

Foundations of Naturopathic Medicine Project
Codifying our knowledge.
It's time.



Vis Deliberations Drive Dialog

Foundations of Naturopathic Medicine Project (FNM) textbook writers are heading down the final stretch before their final manuscript submission deadlines, while executive and senior editors anticipate digging into their final draft editing process. In the meantime, Foundations members have been involved in various projects from expanding dialogue on naturopathic philosophy to bridging gaps between science and theory, to enhancing educational resources.

During this year's AANP conference opening plenary session, Leanna Standish, ND, PhD, LAc, FNM associate editor (Science) presented her perspective on Dr. Mitchell's provocative chapter, "The *Vis* I and II," outlining his thesis on the *Vis Medicatrix Naturae*. Dr. Standish's presentation set the stage for an FNM sponsored panel entitled, "Landscapes of Naturopathic Thinking: A Dialogue with Naturopathic Scholars on William A. Mitchell's, 'Equation on the Healing Power of Nature.'" She suggested that "We don't have to agree on the definition of the '*Vis Medicatrix Naturae*' but we must come to consensus that it is a core and distinguishing concept for naturopathic medicine. The next step is to discover, using the scientific method, exactly what the *Vis* is."

The panel, including Carlo Calabrese, ND, MPH, senior investigator at NCNM's Helfgott Research Institute; Christa Louise, MS, PhD, FNM associate editor and NPLEX agency liaison; James Sensenig, ND, AANP founder, SCNM faculty, and FNM senior editor; and Jillian Stansbury, ND, NCNM adjunct faculty, moderated by Pamela Snider, ND and Jared Zeff, ND; executive and senior editors. In a room packed with convention participants, an engaging discussion followed, providing opportunity to broaden input and feedback on characterizations of the *Vis* considered by participants at last spring's international editors retreat.

From this discussion arose a compelling distinction between theorists and scientists. As a research scientist, Dr. Calabrese called for the recognition of a division in responsibilities within the science of naturopathic medicine—those who develop theories (as do FNM project editors) and those who conduct experiments to test the theories. "This is the conversation," suggests Calabrese, "you propose and we test for the next century. In a hundred years, we could go far, doing good things in the world."

In November, Drs. Zeff and Snider presented notions for a metaparadigm theory of naturopathic medicine at the Naturopathic Societies' *The Gathering* held this year at Bastyr University. This was yet another opportunity to broaden discussions originating among FNM editors and other retreat participants last spring. Also present were FNM agency liaisons Joe Holcomb, ND,

Naturopathic Society International; William Franklin, SCNM Naturopathic Society; and Julia O'Sullivan, Bridgeport Naturopathic Society; and student consultants Brewster Scott, BINM; Serron Wilkie, NCNM; Deborah Epstein and Kelsi Ervin, Bastyr, from the editors retreat.

Contact FNM at foundationsproject@comcast.net (www.foundationsproject.com) or Dr. Snider at 206-517-4527 for more information. The FNM is a project of NCNM.

By Kate Williams

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