Author's response to reviews

Title: A scoping review of research on complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) and the mass media: Looking back, moving forward

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Author's response to reviews: see over
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Dear Editor:

Re: MS 3032246721840959 - A scoping review of research on complementary and alternative medicine and the mass media: Looking back, moving forward

Thank you for your email dated June 24, 2008 indicating a positive publication decision on the above manuscript. We are happy to submit a few final revisions in response to your requests and the suggestions of reviewer 1.

As per the editors’ request, we have removed the unnecessary capitalization of complementary and alternative medicine in the title and cropped our Figure 1 in accordance with the guidelines offered by the journal. We have also reformatted the Word file in accordance with your manuscript formatting checklist.

Each of the minor essential revisions suggested by reviewer 1 have been addressed, including replacing the phrase 'research regarding' with 'research on' throughout the manuscript; adding the word 'the' before 'mass media’ throughout the manuscript; correcting a typo on page 11 and making some small edits to the abstract to improve clarity.

In response to the discretionary revisions suggested by reviewer 1:

- We have further revised the methods and discussion section regarding the major limitation of excluding internet research. Again, we stress that we in no way feel that internet research is any less important, but realistically we were confined by our resources. We rationalize our decision based on the differences between traditional mass media and the internet, but clearly recognize the limitations this exclusion places on our review especially given the ever evolving nature of the media experience as stressed by Dr. Segrott.
- We decided to not add a statement about non-systematic literature reviews to our comparison of scoping reviews and systematic reviews, as it seemed to complicate the issue unnecessarily. We prefer a reference to systematic reviews only, as we imagine most of our readers will be familiar with the methods of systematic reviews, but will perhaps be less familiar with the method of non-systematic literature reviews.
• We have added discussion to specifically suggest that research in this field will benefit from a unified theoretical perspective, tying together production, representation and reception research.

• We agree with the sentiment that there is still a place for research that engages with CAM as a unified category, despite the many differences between the varied group of practices and products that comprise this semantic category. The point we would like to make, though, is that researchers should consider whether it is more appropriate to operationalize CAM as a unified or differentiated concept when designing their research and not simply ignore the issue as we believe has been the case in some instances. We have edited our discussion to this effect.

We thank you for the opportunity to publish our research in your journal.

Sincerely,

Laura Weeks