

He previously served as co-chair of APSA's Committee on the Status of Graduate Students in the Profession. Nelson's work has appeared in the *Texas Law Review* and the *Texas Review of Law & Politics*. In 2023–2024, he will be a judicial law clerk for Chief Judge Lavenski Smith of the US Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit. Nelson utilized the Lee Ann Fujii Travel Grant to attend the 2021 APSA Annual Meeting. He presented his paper comparing different approaches to militant democracy (or defensive democracy) in the constitutions of developing countries.

### TYE RUSH

Tye Rush is a doctoral candidate in the department of political science at the University of California, Los Angeles. Broadly, Tye specializes in issues of race, ethnicity, and politics but his research examines the Voting Rights Act, voting rights, and election administration. His dissertation takes a holistic approach, examining legislator intent behind voter ID laws, by using historical context around restrictive voting laws to establish the link between the restrictive voting laws of the past and those of today in the literature.

Born and raised in San Bernardino, CA, Tye holds a bachelor's degree in political science and public service from the University of California, Riverside. Currently, Tye is a senior policy fellow at the UCLA Voting Rights Project, a Ford Foundation Dissertation Fellow, and a University of California President's Pre-Professoriate fellow. Previously, Tye served as a research fellow at the UCLA Institute for Inequality and Democracy at Luskin and as the Voting and Redistricting Fellow at Common Cause. Tye utilized the Lee Ann Fujii Travel Grant to present his paper, "Are Voter Identification Laws an Electoral Strategy?" at the 2021 APSA Annual Meeting. ■



## 2020-2021 Editors' Report for *PS: Political Science & Politics*

PHILLIP ARDOIN | COEDITOR

PAUL GRONKE | COEDITOR

MARAH SCHLINGENSIEPEN | INTERIM MANAGING EDITOR

*PS: Political Science & Politics* is in its 54th year of publication. *PS* occupies a unique niche among the APSA portfolio of publications as an outlet for brief and non-technical articles featuring new research, political science commentary and research on timely political and social events, research into and discussion of the political science discipline, and scholarship on teaching and pedagogy.

This is our final year as editors. Over our eight-year tenure, we hope that we have successfully stewarded the journal during a period of rapid change in the profession and in the academy. We were the first faculty editorial team at *PS*, and we could not have been successful without the support of Barbara Walthall, who helped manage the transition and mentored our current managing editor, Celina Szymanski. Jon Gurstelle, Steve Smith, our partners at Cambridge University Press, and the Publication Committee of the APSA Council, and our Editorial Board, were also instrumental in helping us move the journal from an in-house publication to a fully peer-reviewed publication.

During the last two years, we have focused on systematizing and documenting our editorial policies and procedures, expanding our social media profile, and working with the APSA Council and staff to ensure a smooth transition to the next editorial team. We continue to advocate for regular communications between the editorial managers for all the APSA journals, standardized reporting on the demographics of authors and peer reviewers, and substantially similar policies across the journals on issues such as data deposit and transparency. Some standardization makes things easier for authors and reviewers, improves the ability of the Council and members of the profession to review and compare editorial performance and evaluation, and reduces the load for editorial teams.

Among the other things we have done this year to start to prepare for the editorial transition:

- Completed a data deposit policy to improve replicability and transparency;
- Continued to systematize submission and peer review policies for symposia and spotlights;
- Continued to reach out to underrepresented scholars, scholars outside the United States, and scholars from institutions with more teaching and service orientations.
- Requested several Board members to extend their term to maintain continuity;
- Recruited a small number of new Board members in order to have some institutional memory for the new team.

We will, of course, be available as a resource for the new team when they take over the journal in September 2022.

*PS* is one of the primary outlets for research on the profession, and we've been proud to publish important articles and symposia that highlight the challenges of broadening and diversifying our profession (and academia) and combating conscious and unconscious biases in hiring, promotion, and peer review. We feel an important sense of responsibility to provide an outlet for disciplinary debates, but this has also opened up *PS* to some controversy as debates that first appear in our pages spill out into social media. We thank our Board, the Publications Policy Committee, and the APSA leadership for helping us navigate these discussions.

As examples, we have recently published and have upcoming symposia and spotlights on:

- Desk Rejections and Peer Review in Political Science Journals
- Normalizing Diversity and Structuring Inclusion in the Profession (this is a three part symposium with sections on the profession, on teaching, and on mentoring).
- The Present and Future Trajectory of Political Science and the Academy in Central Europe
- Forecasting the September 2021 German National Election
- Two Spotlights in From the Sections, one examining scholars working at the nexus of legislative studies and race and ethnic politics, and the other explores research on racial and ethnic politics as it applies to legislative studies.

Political science is somewhat unique among academic disciplines because we cannot turn away from a turbulent political world, and some of this turbulence will inevitably spill onto our pages. We urge anyone who has comments, suggestions, and criticisms to forward these to the editorial team at [ps@apsanet.org](mailto:ps@apsanet.org).

### PEER REVIEW POLICIES FOR SYMPOSIA

Symposia are an important part of the content of *PS*. Some of our most widely cited articles and articles with the highest Altmetric scores, are part of symposia. Symposia provide a critical role in allowing scholars to rapidly respond to current events, controversies in our discipline, and innovations in pedagogy.

This past year, the *PS* editorial team added some additional checks to the symposia and spotlight process. First, all symposium and spotlight proposals are now peer reviewed by a *PS* board member and/or area expert and the *PS* editors. This process is administered via Editorial Manager, which has helped improve the quality of the feedback and reinforces our message that all content—including symposia and spotlights—are required to be peer reviewed.

In addition to the new peer review of symposium and spotlight proposals, we have also implemented a two step process for reviewing all symposium and spotlight manuscripts. Symposium and spotlight manuscripts (1) undergo at least one blinded peer review and guest editor review and then (2) undergo a review by one of the coeditors. One thing we hoped to accomplish was to create a special “guest editor” role in Editorial Manager that would have constrained authority, but we leave this to the next team. Good luck!

### DATA DEPOSIT POLICY

*PS* supports transparency, reproducibility, and replicability in political science research, and we have added a data deposit policy, following closely the model spearheaded by the new APSR team. Authors are required to submit materials to our dataverse (<https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataverse/ps>). We do not have the personnel or resources to confirm that the materials provide full reproducibility and replicability, so we would not describe this as a “replication” archive. We support this requirement and encourage the next team to investigate how replicability can be assured without placing additional undue burdens on editorial teams or which might exclude some scholars from considering service as editors because they do not have the resources, expertise, or support from graduate students.

### DIVERSITY EFFORTS

*PS* supports the diversity efforts of APSA and our discipline, and we are proud that we continue to attract a diverse author pool. Along

with the other APSA journal teams, we’ve worked with the Publications Policy Committee to explain how we identify potential editorial board members, and what criteria are part of that process. In addition, this year, we reached out to our current and past Board members to seek out nominations for new Board members.

We continue to make headway in attracting more submissions from international scholars and featuring articles that address the concerns of contingent scholars. We have published research this year by 72 international scholars representing more than 25% of our contributors. We are particularly excited about an upcoming symposium led by Dr. Tatyana Ruseva and Dr. Joanna Skrzypczyńska, The Present and Future Trajectory of Political Science and the Academy in Central Europe.

We also continue to publish research from a substantial number of young scholars who are working outside of academia and are currently not in a tenure track position. This past year 29% of our contributors are not serving in tenure track positions. Finally, we are proud to note the percent of authors in *PS* representing minority race/ethnicity communities. This past year 44% of our authors identify as a race or ethnicity other than European/Anglo White. More can and will be done.

Table 1: Continued

| Gender   | Percent | Gender   | Percent |
|--|---------|--|---------|
| Male   | 50.0%   | Prefer not to answer                             | 2.4%    |
| Female   | 47.3%   | Non-binary                                       | 0.3%    |
|  |         |  |         |
| Race/Ethnicity                                 | Percent | Race/Ethnicity                                   | Percent |
| European/Anglo White                           | 66.1%   | Other  | 2.4%    |
| Asian or Asian American                        | 10.6%   | Middle Eastern or Arab American                  | 1.7%    |
| Latino/a                                       | 6.8%    | Non-European/Non -Anglo White                    | 1.7%    |
| Black, Afro -Caribbean, or African American    | 4.1%    | Native American/First Nations/Indigenous Peoples | 0.7%    |
| Prefer not to answer                           | 5.8%    |  |         |
|  |         |  |         |
| Home Institution                               | Percent | Home Institution                                 | Percent |
| University with Ph.D. in Political Science     | 58.9%   | Other  | 1.0%    |
| University w/out Ph.D. in Political Science    | 21.6%   | Community or Two -Year College                   | 0.7%    |
| Four -Year College                             | 12.7%   | Government                                       | 0.7%    |
| Non-Profit Sector                              | 2.7%    | Private Sector                                   | 0.3%    |
| Prefer not to answer                           | 1.4%    |  |         |
|  |         |  |         |
| Primary Position                               | Percent | Primary Position                                 | Percent |
| Full Professor                                 | 27.4%   | Independent Scholar                              | 1.0%    |
| Associate Professor (with tenure)              | 23.6%   | Retired  | 1.0%    |
| Assistant Professor                            | 19.9%   | Other  | 1.0%    |
| Graduate Student                               | 8.2%    | Prefer not to answer                             | 1.0%    |
| Full Time Non -Tenure -Track Faculty           | 5.8%    | Academic Administration                          | 0.7%    |
| Post -Doctoral Fellow                          | 3.4%    | Government                                       | 0.7%    |
| Research Scientist or Non -Profit Organization | 3.1%    | Adjunct Faculty                                  | 0.3%    |
| Undergraduate Student                          | 2.7%    |  |         |
|  |         |  |         |
| Country  | Percent | Country  | Percent |
| United States                                  | 75.3%   | Ghana  | 0.7%    |
| United Kingdom                                 | 5.5%    | Japan  | 0.7%    |
| Canada   | 5.1%    | Denmark  | 0.3%    |
| Germany  | 2.7%    | Ireland  | 0.3%    |
| Switzerland                                    | 2.4%    | Italy  | 0.3%    |

### EDITORIAL HIGHLIGHTS

As shown in table 1, submission rates to *PS* have grown by 75-100% since we took over as editors in fall of 2014. We appear to have levelled out to 175-200 submissions annually. We are concerned there may be a slight drop in submissions this year due to COVID-19, but at the time of this writing, we appear to be on pace for 200-250 this year.

With the transition to online courses and cancellation of several academic conferences in spring 2020 due to COVID-19, the submission and peer review acceptance rates for *PS* significantly declined.

## ASSOCIATION

Submission and reviewer acceptance rates have generally returned to the pre-COVID-19 rates, but we will continue to monitor these closely as the fall semester opens.

### PUBLICATION HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PAST YEAR

This past year we published a variety of interesting and engaging articles. Below are listed a few of the more notable articles published this year in the pages of *PS* which provide a snapshot of the timeliness and diversity of issues addressed in the pages of *PS*.

#### Politics Section

- Hughes, Heather, and Israel Waismel-Manor. 2021. "The Macedonian Fake News Industry and the 2016 US Election." 54 (1).
- Scarrow, Susan. 2021. "US Parties Abroad: Representing Versus Mobilizing Expatriates." 54 (1).
- Barnes, Tiffany D., Victoria D. Beall, and Eric C. Cassese. 2021. "American Party Redux: Stability in Partisan Gender Gaps." 54 (3).
- Brown, Adam R., and Jeremy C. Pope. 2021. "Mechanical Turk and the 'Don't Know' Option." 54 (3).

Table 2: New Submissions to *PS* through Editorial Manager

|                          | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021                |
|--------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|---------------------|
| New Submissions Received | 256  | 174  | 207  | 225  | 218  | 181 (as of Aug. 19) |

#### Profession Section

- Garcia, Matthew Mendez, and Ange-Marie Hancock Alfaro. "Where Do We Begin? Preliminary Thoughts on Racial and Ethnic Diversity Within Political Science." 54 (1).
- Aoki, Andrew L., and Janelle Wong. 2021. Introduction: Reflections on Asian American Politics on the 20th Anniversary of the Asian Pacific American Caucus." 54 (2).
- Hill, Kim Quaille. 2021. "Research Career Paths Among Political Scientists in Research Institutions." 54 (2).
- Breuning, Marijke, Christina Fattore, Jennifer Ramos, and Jamie Scalera. "The Great Equalizer? Gender, Parenting, and Scholarly Productivity During the Global Pandemic." 54 (3).
- Mallinson, Daniel, and Rebecca Gill. 2021. "Introduction: How Men Can Advance Gender Equity in Political Science." 54 (3).
- Hill. 2021. "Research Career Paths Among Political Scientists in Teaching Institutions." 54 (4).
- Gibson, James. 2021. "Against Desk Rejects!." 54 (4).

#### Teacher Section

- Loepp, Eric. 2021. "Introduction: COVID-19 and Emergency e-Learning in Political Science and International Relations." 54 (1).
- Glazier, Rebecca. 2021. "Making Human Connections in Online Teaching" 54 (1).
- Williams, Unislawa, Robert Brown, Marilyn Davis, Tinaz Pavri, and Fatemeh Shafiei. 2021. "Teaching Data Science in Political Science: Integrating Methods with Substantive Curriculum." 54 (2).
- Ishiyama, John, Marijke Breuning, Cameron G. Thies, Re-

nee Van Vechten, and Sherri L. Wallace. 2021. "Rethinking the Undergraduate Political Science Major: An Introduction to the Symposium." 54 (2).

- Burmila, Edward. 2021. "Liberal Bias in the College Classroom: A Review of the Evidence (or Lack Thereof)." 54 (3).
- McBeth, Mark K., Jules Belyea, and Andrew Perry. 2021. "Dalton and Putnam: Teaching Political Polarization to Generation Z Students." 54 (4).

### STAFFING AND EDITORIAL BOARD

The *PS: Political Science & Politics* staff consists of a portion of two editors' time and a full-time managing editor as well as a part-time editorial associate. Coeditor Phillip Ardoin is based at Appalachian State University in Boone, North Carolina and coeditor Paul Gronke is based at Reed College in Portland, Oregon. Celina Szymanski, senior managing editor, is based in Baltimore, MD and has been supported during parental leave by Marah Schlingensiepen, who has extensive experience working as an editorial assistant for *Perspectives on Politics*. Henry Chen, the APSA publishing associate, has left to pursue graduate school, and Madelyn Dewey has filled that position. She serves as Associate Editor for *Political Science Today*, APSA's new member magazine, which is the replacement for the former Association section of *PS*. *PS* is further supported by part-time student assistants at Appalachian State and Reed College.

Our current editorial board includes 22 scholars who represent a diverse set of universities and colleges, research interests, methodologies, and perspectives of the APSA membership.

We would like to thank the members of our editorial board for their dedication and service to the journal and the profession.

#### New Board Members:

- Charity Butcher, *Kennesaw State University*
- Jonathan DiCicco, *Middle Tennessee State University*
- Eric Loepp, *University of Wisconsin, Whitewater*
- Matthew Moore, *California Polytechnic State University*
- Lisa Sanchez, *University of Arizona*

#### Continuing Term:

- James Druckman, *Northwestern University*
- Justin Esarey, *Wake Forest University*
- Kevin Esterling, *University of California, Riverside*
- Robin Harding, *Lady Margaret Hall*
- Natalie Jackson, *PRRI*
- Ellen Key, *Appalachian State University*
- Sarah Khan, *Yale University*
- Brett Ashley Leeds, *Rice University*
- Thomas Leeper, *Facebook*
- Tehama Lopez Bunyasi, *George Mason University*
- Yalidy Matos, *Rutgers University, New Brunswick*
- Barbara Norrander, *University of Arizona*
- Joseph Roberts, *Roger Williams University*
- Brian Smentkowski, *University of Idaho*
- Dawn Teele, *University of Pennsylvania*
- Renee Van Vechten, *University of Redlands*
- Yael Zeira, *Syracuse University*

We wish to thank the following editorial board members, whose term of service ends at the 2021 APSA Annual Meeting, for their ser-

vice, time, and dedication to PS.

- Maryam Zarnegar Deloffre, *George Washington University*
- Johnny Goldfinger, *Marian University*
- Robert Griffin, *Democracy Fund*
- Robert Hogan, *Louisiana State University*
- DuBose Kapeluck, *The Citadel*
- Mary Meyer, *Eckerd College*
- Sara McLaughlin Mitchell, *University of Iowa*
- Mason Moseley, *West Virginia University*
- Laura Sjoberg, *University of Florida*
- Jonathan Strand, *University of Nevada, Las Vegas*
- Joel Westheimer, *University of Ottawa*
- Leonard Williams, *Manchester University*

**PRODUCTION AND DELIVERY**

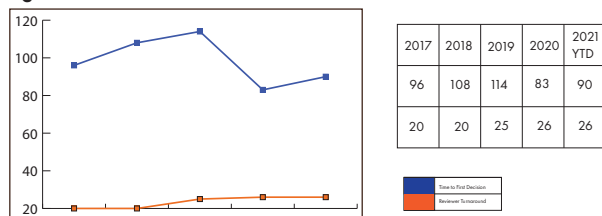
PS has a good working relationship with our publisher, Cambridge University Press. Katrina Swartz, our production manager at Cambridge University Press continues to provide excellent service.

The production of The Association section of PS (People, Association News, Gazette, Business sections) is completed in-house by APSA staff, (previously Henry Chen), publishing associates. The Association section requires more layout and design features than the front, which consists only of peer-reviewed content. We particularly want to commend Henry Chen’s efforts in creating compelling cover art to promote featured articles.

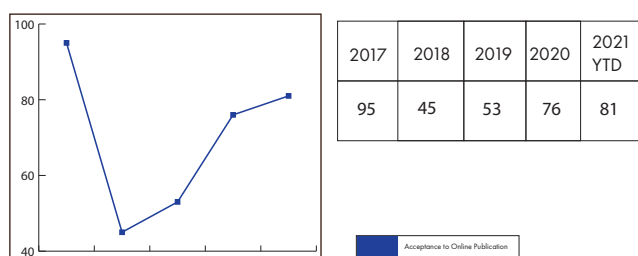
A significant challenge we faced during the pandemic is lack of any response to many of our peer review requests. Each time a request is not responded to, it adds 30 days to the review period. We understand that many journal editors experienced a similar challenge during the pandemic—submissions have held steady or increased, but finding reviewers has become a lot harder.

We have attempted to personalize our invitation letters and utilize our board members when needed, but we continue to have to send out as many as a dozen requests for review. We hope this improves when the world returns to normality. If it continues, PS and other journals may need to think of alternative models for peer review, for example, much larger editorial boards who serve for limited terms and take on regular peer review duties.

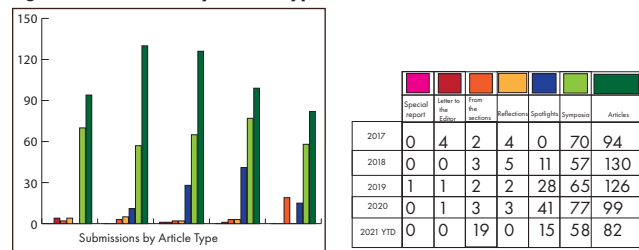
**Figure 1: Turnaround Time from Submission to Review**



**Figure 2: Turnaround Time from Acceptance to Publication**



**Figure 3: Submissions by Content Type, 2017-2021**



**SUBMISSIONS BY ARTICLE TYPE**

About half of our submissions in the first half of 2020 were stand-alone articles, and most of the rest were articles submitted as part of an organized symposium. Our attempts to create new content categories (“Reflections” and “From the Sections”) remain quite under utilized. Moving forward we plan to engage more proactively in soliciting content for these content categories.

The acceptance rate of 66.9% for 2020 was in line with our traditional rates. While the rate of acceptance is high in comparison to other APSA journals, this is partially the consequence of a significantly high acceptance rate of symposia. While all symposia submissions do undergo a double blind peer review, the review of symposium proposals filter out most manuscripts which might be ultimately rejected.

**Table 3: Final Disposition on Submissions, by date of final decision**

|  | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|--|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Number of symposia and spotlights published    | 9    | 6    | 7    | 10   | 17   | 10   | 9    | 9    |
| Number of symposia and spotlight contributions | 68   | 60   | 55   | 68   | 120  | 65   | 73   | 75   |

**Table 4: Symposia and Spotlights Published in PS**

| Volume Year | Accept | Reject |
|-------------|--------|--------|
| 2020*       | 66.9%  | 33.1%  |
| 2019        | 72.4%  | 27.6%  |
| 2018        | 64.6%  | 35.4%  |
| 2017        | 63.5%  | 36.5%  |
| 2016        | 53.1%  | 46.8%  |
| 2015        | 33.3%  | 66.6%  |

\*As of July 16 2020

**PUBLICITY AND OUTREACH**

PS joined the Twitterverse in January 2018. We now have over 4,600 followers and continue to build a follower base. Our handle is @ps\_polisci. A typical Tweet involves a catchy phrase or sentence describing the work and a link to the article itself. Often, authors of the featured article will provide the tweet for us to use on their behalf. We try to tag (@) authors who are active on Twitter to increase exposure and allow the authors to retweet the link. The APSA editorial associate runs the PS-Twitter, in consultation with the managing editor.

We resist pressure to use the PS or our personal / professional twitter accounts or other social media to discuss editorial decisions. We do not believe it is appropriate or productive to debate editorial decision making in 240 character snippets. In general, when we are alerted to controversies regarding PS content, we describe our general policies, direct individuals to the PS web pages, and encourage people to contact us directly via email. Others may disagree with these views, and we would be happy to participate in broader dis-

## ASSOCIATION

discussions about appropriate use of social media to debate editorial decision making.

The APSA-run Political Science Now blog ([www.politicalsciencenow.com](http://www.politicalsciencenow.com)) continues to feature PS content, especially symposia,

spotlights, and research about the profession. PS articles have been featured in news media and other publications including *Inside Higher Ed*, *The Washington Post's* "Monkey Cage," and National Public Radio, among others. ■



21,858  
total mentions



840, 766  
Total Pageviews in 2020-2021



13  
Total no. of conferences

\* Scores current as of August 15, 2021

| Rank | Altmetric score | Title   | Publication date |
|------|-----------------|---|------------------|
| 1    | 184             | Supporting Junior Women: Strategies for Men Colleagues  | 4/29/21          |
| 2    | 95              | Liberal Bias in the College Classroom: A Review of the Evidence (or Lack Thereof)   | 6/24/21          |
| 3    | 58              | Journal Desk-Rejection Practices in Political Science: Bringing Data to Bear on What Journals Do  | 7/6/21           |
| 4    | 46              | Collaboration for Designing, Conceptualizing, and (Possibly) Decolonizing Research in African Politics  | 4/19/21          |
| 5    | 37              | Desk Rejecting: A Better Use of Your Time   | 7/6/21           |
| 6    | 33              | Political Science Scholarship on the Middle East: A View from the Journals  | 2/23/21          |
| 7    | 33              | Covid-19 and Fieldwork: Challenges and Solutions  | 1/19/21          |
| 8    | 32              | Politically Invisible in America  | 6/28/21          |
| 9    | 31              | Pay to Play? How Reducing APSA Division Fees Increases Graduate Student Participation   | 5/14/21          |
| 10   | 31              | Reducing the Carbon Footprint of Academic Conferences by Online Participation: The Case of the 2020 Virtual European Consortium for Political Research General Conference | 2/22/21          |
| 11   | 29              | Single Conversations Expand Practitioners' Use of Research: Evidence from a Field Experiment  | 2/23/21          |
| 12   | 29              | The Great Equalizer? Gender, Parenting, and Scholarly Productivity During the Global Pandemic   | 2/22/21          |
| 13   | 26              | Snowball Sampling and Facebook: How Social Media Can Help Access Hard-to-Reach Populations  | 5/18/21          |
| 14   | 26              | Are You Really About It? Developing a Critical Praxis for Men in the Discipline   | 4/29/21          |
| 15   | 23              | Retaining Women Faculty: The Problem of Invisible Labor   | 4/29/21          |

In 2020, the total mentions recorded by Altmetric for all articles in the journal was 7,295, a 4.9% increase from 2019.

| Year | Total mentions | News mentions | Blog mentions | Twitter mentions | Facebook mentions |
|------|----------------|---------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 2018 | 7,145          | 94            | 177           | 6,786            | 31                |
| 2019 | 6,953          | 133           | 148           | 6,537            | 11                |
| 2020 | 7,295          | 233           | 236           | 6,645            | 5                 |

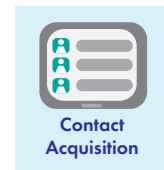
Mentions of all time: 21,858



Increase 43.5%  
Target: 10% increase in PS Views



Increase to OR 30.1%  
Target: email open rate (30.1%)  
Click through rate (3.3%)



Increase 12.6%  
Target: 12.6%

PUBLIC SCHOLARSHIP

# Does Biased Media Coverage Affect Public Opinion? Liverpool's Boycott of a Eurosceptic Tabloid Suggests That It Can

FRANK WYER | UNIVERSITY OF LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

During the 1990s and 2000s, a popular British tabloid *The Sun* waged an intense editorial campaign against the European Union (EU). Not only did *The Sun* offer its readers consistently negative or "Eurosceptic" coverage of the EU, but it also spread viral myths about the organization, one of which asserted that the EU was even out to ban "bendy bananas." Did *The Sun* succeed in propagating negative perceptions of the EU among the British public? In a new article in *American Political Science Review*, Florian Foos and Daniel Bischof exploit a historical event that resulted in a local boycott of *The Sun* to identify the newspaper's effects on public opinion, finding that inhabitants of boycotting localities had significantly more favorable views of the EU and were less likely to support leaving the EU in the 2016 Brexit referendum. Their innovative study provides powerful evidence for the idea that the media plays an independent role in shaping public opinion.

It might seem intuitive that partisan or biased media coverage would influence audiences' beliefs or opinions. Critics of media outlets like Fox News in the United States, or tabloids like *The Sun* in the UK often make this argument. Yet testing this proposition empirically is challenging. After all, viewers and readers choose which television shows to watch or newspapers to buy, and they may just consume the media that best matches their preexisting opinions. This makes it difficult for researchers to determine whether attitudes are the cause or consequence of biased media consumption. In their UK-based

study, Foos and Bischof face this exact challenge: did *The Sun's* EU coverage generate anti-EU attitudes among readers, or were anti-EU readers simply more likely to choose *The Sun* than other newspapers?

To address this challenge, the authors exploit a historical event that caused a large and persistent decrease in readership of *The Sun* in Liverpool and the surrounding Merseyside region in the UK. In 1989, a human crush at a soccer stadium resulted in the tragic death of 97 fans of Liverpool's soccer team. *The Sun* slandered the Liverpool fans in its coverage of the tragedy, provoking a sustained boycott of the paper among both readers and newspaper stands across Merseyside. The authors argue that this incident, while entirely unrelated to the EU or Euroscepticism, nevertheless caused a dramatic decrease in the exposure of Merseyside residents to anti-EU media coverage in the ensuing years.

How did this reduction in anti-EU media affect public opinion? Using survey data, the authors estimate an 11 percentage-point decrease in Euroscepticism in Merseyside relative to other areas of Northern England. A similar analysis of votes in the 2016 Brexit referendum found 8-9 percentage point decrease in support for leaving the EU in Merseyside counting areas compared to control areas (for refer-



Above: Public scholar Frank Wyer.