

Editorial

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This Editorial marks both the beginning of Michael E. Lamb's reappointment as Editor of *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law* and the appointment, for the first time, of an Associate Editor, Nancy Steblay, to help with the review and selection of articles from a growing volume of submissions. This makes it an auspicious time to take stock of where things stand and to articulate the path we would like to pursue together over the next 6 years.

Michael's initial hope upon appointment in 2012 was to consolidate and clarify a unique scholarly niche for the journal, making *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law* the "go-to" journal for the growing number of application-minded professionals across the globe who are directly interested in research, theory, and scholarship on psychology, law, and public policy.

Since 2012, the number of papers submitted for publication has increased steadily while the rejection rate has remained around 75%, so the increased flow of articles has allowed us to publish an increasing number of papers, without sacrificing quality and without creating a problematic backlog. More important than changes in the number of submissions are changes in the diversity of topics covered. In 2012, nearly half focused on risk assessment and mock jury research. By contrast, whereas both topics were still represented in 2016, there were also multiple articles on forensic interviewing, forensic mental health assessment and interventions, correctional policies and practices, family law issues such as custody and child support, juvenile justice, and the assessment of public policy interventions. We hope to continue publishing articles on this broad range of topics.

An additional goal in 2012 was to ensure that scholars and practitioners throughout the world could benefit from the content published and seek to join the conversation themselves. Like all sciences, psychology has become more international, and it was important and timely to ensure that *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law* was authored, reviewed, and read by scholars and practitioners from around the world. The proportion of articles authored by scholars from outside the United States has quadrupled—nearly half the articles now published have authors from countries other than the United States. Furthermore, *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law* now has an Editorial Board that is diverse with respect to geography, gender, professional age, and areas of expertise.

Academic impact factors have also increased slowly over this period, but of course these tell only part of the relevant story for *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law*, because it is much harder to evaluate impact in the worlds of policy, law, and practice than in academia. Ideally, we would like to see *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law* articles cited in legal briefs and decisions, policy and assessment manuals and other aspects of the "gray" literature, as well as in academic articles and books.

Over the last few years, an increasing number of contributors to *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law* have publicly deposited their

stimulus materials or raw data (mostly using APA's OSF online repository), and this has surely enhanced confidence in the reliability and validity of the relevant research. The journal proudly endorses the Open Science Framework and will continue to encourage authors to make their materials and data publicly available whenever possible. Of course, many of the papers we publish involve complex confidential materials rather than scores achieved by experimental participants, so public access is not possible, and a significant number of articles integrate previously published findings with legal and psychological theory in novel reviews. We continue to welcome such articles as well.

Looking ahead, we hope to continue the emphasis on policy issues and on a broadened range of studies that employ a diverse array of methods and approaches, including field research, to address questions that pertain not only to criminal law issues (jury processes and decision making, eye-witness testimony, the assessment of competence) but also to family law issues and to policy questions with respect to education, health, corrections, and evaluation.

Because *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law* seeks to publish articles that provide reliable and valid information for legal practice and public policy, submitted articles should report demonstrably robust and conclusive findings. As a result, an increasing number of published papers report multiple studies with converging and complementary findings rather than individual studies. We expect this trend to continue and note that the demand for multistudy reports is consistent with demands in the field for authors to focus on well-established findings rather than speculation and suggestive results. Newly trained and younger scholars may be particularly open to this approach having been educated during a period in which there has been increased concern about replicability.

We encourage authors to submit articles that synthesize and clarify our current understanding but also recognize the usefulness of articles that open new areas for research. We are especially eager to publish conceptual and theoretical articles that expose and highlight the need and specific direction for research on topics that are practically important but demand answers that have not yet attracted systematic research or where practice often deviates from the conditions that have been the focus of systematic research. In addition, we hope to receive submissions from scholars and practitioners who seek to bring about empirically informed changes in practice.

Our objective is that *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law* be universally recognized for high-quality reports on a wide range of legal and policy topics. We want to attract the attention of a new generation of scientist practitioners, empirical legal scholars, and policy evaluators around the world, ensuring that they view the journal as the optimal place to publish and to read about research at the interface of applied and forensic psychology, legal studies, and policy evaluation.