

From the editors

Welcome to the new-look *Journal of Public Policy*. Cambridge University Press has been working with the team at *JPP* to produce a redesigned cover and format. With the journal keeping the same colour and layout for many years under the previous editors, it was time for a change. The design highlights the new editorial team of Anthony Bertelli and Peter John, and that the home of the journal is at the University of Southern California with its managing editor, Aubrey Hicks, and editorial assistant, Jennifer Connolly. We think the new colours, logo and typeface are much more modern and eye-catching, and are better able to promote the pieces we have been editing. We thank Patrick McCartan and Jim Ansell for their patience in supplying many prototype designs and in responding to our many comments on them, and then not resting until we were happy.

It always takes time for a new editorial team to take full control of the content. Now – just over a year into the job – we are starting to see papers appear in print that have had our editorial contribution right from the start. With their content, clarity and close attention to methods, they represent the kinds of papers we like to publish and are proud of as editors, even though, with just four here, there are many other kinds of papers that we publish too, especially qualitative ones. We also hope the papers have improved as a result of our editing and with the input of good reviewers who have taken the time to read them carefully and who have made thoughtful and considered comments that the authors could implement.

The first piece by James E. Monogan III – *The politics of immigrant policy in the 50 US states, 2005-2011* – is a paradigm of careful empirical analysis. This article is about the determinants of immigrant policy in the fifty US states between 2005 and 2011. These policies, to enact immigration-based legislation, have been increasingly popular over the past two decades. Here politics is to the fore as politicians are influenced by electoral considerations as they make laws. Legislators consider public opinion, but also how the voters are likely to change in composition in future years. The article analyses relevant laws using an advanced statistical model and shows that immigration policy is affected primarily by legislative professionalism, electoral ideology, state wealth and change in the foreign-born population. There are quite a few papers currently on the policy area of migration and immigration, so this paper represents a fruitful line of work currently being carried out by public policy scholars.

Another fruitful line of current work in public policy is on lobbying, a classic topic of study. The attraction of *Business as usual: interest group access and*

representation across policy-making venues by Fred Boehmke, Sean Gailmard and John Patty is that it is an empirical study of something that we should care about very much: what lobbyists actually do, and the balance between lobbying the administration and the legislature. After examining federal lobbying and lobbying in the state of Minnesota, the authors find that few groups specialise in administrative lobbying and most groups devote the same amounts of time to each. We are back to the classic territory of Schattschneider in thinking about the bias of lobbying; and in spite of claims to the contrary, these authors find that the bureaucracy does much to alleviate it.

The next two articles take us across the Atlantic to the European context. One is about the media and the policy agenda, *Newspaper attention and policy activities in Spain* by Laura Chaqués Bonafont and Frank Baumgartner. This is interesting because Spanish newspapers are highly partisan; but the careful data analysis of the authors shows that they map each other in policy topics, and this relates to the attention of the legislature in the form of oral questions. This forces us to think about the causal relationships involved with these agendas, and to realise how attentive are politicians to the media. These findings reveal much about the Spanish case as well as about agenda-setting more generally.

Parliamentary questions is an apposite link to our second European paper *The opposition's policy influence through issue politicisation* by Henrik Seeberg, which is also on agenda-setting. This paper examines the impact of the opposition over crime policy in Denmark. Unpicking the complex relationships between public opinion, media, opposition and government attention, this paper finds that the opposition (right-wing in this context) can force a left-wing government to adopt restrictions in penal policy. In parliamentary systems, the opposition is often thought to be marginalised and for agenda-setting to be in the hands of the government. This study shows just the opposite, and it reveals the power of parliamentary procedures, such as questions, to allow the opposition to set the agenda. We think this article – as well as the other three – shows how recent research on the classic topics in the study of public policy can produce new findings and insights. These pieces are witness to the lively nature of the field in its current state. We anticipate we will have many more papers in this vein, as well as contributions to theory and debate.

Anthony M. Bertelli
Peter C. John