

## Notes from the Editors

The day we began our term as editors, June 1, 2020, then-president Donald Trump authorized National Guard troops to disperse violently a peaceful crowd of Black Lives Matter protestors who had gathered near the White House.<sup>1</sup> That same day, a prominent Belarusian opposition leader was sentenced for joining a protest against the reelection bid of the authoritarian Alexander Lukashenko,<sup>2</sup> and Hong Kong announced its ban of the annual commemoration of the Tiananmen Square uprising.<sup>3</sup> By June 2020, there were more than seven million confirmed cases of COVID-19 and more than four hundred thousand deaths globally (Sanyaolu et al. 2021). We wrote then that the urgency of these political moments underlined our commitment as editors to advance research that could provide purchase on political problems such as these, even when those problems fell outside of the questions, the discipline of political science had recently privileged (Notes from the Editors 2020).

Although these events felt extraordinary in the summer of 2020, the need for political science to tackle important substantive problems has only grown in the last 4 years. The *American Political Science Review* (APSR) has increasingly risen to this challenge. During our term spanning the last 4 years, APSR authors have used a wide range of approaches and methodologies to advance our understanding of social movements and protest, democratic participation and democratic backsliding, inequalities, conflict, immigration, and other significant political problems. In this final “Notes from the Editors,” we highlight just a few of the important contributions APSR authors have made in recent years in addressing what, in our first “Notes from the Editors,” we called “timely or timeless questions about power and politics” (2020, vi).

Among the most pressing of such questions are those centered on democracy and democratic backsliding. In recent years, APSR authors have helped us understand that “status discordance” (i.e., the difference between the status people achieve and their childhood expectations) is associated with both abstaining from voting and supporting radical parties (Kurer and Van Staalduin 2022); they have illuminated how and when strategic false claims about “fake news” enable political elites to evade accountability (Schiff, Schiff,

and Bueno 2024); and explained both the role of partisan echo chambers in promoting affective and issue polarization (Hobolt, Lawall, and Tilley 2024); and partisan democratic backsliding, expansion, and performance (Grumbach 2023). At the same time, they have identified important “Antidote[s] to Backsliding,” for example, the role that politically organized ethnic minorities can play in helping sustain democracy and the conditions under which deliberation can activate people’s abilities to reason about politics (Niemeyer et al. 2024; Rovny 2023).

APSR authors have also explored critically important aspects of inequality and forms of resistance to inequality, including some gender questions that have traditionally been overlooked in the discipline of political science—for example, struggles around feminist demands centered on housework (Forrester 2022), women’s grassroots party activism (Goyal 2024), and intersectional relations of sexual domination and violence (Kessel 2022). Authors likewise addressed the undemocratic nature of political inequalities (Ingham 2022), income inequality in democratic governments (Elkjær and Iversen 2023), and African American respectability politics and perceptions of inequality (Jefferson 2023).

The authors whose work we have published have helped us to understand important concerns about voting, immigration, and climate change. On voting, the journal has published innovative research examining themes such as the usage of bloc voting as a method to ensure political accountability (Cooperman 2024), the suppression of Black people’s voting rights (Keele, Cubbison, and White 2021), the impact of compulsory voting (Oprea, Martin, and Brennan 2024), Asian American voter preferences for state and federal legislative positions (Lublin and Wright 2024), the influence of Spanish-language appeals on voting and candidate evaluations (Zárate, Quezada-Llanes, and Armenta 2024), and the impact of racial group consciousness on voting and other forms of political participation (Smith et al. 2024).

Concerning immigration, several articles have addressed the status of refugees, centering immigrants and their agency and examining how the law regulates asylum and refugees. Authors discovered that the presence of refugees generates both development and conflict resolution in some communities (Zhou and Shaver 2021), that additional knowledge about immigrant family experiences results in more inclusion and less hostility toward immigrants (Williamson et al. 2021), and, finally, that refugee networks are useful for both addressing problems and encouraging political participation (Johns, Langer, and Peters 2022). And, research published during our term has shed light on climate

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.npr.org/2020/06/01/867532070/trumps-unannounced-church-visit-angers-church-officials>.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.rferl.org/a/belarus-s-slipper-revolution-seeks-to-stamp-out-lukashenko-is-he-at-risk-/30656256.html>.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/01/world/asia/Hong-kong-Tiananmen-vigil-banned.html#:~:text=The%20order%20cited%20the%20need,see%20as%20China%27s%20rising%20repression>.

change and climate justice, focusing on political attitudes toward climate change (Bush and Clayton 2023) and indigenous people's uncompensated labor caring for the natural world (Temin 2024).

As we write this final "Notes from the Editors," the eyes of the world are on the Russia war against Ukraine,<sup>4</sup> on Israel's ongoing assault on Gaza and operations in the West Bank in the wake of Hamas's October 7, 2023 attack (Congressional Research Service 2024) and on the political contexts that shape these and other conflict processes worldwide. Many eyes are also trained on our own campuses, particularly on the student protests and university administrations' responses to them, both of which have themselves been under increased scrutiny, not only from students, faculty, and alumni but also from federal and state legislators. Recent contributions to the journal have helped us to grapple with eternal questions about conflict and cooperation, about the domestic reverberations of global issues, and about the politics of protest and protest management.

For example, at the broadest levels, *APSR* authors have explored the impact of colonialism and imperialism on conflict, and other contemporary political problems (Adalet 2024; Allen and Leonard 2024; Haas and Lindstam 2024; Paine, Qiu, and Ricart-Huguet 2024; Sharman and Zarakol 2024), how anger perpetuates conflict cycles (Schnakenberg and Wayne 2024), and how foregoing demands for atonement facilitates cooperation (Herrera and Kydd 2024). They have also examined more micro-level causes of political violence, finding, for instance, that patriarchal values drive voluntary military service (Bjarnegård et al. 2023), and that nonviolent protests by ethnic minorities and patriarchy-defying women are more likely to be perceived as violent and deserving of repression (Manekin and Mitts 2022; Naunov 2024). Similarly, they have uncovered individual-level coping mechanisms: civilians choose varying survival strategies in violent contexts (Milliff 2024).

*APSR* authors have also shed light on the consequences of political violence and on prospects for peace. They have analyzed the role of greed (Tellez 2022) and violence (Ghosn et al. 2021) in the creation of refugees and in determining their willingness to return, shown that refugees do not produce additional violence in host states (Zhou and Shaver 2021), connected state violence to the resonance of human rights discourse (Dancy and Fariss 2024), provided persuasive evidence that foreign threats and campaigns boost autocratic leader's stability (Di Lonardo, Sun, and Tyson 2020) and popularity (Hale 2022), and underscored how wars drive subsequent nationalism (De Juan et al. 2024). They have also illuminated the ways in which peacekeepers can promote democratization in the aftermath of civil war (Blair, Di Salvatore, and Smidt 2023), how women rebels develop intersectional identities that drive collective demands for more gender-inclusive provisions in civil war peace agreements (Thomas

2024), and how NGO investigations compel states to disclose more accurate information on their use of violence against civilians (Gibilisco and Steinberg 2023).

As a team, we are proud of the excellent research that has appeared in the *APSR* under our editorship, but we have certainly not done this work alone! We thank all of the many authors who chose to submit their best work to the *APSR* beginning in June 2020. We were only able to accept a painfully small number of the manuscripts we received, but we all learned a lot through reading the submitted manuscripts and are grateful that so many excellent researchers and writers saw the *APSR* as a potential outlet for their work.

We relied on thousands of reviewers to provide expert judgment and guidance regarding these manuscripts, and we truly appreciate the generosity of these reviewers. We note especially the constructive spirit with which so many of them entered the review process, finding ways to be helpful to authors even when they were skeptical about a manuscript's prospects for moving forward with us. And, all of the articles we published benefited from the authors' engagement with the reviews, which often involved more than one round of revisions.

Our editorial board was a great support in our endeavors. Editorial board members stepped in when we needed a replacement review or when we needed an additional trustworthy independent judgment about a manuscript. Many of our editorial board members also helped to guide manuscripts in our direction that we might not otherwise have received for consideration. We asked some members of the editorial board to serve as our Advisory Board for Ethical Research. These individuals (Catherine Boone, Scott Desposato, Macartan Humphries, Lauren Maclean, Trisha Phillips, and Peri Schwarz-Shea) provided thoughtful, sensitive guidance on many questions about the ethics of political science research and helped us to set and maintain a high bar for the work that the journal published. Each editor also worked with one or more graduate students who served as editorial assistants. These assistants provided crucial support for the individual editors and the team across many dimensions of our work.

Both Cambridge University Press and the American Political Science Association facilitated our success. Mark Zadrozny, David Mainwaring, Jim Ansell, Wendy Moore, and Helen Hardy at Cambridge were terrific partners for the team. Jon Gurstelle at APSA was a consistent, thoughtful, and kind source of guidance and support. We also worked productively with APSA Executive Director Steven Smith. And, the *APSR* simply could not have functioned without the superb management of Managing Editor Dragana Svraka.

It has been our honor to edit this distinguished journal. We are excited to see where the *APSR* goes in the future, and hope that the incoming team has an invigorating experience encountering the best that political science has to offer. We wish them well and will read the new issues with great interest, understanding

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/conflict-ukraine>.

so much better now everything that lies underneath the development and production of excellent, pathbreaking research.

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