach to mixed methods research available to the academic community.

In that first article that appeared in *Constructivism* I stated:

In short, IMP provides a powerful framework that can coordinate multiple methods of research as well as integrate their findings into a coherent understanding of any phenomena investigated. When IMP is used in this way, the result is a new approach to mixed methods research called *Integral Research*.

Integral Research (IR) is an emerging approach to mixed methods that is explicitly grounded in Integral Theory and makes use of its post-metaphysical position and its practice of Integral Methodological Pluralism to provide a multi-method approach.... (pp. 88-89, emphasis in original)

I feel this still is a good starting point for defining Integral Research. However, this current issue and the next one—also focused on Integral Research—attest to the fact that Integral Research is no longer just the name of a demanding course in a master's program but represents a larger community effort to develop innovative mixed method approaches based on Integral Theory. If that article was the public conception then this issue (along with the next) marks the birth of Integral Research as an emerging field of mixed methods.

## **In This Issue**

By bringing together over a dozen articles (across these two issues) exploring aspects of Integral Research I hope to not only further establish Integral Research as a unique approach to

investigating the complexity of phenomena but to also make the development and definition of Integral Research a collective effort. It will only be through the effort of many kinds of Integral researchers in collaboration and dialogue that we will be able to identify the many effective ways to combine and interpret various methods (both zone specific and multi-zone) within a single research project or across multiple studies.

We open the issue with Timothy Black's "Applying AQAL to the Quantitative/Qualitative Debate in Social Sciences Research." This article helps set the context for the both issues by highlighting how the AQAL model can overcome some of the unnecessary debates that have defined much of the conversation around qualitative and quantitative methods. Black points out how many aspects of these debates dissolve when approached from the broad empiricism of IMP. Black also articulates the importance of an injunctive emphasis within research as a means of overcoming ideological differences.

Building on the context setting of Black's article, my own article, "Integral Ecological Research," formally introduces Integral Research. First, I provide an overview of mixed method research and IMP and then position Integral Research as the result of using IMP within a mixed methods approach. This article presents the Integral Mathematics, methodological techniques, and common validity issues associated with each of the eight zones. Then to illustrate Integral Research more concretely I examine two integrative approaches to ecological phenomena: animal consciousness and sustainability. By showing how Integral Research could augment existing mixed method approaches I aim to help bring into focus the value of IMP for addressing complex issues such as how can we say something meaningful about animal interiors or how can structural assessment (zones #2 and #4) support sustainability projects.

Next, Jordan Luftig's "Living for Playing, Playing for a Living" provides the first published account of the results of an Integral Research project. Luftig wrote this article in the context of the first Integral Research course I taught. For years I have used it as an exemplar paper for subsequent students in all my Integral Research courses to read, so I am very pleased to publish it here and share it with a wider audience. Luftig's article demonstrates that it is not only feasible to do a six method research project in a six month period but that it is a worthwhile endeavor enacting the many facets of a rich topic such as the transformative power of play. Since graduating from the Integral Psychology program at JFKU Luftig has become faculty within the online program in Integral Theory and is playing a crucial role in developing the Integral Research Center. This article more than any other in this issue will be essential reading for graduate students who want to use three or more methods in any research project.

Moving from Luftig's weaving of multiple methods across six zones, we then turn to a more focused exploration of a single method in zone #2. In "On Operationalizing Aspects of Altitude" Zachary Stein and Katie Heikkinen—both doctoral students in Harvard's Graduate School of Education—introduce the Lectical™ Assessment System (LAS). Given the emphasis Integral Theory places on constructive developmental theory (i.e., stages of vertical development) and the notion of altitude, this is an important article. Not only does it situate the LAS within IMP but it articulates many of the key conceptual and methodological issues involved with creating psychographs. All too often psychographs are talked about within Integral circles in a general and abstract way. Stein and Heikkinen provide a much needed concrete exploration of the issues

and considerations with actually constructing psychographs based on psychometric testing. It is worth mentioning that the JFKU program in Integral Theory will be using the LAS as part of its overall assessment and research of student transformation during their enrollment in the master's program.

Next, Clint Fuhs' "Towards a Vision of Integral Leadership" introduces a new methodology that can be used by Integral Researchers to analyze any kind of text (e.g., articles or books). This method is called Quadrivial Analysis and is particularly suitable for conducting Integral literature reviews for research projects or it can be used as a method for a study onto itself—as is the case here where Fuhs examines eight leadership books and reports his interesting findings. I can imagine researchers taking the basic idea of Fuhs' method and extending it into other contexts beyond book analysis: using "text" in the broader hermeneutic sense. Not only does Fuhs present a new method and report the results of his original research but he provides an important example of how we can take distinctions within Integral Theory such as quadrants/quadrivia and build methodological techniques out of them. In this sense Fuhs' article is an invitation to all of us to develop new Integral practices for doing innovative research.

Another example of a new Integral method is presented in Cindy Lou Golin's "Integral Life Practice Inquiry." In this article Golin introduces a form of inquiry she developed for use in her online course in Integral Life Practice. This method builds on Bill Torbert's work in Action Inquiry by using cycles of action and feedback for the development, maintenance, and refinement of an individual's personal ILP. Not only does Golin, like Fuhs, provide us with an example of a new method but she illustrates its value by sharing with us examples from her classroom. In addition, her article serves as a case study of how one might go about using real-time research as part of classroom pedagogy. In other words, Golin illustrates the value of using Integral methods as a way of enacting a dynamic educational space.

Finally, Brian Eddy's "AQAL Topology" introduces the field of Integral Geography. In describing some of the basic aspects of Integral Geography Eddy raises some important issues around the role of spatiality in the AQAL model. Eddy suggests that a "When" and "Where" dimension to Kosmic address be included along side the more common "Who," "How," and "What" as described in my article. Throughout the article, Eddy highlights methodological and research issues within geography and at the end of his article Eddy presents seven areas of future Integral Research. In providing this overview of potential research projects, Eddy is effective in helping us see how any Integral discipline (e.g., psychology, ecology, art, nursing) could identify and benefit from areas of Integral Research.

In conclusion, this issue sets the context for and introduces Integral Research, provides an example of original research using IMP, clarifies methodological issues within a single zone, presents new Integral methods, and highlights the disciplinary value of Integral Research. The next issue also provides another great line up of a half-dozen articles serving to articulate and explore Integral Research. In particular, the next issue has articles dedicated to: articulating some of the theoretical issues involved in methodological labels and meta-theory development; presenting examples of IMP coding schemes that are being used for doctoral research; reporting original research results from both an individual's inquiry into a topic and a field report on the status of multi-method efforts in community development around the globe. The birth of Integral

Research as marked by these two issues is a signal that Integral Theory is entering a whole new phase of exploration, development, and operationalization. The academic status of Integral Theory is substantiated. Much work remains to be done and it will take several decades for Integral Theory to mature into a field of academic discourse. Nevertheless, the academic trajectory of Integral Theory is clearly taking off in an exciting direction and promises to be one of the most interesting post-disciplinary efforts around.