

The 1997–98 Sail on the Flagship *American Political Science Review*

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Reviewers so often couch their remarks about manuscripts in terms of the standards of “the flagship journal of the discipline” that we in the editorial office sometimes feel that we should don naval gear and watch out for rough seas. The flow of manuscripts here can surely be described as a swell, “a long wave on water that moves continuously without breaking” (*American Heritage Dictionary*). Table 1 shows this year’s swell, a total of 537 manuscripts, 411 of them new submissions.¹ In my first two years as editor, the comparison of the current year’s total submissions with the averages during the previous two editors’ terms appeared to suggest a continuing increase in submissions. While the figures for 1995–98, my first three-year term, clearly indicate a higher level of submissions than was experienced by previous editors, the perspective of three years suggests that the pattern of submissions may have stabilized, albeit at a higher plateau.

During the summers of 1997 and 1998, the *Review* and the official journals of the regional political science associations (*American Journal of Political Science*, *Journal of Politics*, *Political Research Quarterly*, and *Polity*) observed a one-month “moratorium” on new submissions. We were not seeking to decrease our annual totals of submissions; rather, we wanted to avoid receiving manuscripts during the time when it was most difficult to get reviewers for them and to enable staff to take summer vacations without interfering unduly with efficient manuscript processing. The moratorium for 1998 was in August. The submission figures indicate that the moratorium does not affect our annual submission level, and our extremely heavy mail load in July demonstrates that authors have learned how to deal

with the August break. Given the academic calendar and dates of APSA’s Annual Meeting, August is a convenient break time, and I expect to follow the same policy in 1999. Again, the moratorium applies only to the submission of new manuscripts. The office remains open for business and continues to receive and process revisions, reviews, and all manuscripts received through the last day of July.

Field Representation of Manuscripts Received and Published

Table 2 shows the distribution of original manuscripts (not including revisions) received, by both field and analytic method, for both this year and last. The breakdowns by field and method are stable over the last two years.² Table 3 suggests relative stability in submissions by major field over a longer period. Scholars in all fields submit substantial numbers of papers to the *Review*.

The field distributions for manuscripts published since 1985 are shown in Table 4. Again, annual differences are relatively small and not meaningful. For example, the substantial increase in 1997 in International Relations manuscripts was caused largely by a forum exchange consisting of a critique and five responses. The representation of American Politics returned to its more usual level in 1998. While the traditional predominance of American Politics papers was restored, the figures suggest that the *Review* is seen as an important publication outlet for all the major subfields of the discipline.

The articles published in the eleven issues between March 1996 and September 1998 represent a very wide range of interests and authors. In addition to articles about

the United States, we have published articles about Bosnia, Canada, China, England, the European Union, France, Germany (both contemporary and Weimar Republic), Kenya, India, Italy, Mexico, Norway, Poland, and the former Soviet Union (in several cases more than one), as well as other broadly comparative articles focusing on a number of different countries or types of political system. Most of our published authors are from U.S. institutions, but during this period we have also published articles by authors at institutions in Australia, Canada, England, Israel, Scotland, Sweden, and Switzerland. Our articles have included some focusing on women, both in contemporary politics and as viewed by classical political theorists, and about African-Americans or issues affecting minority groups more generally. The *Review* is open to articles in any field and on any subject about which political scientists do research, and we strive for fair reviews of all articles submitted. Our reviewers always include specialists in the particular field of the submitted work, but to provide a broader perspective, I may also include nonspecialists who nevertheless work in the same general area. I want to publish a mix of articles that will be of interest to as many of our readers as possible, and welcome submissions from any field of political science scholarship.

“Turnaround” Time

The entire staff works very hard to keep turnaround time as short as possible, although that is a difficult task given the editorial structure and very high submission rate. The general rule is that manuscripts are sent to three reviewers. If the first two reviews received advise clearly against publication, I will almost al-

TABLE 1

APSR Submissions (Manuscripts Received)

		Number of Submissions		
		Total	Original	
A. Yearly Totals	1997–98	537	411	
	1996–97	540	391	
	1995–96	533	420	
	1994–95	495		
	1993–94	480		
	1992–93	487		
	1991–92	479		
	1990–91	438		
	1989–90	428		
	1988–89	447		
	1987–88	391		
1986–87	427			
B. Editorship Averages				
	Finifter	1995–98 (Average)	537	407
	Powell	1991–95 (Average)	485	
	Patterson	1986–91 (Average)	426	

Sources: Data for 1991–95, and averages for 1986–91 are taken from Powell (1995, Table 1). Average for 1991–95 is calculated from the same source. Individual year data for 1986–87 to 1990–91 are taken from Patterson, Bruce, and Crone (1991, Table 1).

Note: For 1995–98, annual periods range from August 15–August 14. For annual years 1996–97 and 1997–98, these times include “moratorium” periods when new manuscripts were not accepted for review. The moratorium for 1997 was July 15–August 14 and for 1998 it was the entire month of August. The total column includes revisions; the breakdowns between original and total submissions were not provided in previous editorial reports.

ways reject the paper based on that advice without waiting for the third review. In this way, authors whose papers are not considered suitable for the *Review* by the majority of reviewers are not held up in pursuing publication of their research in other outlets. Many rejected papers are thus processed very quickly, often within a month or six weeks of receipt. Papers in which reviewers see more potential for APSR publication often take far more time to process, as reviewers give them a thorough reading and often write lengthy reviews with many suggestions for revision; the process is slowed again in the editorial office as papers await yet more detailed consideration if the set of reviews is not consistent or reviewers offer contradictory advice. Thus, often, for authors, no news may be good news.

Table 5 shows four measures of time spent in the different stages of

the editorial process by year received for the last three years of my editorship (final three columns), and also provides summary data for the two previous editorships and my own (first three columns), which some colleagues requested. For comparability with those earlier figures, I report medians this year rather than the means reported in my two previous annual reports. Since only manuscripts that have been decided are included, the data for 1997–98 are less stable than earlier figures; papers that are not yet decided include some that have been in process longer than usual (and will therefore have longer times to decision) as well as many that have come in too recently to have received any reviews (including some that may have very short times to decision). For this same reason, data for 1996–97 are updated in this report to include decisions made on

manuscripts received in that year but decided during this past year.

“From receipt to referee assignment” indicates the time involved in choosing reviewers and mailing manuscripts to them. “From assignment to last review” indicates the time it takes for reviews to arrive. I discussed the factors that affect this time and described our reviewer reminder procedures in some detail in an earlier report (Finifter 1996, 763–64). “From last review to decision” indicates the time taken to make decisions and send a letter to the author after the final review has arrived.³ The measure “from receipt to final decision” is the overall total number of days in the process for all manuscripts received. This figure is not a sum of the previous measures because it also includes papers that are not put through the review process.

The number of manuscripts received obviously affects how rapidly they can be processed; Powell received, on average, 15% more manuscripts than Patterson, and I have received 11% more manuscripts than Powell. Nevertheless, the figures show substantial similarity in turnaround time (of course, given the increase in submissions, each successive editor has to work more intensively to accomplish the same turnaround time as his or her predecessor). Powell’s turnaround time was somewhat longer than Patterson’s due to his extremely useful innovation of using faxes to consult members of the Editorial Board about appropriate reviewers for each manuscript. I have retained that procedure, but we are now able to use email to speed and facilitate the exchanges. Despite the fact that the overall numbers are similar to those at other journals, obviously any measure of central tendency only summarizes a distribution. While one might wish the APSR editorial office were located in Lake Wobegone so all authors could experience shorter-than-average turnaround time, it is not, so instead, I express my regret to those authors whose papers are at the higher end of the distributions. My assistant, the graduate student interns, and I, are constantly trying to improve efficiency, remind late

TABLE 2

Distribution of Manuscripts Submitted to the APSR August 15, 1996–August 14, 1998, by Year, Subfield, and Type of Analysis (Original Submissions Only)

Subfield and Type of Analysis	1996–97		1997–98	
American Politics				
Formal and Quantitative	10	2.56%	8	1.95%
Formal	8	2.05	8	1.95
Interpretive, Conceptual	9	2.30	15	3.65
Quantitative	125	31.97	121	29.44
Small N			2	.49
<i>Subfield total</i>	152	38.88%	154	37.47%
Comparative Politics				
Formal and Quantitative	5	1.28%	9	2.19%
Formal	9	2.30	7	1.70
Interpretive, Conceptual	19	4.86	17	4.14
Quantitative	46	11.76	50	12.17
Small N	14	3.58	4	.97
<i>Subfield total</i>	93	23.78%	87	21.17%
International Relations				
Formal and Quantitative	3	.77%	11	2.68%
Formal	10	2.56	6	1.46
Interpretive, Conceptual	9	2.30	6	1.46
Quantitative	22	5.63	21	5.11
Small N	1	.26	1	.24
<i>Subfield Total</i>	45	11.52%	45	10.95%
Normative Theory				
Formal			1	.24%
Interpretive, Conceptual	70	17.90%	83	20.19
<i>Subfield Total</i>	70	17.90%	84	20.44%
Formal Theory of General Political Processes				
Formal and Quantitative			2	.49%
Formal	20	5.11%	25	6.08
Interpretive, Conceptual			3	.73
<i>Subfield Total</i>	20	5.11%	30	7.30%
Methodology				
Formal and Quantitative	1	.26%	2	.49%
Formal			1	.24
Interpretive, Conceptual	5	1.28	3	.73
Quantitative	5	1.28	5	1.22
<i>Subfield total</i>	11	2.81%	11	2.68%
Total Original Submissions	391	100.00%	411	100.01%

reviewers, and speed up the decision process.

Acceptance Rates

Since the *Review* editor can publish only a fixed number of pages each year, as determined by the association budget for the *APSR*, as submissions rise the acceptance rate must decline. We are currently publishing about 8% of manuscripts re-

ceived. Two issues that concern authors are that few manuscripts are accepted on the first round, and that there is considerable uncertainty about acceptance even after revision. These difficulties result from the limited space in the *Review*, the very rigorous and demanding nature of the reviews, and my desire to give the greatest opportunity possible for a *Review* publication to each submitting author.

My “Revise and Resubmit” decision letters come in two varieties: “invite” and “permit.” To avoid reifying the decisions, authors do not receive a specific statement of the decision category in which their paper falls, but this can easily be gleaned from my decision letter. Papers invited for resubmission may be described as having “promising reviews” and providing “grounds for optimism,” for example, and I will usually state that I would be happy to receive the revision. Papers that are permitted to be resubmitted may be described as having reviews that “suggest that your paper is potentially important but the reviewers recommend such significant revision that it is hard to predict the outcome.” In these less promising cases, I usually state that I am willing to reconsider a revision. Depending on my assessment of the reviews, I may suggest other cautions: that given the uncertain nature of the reviews I cannot in good conscience encourage the author, that I would understand if the author decided to go elsewhere, or that the author should consider carefully how likely it is that he or she will be able to respond successfully to the reviewers’ suggestions and whether an additional investment of time in the *APSR* review process seems worthwhile. For both types of revisions, authors are cautioned that there are “no guarantees” on resubmissions, but clearly for invited revisions the author receives significantly more encouragement to resubmit.

Table 6 shows the distribution of decisions at each stage of submission for all papers received during my editorship and decided as of the end of August 1998. As the data for new submissions indicate, it is rare for a paper to be accepted on the first round. Unfortunately, also, less than a third of first revisions are accepted on that round and more than two-fifths are rejected. As the table indicates, we do go to further revisions on a minority of papers, but as the numbers given in the “Accept” line show, almost three-fourths of papers published in the *Review* are accepted on the original round or after the first resubmission.

Table 7 (new this year) provides

TABLE 3
Manuscripts Received by Field, 1985–98

	1985–91	1991–95	1995–96 ^a	1995–96 ^b	1996–97 ^b	1997–98 ^b
American Politics and Public Policy	41%	35%	34%	38%	39%	38%
Comparative Politics	17	22	18	23	25	22
International Relations	10	12	9	13	13	11
Normative Political Theory	19	21	19	19	16	17
Formal Theory	13	10	18	5	5	9
Methodology	—	—	2	2	2	3
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of Manuscripts	426	485	533	533	540	537

Sources: Average for 1985–91 from Powell (1995, Table 1). Average for 1991–95 calculated from same source.

^aAllocates formal theory papers in all fields to “Formal Theory” category for consistency with previous editorial reports.

^bAllocates formal theory and methodology papers to their substantive field (American Politics, Comparative Politics, or International Relations) whenever possible (based on data used).

detail on the revise and resubmit process, in a kind of panel analysis for manuscripts. The substantial differences in resubmission rates from authors “invited” and “permitted” to resubmit, and the patterns of these differences as the rounds progress, show that authors understand the tone of my decision letters. On original submissions, 60% of papers invited for revision have come back compared to 47% of those permitted to be resubmitted. The margin increases at each subsequent round. This shows clearly that the relationship between potential outcome and willingness to bear risk is strongly affected by the extent of an author’s prior investment. With a stake of only the original submission, the degree of encouragement for resubmission has a clear effect, but one that is much smaller than the comparable difference after authors have lengthier investments. The larger differential effects at later stages suggest that authors receiving encouraging letters are willing to invest more time, since the goal still seems attainable, while authors receiving noncommittal letters become increasingly likely to cut their losses.

The editorial decisions made at

each stage also show that these decision calculations make sense. Papers invited for resubmission are one-and-a-half to two times more likely to be accepted than papers permitted to be resubmitted. At the same time, it is also clear that the chance of an acceptance for a permitted revision is not so low that it makes no sense to try, as long as one’s career time frame permits it. A continued investment of work and time, even if it may result in rejection, is much less risky for a full professor with a strong publication record than for an assistant professor coming up for tenure or a graduate student trying to build a publication record in the months before his or her first job interview.

Despite the cautious nature of the permit revision letters, it is important to emphasize that most of these papers do show promise and generally at least two of the three reviewers have suggested revision and resubmission. For many papers permitted revision, reviewers state that it is only the very rigorous standards they are applying for an *APSR* article that stops them from recommending acceptance or being more encouraging—the “flagship” crite-

riion authors dread. While the figures indicate that fewer permitted than invited revisions will be successful, it is difficult to predict the fate of individual papers. Some are revised so extensively that even reviewers who previously were close to recommending or did recommend rejection change their evaluations substantially. In my “revision permitted” decision letters, I suggest that the author assess his or her own risk tolerance and circumstances when deciding whether to resubmit; inviting the author to share responsibility in this way seems preferable to first-round rejection of papers that show promise but whose reviews suggest that significant rethinking or new analysis would be required for further consideration at *APSR*.

Table 7 shows the details of a process that can be long and is certainly very rigorous and highly selective. While it demonstrates, unfortunately, that a number of authors are disappointed after one or two revisions, it also indicates clear communication with authors and an overall rationality to both authors’ decisions about whether to resubmit and the reading of the initial set of reviews by both authors and Editor. Publication of these detailed figures may also be of some help to authors in understanding the probability of acceptance on each round, but, of course, the particular issues identified by the reviewers are a much more specific indication.⁴

The upside of our low acceptance rate is that once papers are accepted, they are usually published rapidly, frequently in the next issue going to press. In that respect, *APSR* uses a “just-in-time” inventory procedure that serves published authors very well.

Acceptance Rates By Field

Table 8 presents acceptance rates by field for all manuscript “chains” that began as original submissions at MSU, i.e., all original manuscripts and their revisions, if any. It is always noteworthy that, even in the absence of field quotas or representation criteria to structure decisions, acceptance rates are similar across

TABLE 4

Manuscripts Published by the *APSR*, by Subfield, 1985–98

	1985–91	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
American Politics and Public Policy	42%	34%	39%	36%	38%	30%	27%	35%
Comparative Politics	16	17	19	23	18	20	20	22
Normative Political Theory	20	24	18	21	20	25	22	17
International Relations	10	13	14	9	6	16	25	13
Formal Theory ^a	13	11	11	11	18	9*	6*	11
Methodology								2
Total	100%	99%	101%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of Manuscripts	49	53	57	53	49	44	51	46

^aData for 1996–98 are coded with formal theory and methodology manuscripts that also use empirical data distributed into their substantive subfields (American Politics, Comparative, or International Relations).

all fields, and variation can frequently be attributed to small numbers of cases (e.g., Methodology) or unusual situations (e.g., a recent multipaper forum in International Relations).⁵ This suggests that reviewers across all fields apply similar standards for publication.

Electronic and Print Publication

As the web has continued to grow at a pace that has amazed us all, its role in the dissemination of scholarship has become increasingly important. More and more electronic publications are coming into existence and scholars are reporting and publishing their original research on their own home pages and in electronic forums as well as using the Internet to distribute research papers stored in electronic archives. While these are exciting new developments that have important potential to increase the worldwide dissemination of knowledge, increase international collaboration, and advance the pace of scholarly research, they do not come without problems. Protection of copyright for electronic materials, for example, is an issue that is constantly in the news.

In the editorial and scholarly community, a very important issue is whether research papers posted on the Internet are “published,” and therefore may not be submitted to print journals. Interested readers will find a discussion of these issues in a recent issue of *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (Guernsey and

Kiernan 1998), in which the electronic paper archive of the Political Methodology section of APSA was featured prominently. At present, papers that appear on authors’ own web sites or in electronic archives that do not apply any filtering or peer review process are not considered published for purposes of submission to *APSR*. However, articles that appear in electronic journals or on other sites that apply peer review processes, or those for which authors have transferred copyright to the electronic publisher or the institution or company sponsoring the web site, are considered published and may not be submitted to the *Review*. A more detailed discussion of this issue appears in the “Editor’s Notes” of the September 1998 issue of the *Review* (Finifter 1998). Since the *Chronicle* article reported significant confusion in the scholarly community over these issues, I hope that my statement will clarify the issue for political scientists interested in submitting to the *Review*, at least for the immediate future. As opportunities for publication on the web grow, and more print journals introduce electronic versions, we will undoubtedly be revisiting this issue.

Book Review⁶

Table 9 provides data on the books received from September 1996 to August 1998. As shown, we received nearly 1,800 books this year. While this number is down a bit from a few years ago, it represents almost 200 more books than

we received in 1996–97. We received more books in Comparative Politics (654) than in any other field, and the fewest in Political Theory (270). These data, which are historically quite stable, probably mirror the distribution of book-writing faculty among the fields in our discipline. While we receive the fewest books in Political Theory and International Relations, we review a higher percentage of books in these fields (25.9% and 26.5%, respectively) than in American Politics (20.9%) and Comparative Politics (14.1%). The result, as indicated in Table 10, is a rough balance among the four fields in published reviews. That is, we review just about as many books in Political Theory and International Relations as in American Politics and Comparative Politics.

Most of the books we review receive individual 1,000-word book reviews. If we can establish thematic unity among different books, we publish multiple-book reviews. We devote 1,500 words to two-book reviews and 2,000 words to the occasional three-book review. We also publish book review essays, which are featured more prominently. This year, for example, Paul R. Abramson and Ronald Inglehart reviewed an important series of five books on cross-national public opinion and political behavior, and Ira Katznelson reviewed six books on American Politics and Policy.

The individual book reviews, multiple-book reviews, and review essays continue to receive a great deal of attention. Many of our readers re-

TABLE 5

Elapsed Time in the *APSR* Review Process, by Year of Submission

	Patterson Editorship, 1985–91	Powell Editorship, 1991–95	Finifter Editorship, 1995–98		Aug. 17, 1995– Aug. 14, 1996 ^a		Aug. 15, 1996– Aug. 14, 1997 ^b		Aug. 15, 1997– Aug. 14, 1998 ^c	
	Number of Workdays ^d	Number of Workdays ^d	Median Number of Workdays	Number of Manuscripts	Median Number of Workdays	Number of Manuscripts	Median Number of Workdays	Number of Manuscripts	Median Number of Workdays	Number of Manuscripts
From receipt to referee assignment	9	20	10	1349	10	473	8	489	12	387
From assignment to last review	43	43	46	1349	46	473	47	489	46	387
From last review considered to decision	6	7	5	1349	5	473	5	489	4	387
From receipt to final decision	54	67	62	1511	63	531	63	542	62	438

^aIncludes only manuscripts originally received at MSU and not those originally received at Rochester but which finished processing at MSU.

^bUpdated from previous year's reports to include all decisions for manuscripts received during that year.

^cIncludes only manuscripts on which a final decision had been made as of August 30, 1998.

^dCalculated from Powell (1995, Table 4). Figures reported for Patterson and Powell are subject to error because the calculation methods they used are not described in detail in the Powell report. Patterson figures are calculated by averaging figures given for the two periods 1985–88 and 1988–91. Both columns are headed "average" but figures for 1985–88 are additionally identified as medians. Powell figures are calculated by averaging figures given separately for each of four academic years, 1991–92 through 1994–95; however, the figures for 1992–95 are identified as medians while the calculation method for 1991–92 figures is not specified. Powell additionally reports in a note to the table that "1992–95 are based on the months for which over half the manuscripts were completed and medians available at the time of report (9 months in 1992–93 and 11 months in 1993–95). Reported figure is the average of the monthly medians." Numbers of manuscripts on which figures are based are not given in the Powell table but average numbers of manuscripts received per year during the three editorships are: Patterson, 426; Powell, 485; Finifter, 537.

port that they rely on our book reviews to keep up with their fields and subfields. While we cannot please everyone—not all books are reviewed and not all published reviews are favorable—the book reviews are a very important complement to the articles published in the main section of *APSR*. We therefore encourage all book authors to make certain that their publishers submit their books to us.

APSR Editorial Staff

The *APSR* editorial office operation has grown slightly this year as we have evolved from only one full-time staff-member to one full-time and one part-time staffer. Harriett Posner, who was director of manuscript processing and production for the past three years, has now become director of manuscript production and now works entirely on post-

acceptance production. Melody Scofield, full-time assistant to the editor, manages the flow of incoming manuscripts and reviews through the end of the decision process. Two other professionals continue to work for the *Review* as independent contractors: our copyeditor, Elizabeth Johnston, and our data processing consultant, Paul Wolberg.

During the 1997–98 academic year, invaluable assistance was provided by *APSR* interns Jamie Carson, Bernard Joseph Dobski, Erik Herron, Matthew Kleiman, Andrew Padon, Lisa Shoichet, and Chris Sprecher. Dobski, Kleiman, Shoichet, and Sprecher are now concentrating on teaching or dissertations and Charles Finocchiaro, Jeff Reno, Mark Souva, and Shane Szalai have joined the ship's crew. Interns review all incoming manuscripts, assist the Editorial Board in the process of reviewer recommen-

dations, and help me in a variety of other ways.⁷

The peer review process could not operate without the advice of our reviewers, all of whom are listed in the December issue of the *Review*. During 1997–98, we again benefited from the advice of almost 1,000 scholars who served as reviewers.

Mark Lichbach continues as *APSR* Book Review editor, having managed a successful relocation of that operation from the University of Colorado to the University of California, Riverside. During 1997–98, he was assisted by John Halpin, Robert Lopez, and Eitan Schiffman at Colorado.⁸

All these individuals, and in particular the 33 members of the editorial board, have contributed to the quality of the *APSR*, the editorial operation, and the review service we provide to those who submit papers to the *Review*. I am very grateful to

TABLE 6

Manuscript Decisions by Review Stage

	New Submissions		First Revision		Second Revision		Third Revision ^a	
Reject	66.0%	(778)	42.1%	(83)	20.9%	(9)	33.3%	(3)
Permit Revise and Resubmit	10.6	(125)	9.1	(18)	9.3	(4)		
Invite Revise and Resubmit	14.6	(173)	19.3	(38)	7.0	(3)		
Accept	2.0	(24)	29.5	(58)	60.5	(26)	66.7%	(6)
Other	6.8	(81)	0	(0)	2.3	(1)		
% (N)	100.0%	(1,181)	100.0%	(197)	100.0%	(43)	100.0%	(9)

Note: Includes only manuscripts originally received at MSU (i.e., were not revisions of manuscripts originally submitted to Rochester). All 197 first revision papers therefore came from the 1,181 new submissions and all 43 second revision papers came from the 197 first revisions.

^aAll three manuscripts shown as having been rejected on the third revision round had been rejected on the second revision but their authors asked for reconsideration. In each case, consideration of the subsequent revision by the same or additional reviewers resulted in confirmation of the decision made at the second revision stage. The third revision stage is intended primarily for papers that seem destined to be accepted but where reviewers have requested specific additional revisions, e.g., additional statistical tests or proofs.

TABLE 7

Decision on Revisions by Decision on Prior Submission, for Manuscripts Submitted Since August 17, 1995 and Decided by August 30, 1998

Decision on Subsequent Submission	Decision on					
	Original Submission		First Revision		Second Revision	
	Invite R&R	Permit R&R	Invite R&R	Invite R&R	Permit R&R	Permit R&R
Accept or Conditionally Accept	42% ^a	22%	63%	40%	100%	—
Invite Revise and Resubmit	26	14	7	0	0	—
Permit Revise and Resubmit	9	8	4	40	0	—
Reject	23	56	26	20	0	—
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
N resubmitted ^b	104	59	27	5	3	0
N with this decision (eligible for resubmission) ^b	173	125	38	18	3	4
% of manuscripts resubmitted to date for next round ^c	60%	47%	71%	28%	100%	0%
N rejected on this round (not eligible for resubmission) ^d		778		82		9

^aMain cell entries are decisions on subsequent round for manuscripts invited for revision (not rejected, accepted, or conditionally accepted) on prior round. Thus, of papers invited for revision on the original round and actually resubmitted, 42% were accepted or conditionally accepted on the first revision round.

^bFigures in these rows report the actual number of manuscripts resubmitted and the number of those eligible for resubmission.

^cFigures in this row report the percentage of manuscripts with the specified decision on this round that were actually resubmitted (e.g., from the columns above, 173 of the original submissions were invited for revision and 104 or 60% of them have so far been resubmitted).

^dThis row reports the number of papers rejected at this stage and therefore not eligible for resubmission. Very minor inconsistencies in Ns are caused by the fact that at every stage, a small number of authors whose papers are rejected request permission to resubmit. Since this number is trivial, these cases are not shown in the columns of the table. Of requests granted, most subsequent submissions are rejected. A handful that receive promising reviews on such resubmissions may be permitted or invited to resubmit yet again. Since a rejection column is not presented, these decisions are not shown but may increase by one or two cases the number of invited or permitted revisions on a later round as compared to the number given for each category from the former round.

TABLE 8**Acceptance Rates of Manuscripts by Field, for Manuscripts Submitted since August 17, 1995, and Decided by August 30, 1998^a**

Field	Number of Original Submissions	Number of Papers Accepted	Acceptance Rate
American Politics	451	34	7.5%
Comparative Politics	269	19	7.1%
Normative Theory	222	17	7.7%
International Relations	136	18	13.2%
Formal Theory	73	7	9.6%
Methodology	30	1	3.3%
Total	1,181	96	8.1%

^aDoes not include manuscripts originally submitted to Rochester but accepted at MSU.

each of them, officers and crew alike, for the important roles they played during my first term as editor.

Comments on this report or on any of the editorial procedures of the *APSR* are always welcome. Readers will also find additional information on our web site (www.ssc.msu.edu/~aprs), including "Instructions to Contributors," the complete table of contents of each issue, abstracts and lists of tables and figures for published articles, a list of forthcoming articles, biographical and other information about our Editorial Board and staff, information about our review procedures, and the names of scholars who reviewed for us in each volume year. We can be contacted by email at aprs@ssc.msu.edu.

TABLE 9**Books Received, 1996–98, and Books Reviewed, 1997–98**

Field	Books Received		Books Reviewed or Scheduled for Review (of 1997–98 arrivals)	
	Sept. 1996–Aug. 1997	Sept. 1997–Aug. 1998	<i>N</i>	% Across
American Politics and Public Policy	421	507	106	20.9%
Comparative Politics	551	654	92	14.1%
Political Theory	256	270	70	25.9%
International Relations	369	344	91	26.5%
Total	1,597	1,775	359	20.2%

TABLE 10**Books Reviewed by Issue and Field, September 1997–September 1998**

Issue	American	Comparative	Theory	International Relations
September 1997	30% (28)	26 (24)	24 (22)	20 (18)
December 1997	27% (22)	27 (22)	27 (22)	20 (17)
March 1998	35% (32)	24 (22)	22 (20)	20 (18)
June 1998	26% (24)	26 (24)	29 (27)	18 (17)
September 1998	28% (25)	26 (23)	27 (24)	20 (18)

Note: *N*s include books reviewed in review essays and both multiple- and single-book reviews. Percentages across; rows sum to approximately 100% due to rounding error.

Notes

1. An additional 67 papers not included in Table 1 have been received during the new reporting year (i.e., between August 15 and September 30, 1998, when this report is being finalized).

2. More detailed discussion of field codes, turnaround time categories (presented below), complications in calculating acceptance rates, and other issues discussed in this report can be found in *Finifter* (1997).

3. For my editorship, this "final review" means either the second negative review or the last of all three reviews for manuscripts with more positive reviews. Powell used the

same procedure, but I am not certain how his figures took that into account, nor can I report on the Patterson procedures.

4. Of course, we hope that the articles we publish are the best the discipline has to offer, but the many authors whose papers are rejected may take comfort in Adlai Stevenson's opinion that "An editor is someone who separates the wheat from the chaff and then prints the chaff" (quoted in Adler 1966).

5. Recall also that we try to code all papers in a substantive field; this affects the type of papers included in the "Methodology" field. Reviewers frequently advise that papers that

are very strongly focused on methodology or statistical applications but that have relatively little political science content or empirical data belong in more specialized journals.

6. The Book Review section of this report was written by Mark Lichbach.

7. It is a pleasure to report, too, that former intern Damon Linker is now teaching at Brigham Young University, Mark Hurwitz is at the University of Utah, and Elizabeth Kaufer is at Emory.

8. At Riverside, Lichbach is currently assisted by Kenneth Fernandez, William Aviles, and Stacey Searl-Chapin.

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NSF Announces Special Focus!

The Directorate for Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences of the National Science Foundation announced a Special Focus in FY99 and FY2000 to create and extend large-scale infrastructure to support the social and behavioral sciences. The deadline for submission will be between February and March 1, 1999. For a detailed description of the program and updates on the submission process, including precise deadlines, consult the NSF website at <http://www.nsf.gov/sbe/start.html> or contact Mr. William P. Butz, Director, Division of Social, Behavioral and Economic Research, Room 995N, National Science Foundation, Arlington, Virginia 22230 (phone: 709-306-1760; email: wbutz@nsf.gov).