

Editors' Note

1 Introducing *Letters*

In this issue of *Political Analysis* we introduce a new format, *Letters*. These are meant to be shorter reports that are tightly focused on a specific point. Often that point will be a new quantitative or qualitative result, a short theoretical development, or a brief methodological innovation. Letters will typically range between two and four journal pages, and when submitted should not exceed 3,000 words.

Our intention behind this new format is to emulate the typical publication style often seen in the natural and physical sciences; letters should be written clearly and concisely, and they should only contain a few tables or figures. Authors of letters should avoid lengthy literature reviews, and are encouraged to make use of supplementary materials that can be published online. In our experience as authors and editors, there are many contributions that can be presented in a short letter-length paper, especially in a field like political methodology. By presenting important results in this shorter-format style, we believe that these results are less likely to be buried in pages of repetitive literature reviews, and they will be more likely to be read and incorporated into the development of future methodologies.

From the standpoint of the *Journal*, letters differ from research articles in their length and style; letters that are submitted will go through the same rigorous peer-review and editorial-review process that is the hallmark of *Political Analysis*. Letters that are accepted for publication will be published in the electronic and print versions of the *Journal*, and like our research articles will be searchable and citable. We will continue to publish research articles, just as the *Journal* has done successfully since the first volume of *Political Analysis*.

The letters are overseen by our co-editors. Currently they are primarily edited by our two newest Associate Editors, Justin Grimmer and Jens Hainmueller, both professors at Stanford University. We thank Professors Grimmer and Hainmueller for taking on this important role for the *Journal*, and the Society for Political Methodology and Stanford University for providing support for their editorial work. We also want to thank Oxford University Press for their assistance with developing the letters format, and for their willingness to let us work to develop new and improved outlets for academic publishing.

If you wish further information about the guidelines for letters, please review the Information for Authors and Reviewers, available on the *Journal's* website. That resource is the most up-to-date statement about current *Journal* policies and procedures.¹

2 The *Letters* in this Issue

We publish two letters in this issue of *Political Analysis*. The first is by Arthur Spirling and Michael Gill, "Estimating the Severity of the WikiLeaks United States Diplomatic Cable Disclosures." In this letter, the authors develop an interesting and useful approach to estimating a quantity, when the true quantity is unknown (to the researcher). They apply this approach to the WikiLeaks data, and their methodology indicates that approximately 5% of all U.S. diplomatic cables were leaked.

The second letter in this issue is by Annie Franco, Neil Malhotra, and Gabor Simonovits, titled "Underreporting in Political Science Survey Experiments: Comparing Questionnaires to Published Results." In recent years, there has been considerable debate regarding the preregistration of research studies, including a Symposium on Research Registration that appeared in Volume 21, Issue 1, of *Political Analysis*. In this letter, the authors analyze data from the "Time-sharing

¹See http://www.oxfordjournals.org/our_journals/polana/for_authors/general.html.

Experiments in the Social Sciences” (TESS) project; they compare the preresearch version of TESS research protocols with their published results, and thereby provide some important quantitative data about the potential underreporting of results in these experiments.

Both are important and interesting reports of research, and provide excellent examples of what we hope will grow into an important aspect of the way in which future research results are reported in *Political Analysis* and other social science journals.

R. Michael Alvarez and Jonathan N. Katz