Somatics Research Bibliography: A Working Tool for Somatics and Somatic Psychology

Eleanor Criswell Hanna

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Somatics Research Bibliography: A Working Tool for Somatics and Somatic Psychology

Eleanor Criswell Hanna
The Novato Institute for Somatic Research and Training
Novato, CA, USA

Many years ago when Somatics magazine was young, it occurred to me that it would be valuable to collect and publish research article references in Somatics magazine that were relevant to the different somatics disciplines to encourage the development of the field. There were next to no studies devoted to Somatics itself, but there were many studies devoted to the elements of somatic practices. Somatics is a multidisciplinary field. It builds on the research findings from many fields, such as anatomy, physiology, neurophysiology, psychology, dance, biomechanics, and education. The references are selected to be suggestive to the interested researcher and practitioner for their purposes and of the many possible research avenues that are yet to be explored. I have collected these research references for more than four decades. I worked originally with Psychological Abstracts, then PsychInfo, and finally, PubMed. Over that time there has been more research done on the somatic disciplines themselves. The greatest amount of research has been done on yoga (the oldest and largest of the somatic disciplines) and yoga therapy. These studies are examples of the research that can be done with the other somatics disciplines as well. We are in an era that appreciates evidence-based practice and practice-based evidence. This is evidence. These research articles are selected according to the following criteria: The article combines both body and mind either in its research design or theoretical perspective; the research design incorporates convergent measures—that is, it includes physiological, behavioral, and psychological measures; subjective and objective measures; and the research focuses on the whole organism (human) from a somatic perspective—that is, the effect of a body therapy on a psychological state. Topics addressed include biofeedback, body psychotherapy, consciousness states, electrophysiology, kinesiology, mind and body, motor processes, neural basis of motor control, neuroscience, posture and emotion, psychophysiology, and yoga/yoga therapy.


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About the Author

Eleanor Criswell Hanna, EdD, C-IAYT, is emeritus professor of psychology, Sonoma State University. She has a master's degree in counseling and guidance (University of Kentucky, 1961) and a doctorate in educational psychology from the University of Florida (1968). She is founding director of the Humanistic Psychology Institute (1970) (now Saybrook University, Pasadena). Director of the Novato Institute for Somatic Research and Training, she has written Biofeedback and Somatics: Toward Personal Evolution, How Yoga Works: An Introduction to Somatic Yoga, and edited Cram’s Introduction to Surface Electromyography. She is editor and publisher of Somatics—Magazine-Journal of the Bodily Arts and Sciences. She served as president of the Association for Humanistic Psychology (1976), Division 32 (1999–2000), and the International Association for Yoga Therapists (2010–2013). She is the first recipient of the Eleanor Criswell Hanna Award for Outstanding Contributions to Women in Humanistic Psychology given by Division 32—the Society of Humanistic Psychology, American Psychological Association. She is a Fellow of the American Psychological Association.

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