

# Report of the Editors of *Perspectives on Politics* to the American Political Science Association Council, 2021-2022

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This year's report covers the operation of *Perspectives on Politics* for calendar year 2021. We are presently in the fifth year of our tenure as the editorial team, after renewing for an additional two years. During this year Jennifer Boylan left her assignment at the University of Florida and became an employee of the American Political Science Association, while continuing as the managing editor.

Despite operating for a second year under pandemic conditions, the state of the journal is healthy. We published all four issues on schedule with the continued support of the American Political Science Association and Cambridge University Press. We continue to acquire and publish material at pre-pandemic rates including pre-publication of all articles and reflections on our FirstView webpage on Cambridge Core, prior to their incorporation in individual issues. Finally, our status as the book review of record of the American Political Science Association continues despite disruption in supply chains in the publishing realm and pandemic-related difficulties faced by reviewers. We continue to review several hundred books a year in the form of individual reviews, multiple book reviews, review essays, symposia, and our highly popular critical dialogues.

As in previous years we will discuss editorial developments, report summary statistics on submissions, decisions, books reviewed, and disciplinary impact.

## PANDEMIC IMPACT

Pandemic publishing has become our new normal. All journal operations are conducted remotely, with phone and skype conversations, and zoom meetings replacing face-to-face operations. In 2021 we again chose to hold the annual board meeting remotely, and we hosted our panels at the annual meeting as part of the virtual conference, rather than the in-person meeting in Seattle. While this has not disrupted our work, we do miss face-to-face meetings, especially the opportunity to socialize with the board, greet our authors, and thank those of you who have generously reviewed for us. We are hopeful that COVID-19 is now entering an endemic phase which will allow us to return to more normal practices.

The one area where the pandemic has made things more difficult is reviewing; this holds for both articles and books. Illness, the difficulties posed by childcare closings and remote schooling, and increased care responsibilities for many colleagues have made it harder to line up reviewers and sometimes disrupted the meeting of deadlines. We have heard from many colleagues who have had to care for loved ones, who have fallen sick (including several who are suffering from long COVID-19), or who have needed to devote more

time to the care and education of their children. We fully understand the decisions of our colleagues to temporarily abstain from journal service in the face of these unfortunate developments and have worked with many to extend deadlines so that the burden of service is manageable. We continue to admire and appreciate the efforts of those of you who support the journal with your unselfish work on our behalf.

## PROGRAMMING

A great deal of our editorial effort has been devoted to shepherding two special issues—"Pandemic Politics" and "Black Lives Matter"—towards publication. These collections came in response to calls for papers issued for both topics<sup>1</sup>. The Pandemic Politics special issue will come out in Volume 20, Issue 2 (June 2022) and will be fully devoted to exploring the political impact of COVID-19 from the local to the global. The issue will contain thirteen articles and one reflection, drawn from all four major subfields of the discipline. The introduction to this special issue was coauthored with editorial board member Julia Lynch of the University of Pennsylvania, one of the discipline's leading experts in the politics of public health. At this year's annual meeting we organized two panels that featured ten of these papers.

The Black Lives Matter issue is still in progress. The lead on this issue was taken by editorial board member Christopher Parker of the University of Washington. To date we have accepted nine manuscripts (with the first already up on FirstView) with four additional pieces under review. The expected publication date of this special issue is in early 2023. It will be a worthy follow-up to our last issue in 2021, a special issue on "Race and Politics" in America.

Our commitment to having each issue of the journal have a substantive focus continued in 2021. All four issues were either special issues or had substantial special sections. Table 1 below lists those themes for all four issues in Volume 19 (2021) and provides links to the electronic copy on the web.

## PUBLICITY EFFORTS

Our publicity efforts continue to be built around Twitter and Facebook. We coordinate with all authors on the release of their articles and reflections on FirstView. We hold the production versions off-line for a few days in order to set a publication embargo date, which authors are notified of about 7-14 days in advance. This helps coordinate article promotion efforts and allows authors who want to blog or write op-eds on their research to prepare such materials. When authors succeed in bringing their work to the attention of the broader public we coordinate with Cambridge University Press to temporarily

**Table 1: Specials in Volume 19 (2021)**

Number	Topic	Link to ToC
19(1)	Special Section: Working Class Blues or Reds?	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/4mh5h48a">https://tinyurl.com/4mh5h48a</a>
19(2)	Special Section: The Politics of Immigration	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/449wjds2">https://tinyurl.com/449wjds2</a>
19(3)	Special Section: Comparative Historical Analysis	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/5fuxfjhx">https://tinyurl.com/5fuxfjhx</a>
19(4)	Special Issue: Race and Politics in America	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/2p9fsstb">https://tinyurl.com/2p9fsstb</a>

ungate those materials so they can reach the broadest possible audience. We are now followed by over 6444 (February 23, 2022) accounts on Twitter, up from several hundred when we took over in 2017 and 5200 eleven months ago. Our Facebook Page has over 1400 followers. Only 30 percent of them reside in the United States. We also have substantial followings in India, the United Kingdom, the Philippines, Turkey, Brazil, Canada, Egypt, Germany and Italy. The greatest concentration of viewers by city is in Istanbul Turkey, and in the United States, in New York and Washington, DC.

### EXPANSION OF CONTENT

We continue to expand the article and reflection content of the journal. When we started, the page allocation was 296 per issue. 148 were allocated to articles and reflections and 148 was for book reviews. Last we went to 352 pages per issue, with 200 for the front-end content, and this year we have upped this again to 383 total, with 232 pages for front-end material.

### GOODBYE TO MOST HARDCOPIES

APSA has decided to move its journals to a dominant electronic platform. This has substantially reduced the print run of each issue. A limited number of hardcopies are still available for libraries and other purposes.

### SUBMISSIONS AND PROCESSING

While we did not issue a call for papers in 2021, the number of manuscripts we received was only slightly behind those received in 2020 (see table 2), when we had two calls for papers (Pandemic Politics and Black Lives Matter). As such, the number of new manuscripts received in 2021 is a new high for a year without a call for papers.

2021 was also a new high for the percentage of papers received by a corresponding author outside of the United States (49.1%). We are encouraged by the continued internationalization of the submissions we receive at *Perspectives* (see table 3).

We also continue to publish a great number of manuscripts authored outside of the US. In Volume 19 (2021), 17 the authors of 17 articles (23.9%) were based outside of the US, as compared to 54 article authors (76.1%) based in the US. However, all the article authors of the 19(4) Special Issue (Race & Politics in America) were based in the US. When excluding 19(4), the percentage of article authors based outside of the US rose from 23.9% to 30.4%. This is indicative of further progress in the internationalization of the journal, as only 27.1% of Volume 18's authors were employed by universities outside the US.

**Table 2: Manuscript Submissions per Year**

Time Period	New Manuscripts Received	Revised Manuscripts Received
2021	501	169
2020	571	164
2019	357	94
2018	316	101
2017	294	83
2016	321	51
2015	258	53
2014	253	47

**Table 3: Number of Manuscripts Received Based on the Location of the Corresponding Author (based on available data)**

Year	United States	Outside of United States
2021	253 (50.9%)	244 (49.1%)
2020	286 (51.2%)	273 (48.8%)
2019	190 (53.8%)	163 (46.2%)
2018	181 (57.3%)	135 (42.7%)
2017	164 (56.6%)	126 (43.4%)
2016	190 (59.9%)	127 (40.1%)
2015	155 (60.8%)	100 (39.2%)
2014	170 (67.5%)	82 (32.5%)

**Table 4: Average Number of Days in Review**

Stage of Review Process	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
Submission to Editor Assignment	0.7	0.5	0.5	0.7	4.8	6.9	6.3	6.0
Submission to First Decision	33.4	32.7	39.0	38.3	46.0	42.1	45.9	51.8

**Table 5: First Round Editorial Decisions**

Editor Decision	Total Decisions	Frequency of Decision	Average Time to Decision (days)
Decline: No External Review	296	58.5%	9.4
Decline: After External Review	140	27.7%	74.4
Major Revision	57	11.3%	88.6
Minor Revision	11	2.2%	81.2
Conditional Accept	2	0.4%	9.5
Total Editor Decisions	506	100%	37.9

**Table 6: Outcome of First Round of the Review Process, 2014-21 (percentage)**

Outcome	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
Decline: No External Review	58.5	60.9	55.8	59.2	59.4	69.1	69.6	64.9
Decline: After External Review	27.7	25.5	26.3	26.1	25.5	22.3	19.2	22.9
Major Revision	11.3	11.0	14.3	12.4	10.4	5.5	7.2	7.4
Minor Revision	2.2	2.0	2.9	1.6	2.7	2.8	4	3.9
Conditional Accept	0.4	0.6	0.6	0.7	.3	.3	0	0.4
Accept	0	0	0	0	1.7	0	0	0.4

## PROCESSING OF SUBMISSIONS

Given there was no call for papers issued in 2021, with a corresponding increase in the rejection of inappropriate submissions, a 33.4 day average time to a first decision is a significant improvement from prior years (see table 4). The editorial team prides itself on getting timely decisions back to prospective authors.

## EDITORIAL DECISIONS

Table 5 presents data on editorial decisions on the first round of review in 2021. The number of manuscripts DNER'd (declined without external review) decreased from 60.9% in 2020 to 58.5% in 2021. Of the 210 submissions that went out for external review (the same as in 2020), 70 submissions (33.3%) received revise and resubmit decisions. 57 of these were Major Revisions, 11 were Minor Revisions, and 2 received Conditional Accept decisions, as they had previously been rejected article submissions that were then modified into reflection essays under the guidance of the editors.

After the first round of revisions, 2 submissions were accepted for publication, 40 received conditional accept decisions (54.8%), 24 received revise decisions (32.9%), and 7 were declined after external review (9.6%). After the second round of revisions, 38 papers were accepted, 17 were conditionally accepted, 4 received minor revise decisions, and 2 were declined after external review.

Table 6 compares this year to the previous seven. Our overall decision numbers are very similar to 2020, despite not having any call for papers. We did have the highest rate of papers declined after

external review in 2021 as compared to past years.

Finally, this work is of course highly dependent upon the support of external reviewers. As the pandemic continued in 2021, many of our colleagues still faced a great number of personal and professional challenges which made completion of article reviews more challenging than in the "before times." The number of reviewers who declined to review decreased to 550 from 568 in 2020, but this was still a great deal higher than the 438 declined reviews in 2019. 2,078 reviewers did complete a review in 2021 and we are very grateful for their efforts given the year's challenges. We are similarly grateful for colleagues who, despite the personal or professional obligations that kept them from writing a review, recommended others who could replace them.

## JOURNAL IMPACT

Figure 1<sup>2</sup> displays the journal's impact scores for the last decade. The Thomson-Reuters Journal Citation Reports both two-year and five-year impact factors. The two-year impact factor (JIF2) continues to show recovery from its substantial decline in 2017. The two-year JIF jumped from 2.398 (2019) to 3.776 (2020) and the five-year JIF from 3.407 (2019) to 4.064 (2020). This moved POP from 41st to the 36th highest ranked journal in the discipline. This solidified our position as a Quartile 1 journal in the discipline (top 45 JIF scores). It also fully justifies our decision to move to "FirstView" for accepted material when we took over the journal.

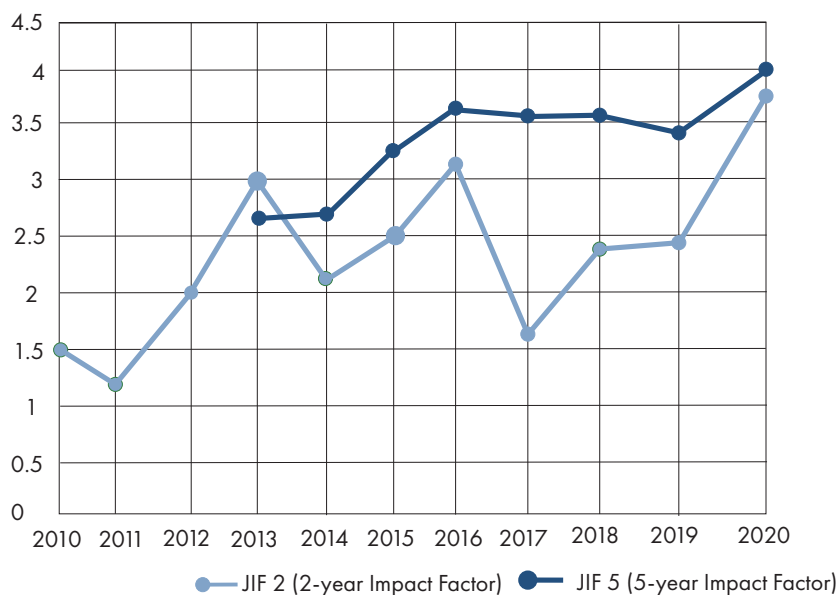
Even though the 2020 rankings showed strong upward movement in both the two- and five-year impact factors, they are not strictly comparable to last year's figures because Clarivate changed the way in which on-line pre-publication is tabulated. Next year we expect the raw numbers to fall because items left out of the denominator this year will be counted next year.<sup>3</sup>

*Perspectives on Politics* ranked in the top twenty journals according to the Google H5-index (see Table 7). The H5-Index lists the number of articles that received at least five citations for the last 5 years (2016-2020). The H5-median is the median number of citations for the pieces that constitute the H5-index. This means that in the last five years on Google Scholar we have 37 articles with at least 37 cites and the median piece in that sample has 52 cites.

## BOOK REVIEW SECTION

2021 was a good year for the Book Review section of the journal. Overall we reviewed 327 total books across all fields (see Table 8). This figure is down somewhat from the three previous years in

**Figure 1: Journal Impact, 2010-2020**



Year	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010
JIF 2	3.776	2.398	2.326	1.714	3.234	2.462	2.132	3.035	1.963	1.186	1.519
JIF 5	4.064	3.407	3.617	3.607	3.68	3.257	2.661	2.628	n/a	n/a	n/a

**Table 7: The Google H-5 Rankings, Political Science**

	Publication	h5-index	h5-median
1	<i>American Journal of Political Science</i>	68	106
2	<i>American Political Science Review</i>	65	114
3	<i>Journal of European Public Policy</i>	63	87
4	<i>The Journal of Politics</i>	59	85
5	<i>JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies</i>	52	74
6	<i>Comparative Political Studies</i>	52	69
7	<i>British Journal of Political Science</i>	51	81
8	<i>Journal of Democracy</i>	48	86
9	<i>European Journal of Political Research</i>	46	68
10	<i>West European Politics</i>	45	72
11	<i>Annual Review of Political Science</i>	44	87
12	<i>Political Behavior</i>	41	65
13	<i>Party Politics</i>	41	63
14	<i>Political Analysis</i>	40	68
15	<i>Democratization</i>	39	56
16	<i>Governance</i>	37	58
17	<i>Political Studies</i>	37	55
<b>18</b>	<b>Perspectives on Politics</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>52</b>
19	<i>Political Science Research and Methods</i>	36	54
20	<i>Political Research Quarterly</i>	35	66

**Table 8: Book Reviews Published in Volume 19**

Field	Conventional Reviews	Review Essays	Critical Dialogues	Symposia	Total
IR	51	1	7	0	59
American	80	0	4	1	85
Theory	61	0	5	0	66
CP	64	4	4	0	72
Total	256	5	20	1	282

our tenure (368, 369, and 366 book, respectively). This figure also represents a smaller drop in the number of books reviewed in 2017 (348) and 2016 (343). While we commissioned enough reviews to easily reach or surpass the figures seen in the last three years, problems related to the pandemic led many scholars to either renegotiate their deadlines or withdraw their earlier commitment to review.

As always, we featured the usual wide array of formats from single, double, and triple books reviews to Critical Dialogues, Book Review Essays, and Symposia. 2021's special formats included a Symposium on Ismail K. White and Chryl N. Laird's *Steadfast Democrats: How Social Forces Shape Black Political Behavior*. There were also Book Review Essays by Kurt Weyland (on recent work by historians of ethnicity and nationalism); Karen Beckwith (on books concerning women's political inclusion, exclusion, and violence against women in politics); Joseph Fewsmith (on recent books about China); Timothy Haughton (on Brexit); and Peter Rutland (on Russia and Ukraine). Finally, we had another excellent year of exchanges in our Critical Dialogues section, including those between Erik Engstrom, Robert Huckfeldt, Benjamin Page, and Martin Gilens on American democracy; Paulina Ochoa Espejo and Gillian Brock on migration and international justice; David Skarbek and Georg Wenzelburger on global crime and punishment; Ana Tanasoca and Mary Scudder on democratic deliberation; Tim Glawion and Jonathan Fisher on East Africa; Steven Klein and Benjamin McKean on neoliberalism and paths to global democracy; Neil Renc and Michael Boyle on drones and the ethics of asymmetric killing in warfare; Richard Fording, Sanford Schram, David Peterson, and Mark Ramirez on racism in America; Sinja Graf and Dirk Moses about the concepts of universal crime and human rights; Jennifer Pan and Manfred Elfstrom on social assistance programs and worker resistance in China; and Gabriel Negretto and Rogers Smith on comparative constitutionalism.

### FINAL WORDS

Michael Bernhard and Daniel O'Neill's time on the journal is coming to a close. At the end of the Spring semester they will be going into their 6th and final year as editors. The Association will be conducting a search in the near future to find their replacements. We look for-

ward to bringing the Black Lives Matter issue to fruition, and hope that our final Annual Meeting as editors will not be ruined by a new mutation that prevents us from meeting in Montreal. At that time we hope to organize two panels drawn from the great papers that we solicited on BLM. We close as usual by thanking our staff of editorial assistants who are all pursuing their PhDs at the University of Florida<sup>4</sup>, the staff at Cambridge University Press<sup>5</sup>, the publication team at APSA<sup>6</sup>, the members of the editorial board<sup>7</sup>, and all those who write and review for the journal. ■

### Endnotes

1. The calls for papers can be found at these locations. BLM: <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/perspectives-on-politics/call-for-papers-black-lives-matter-special-issue>; Pandemic Politics: <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/perspectives-on-politics/call-for-papers-pandemic-politics>
2. Clarivate Analytics. InCites Journal Citation Reports. Accessed February 7, 2020. <https://jcr.incites.thomsonreuters.com/JCRJournalHomeAction.action> (login required).
3. According to Mark Zadrozny of CUP: "Journals with Impact Factors may see their citation count increase this year as a result of Clarivate's inclusion, for the first time, of citations from 'Early Access' (FirstView/online-ahead-of-issue) articles in this year's release. Although these same FirstView articles will not be counted in the denominator of Impact Factor calculations this year, new FirstView articles will be counted in the denominator from 2021 and forward. Articles already published in FirstView and in your journals' backlog queue will be counted in the year they are published within a volume. There will be no changes to the base calculation itself – citations for the 2020 Impact Factor will still need to have been made in 2020 for content published in 2018-2019."
4. Stephanie Denardo, Graham Gallagher, Karla Mundim, and Kelly Richardson.
5. Mark Zadrozny, David Mainwaring, Katrina Swartz, Wendy Moore, Jim Ansell, Alyssa Neumann, Molly Sheffer, Andrew Hyde, Linda Lindenfelser, Gavin Swanson, and Gail Naron Chalew.
6. Janet Box-Steffensmeier, Steven R. Smith, Jon Gurstelle, Madelyn Dewey, and Karima Scott.
7. See here: <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/perspectives-on-politics/information/editorial-board>